THE SOCIOLOGY OF INDUSTRY

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Fourth Edition

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PART TWO ORGANISATIONS AND ROLES

Introduction to Fourth Edition

It is thirteen years since the first edition of this volume appeared and three years since the third edition. A substantial amount of new material on the subject of industrial and occupational sociology continues to be published. In order to provide an up-to-date account of developments in this field, we have again substantially revised the previous text, deleting some (but by no means all) older references and treatment to make room for newer material.

This book is addressed mainly to students of sociology who are especially interested in its application to the 'world of work'. It is intended as an introduction, but assumes that the reader is not completely unfamiliar with sociological approaches to the study of society. The purpose of this book is twofold: to synthesise the growing body of relevant empirical material, and to show how sociological theory at different levels of analysis applies to the three interrelated aspects of the subject-matter. These three inter-related aspects constitute the three sections of the book.

The first part is at the social system level of analysis, and examines the relation between industry and other sub-systems or institutions of society. We discuss specifically education, the family and stratification as sub-systems each of which affects industry and is affected by it. At this level, industrial sociology forms part of a wider economic sociology, which is the application of the general frame of reference, variables and explanatory models of sociology to the complex of activities concerned with production, distribution, exchange and consumption (Smelser, 1963, p. 32).

The second part of the book, focusing on the second level of analysis, is concerned with the internal structure of industry and the roles that individuals play in that structure. Organisation theory is the link between analysis of systems and of work organisations. We attempt, therefore, to analyse organisational structures and processes, giving particular attention to authority and technology as aspects of work organisations. These aspects include informal organisation, technology and shopfloor strategies, the structure of management, and some key problems in industrial relations.

Roles also feature in the third part of the book, but here, instead of being linked to the structure of organisations, they are seen as the social actions of individuals and groups. This part is also concerned with the relation between work and non-work, and it corresponds roughly to what is sometimes defined as the sociology of occupations. It includes an analysis of occupations, changes in them, and the consequences of those changes; work involvement and its alternatives; and the various ways in which work can be experienced.

There are, of course, different approaches to the whole subject-matter of sociology and long-standing but still active debates about the validity of competing theories of society. We intend neither to ignore these differences, nor to write exclusively from one or other standpoint. To some extent the threefold division of our book parallels three phases in one of the central debates in sociology: that between 'systems' theorists and 'action' theorists. To over-simplify the positions of these theorists, they represent respectively the view that 'society makes man' and that 'man makes society'. Part One of our book may be seen primarily as an exercise in systems analysis, and Part Three as an exercise in action analysis. Part Two stands at the intersection of system and action, requiring both perspectives to be brought into the picture, and in this sense it is the pivotal part of the book. We believe that in the study of organisations there is a need to use, if not combine, both a systems and an action approach. This means seeing the structure and functioning of organisations partly as systems of social relations and partly as the consequences of motivated action by groups and individuals.

We have thus distinguished the subject-matter of a broadly defined industrial sociology at three theoretical levels. But to be too rigid in relating a large amount of empirical material to a theoretical framework could risk oversimplifying the complexity of the phenomena. Our treatment of theory is not intended to put research into a straitjacket; rather, we view theory as a guide to the planning of research, the results of which in turn can serve to modify theory.

Although we have included some consideration of what seem to us to be the more important research findings and theories, inevitably in a book of this small size and large scope the treatment of each topic is brief. The interested reader will, however, be able to follow up particular topics through the recommended reading and extensive Bibliography.

Note: The names against chapter titles indicate who was responsible for preparing the first drafts. All four authors took part subsequently in the process of revision and of integrating the chapters according to an agreed framework. However, the views expressed in each chapter remain the responsibility of its original author.

Chapter 1
Industrial Sociology: Perspectives and Models

Industrial sociology is an important and fascinating subject. Its importance is obvious, since the world of work and the patterning of industrial structures and economic processes profoundly shape the kind of people we are, our social identities and life styles, and the kind of society in which we live. The social, economic and political organisation of industrial society, and the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of its members interact in a complex way. Understanding this complexity is what sociology is about, while a particular concern with industrial and economic structures and experiences is the focus of industrial sociology. This is the fascination of the subject. For in posing the question 'What is industrial sociology?' we immediately confront the main. dilemmas and questions posed by sociology about contemporary society, its conflicts, shared values and aims and the direction of its development.

Is our society best understood in terms of power groupings, each competing for social and economic resources, increasingly polarised in their interests and objectives? Or is it one in which the basis of power is diffuse, in which capital and labour stagnate and lose relevance together in the face of new groupings, definitions and interests? Is our society one characterised by alienation, by a profound sense of inequality and the futility of work? Or is it one in which there is the *potential* for 'more participation and involvement, more flexible life styles, more fulfilment…a recognition that technology is not just the servant of profit, that large-scale organization may be inefficient in human terms, that social class divisions are not inevitable?' (Smith, 1976, p. 21). Is it a society in which class thinking dominates people's views of themselves and their lives, or one in which class analysis simplifies and distorts social interests as experienced and explained? Is it a society of new freedom and liberty (Dahrendorf, 1975), of justice without bondage? Or is it one in which liberty is declining in the pursuit of equality?

These are exciting and crucial questions. They pose acute dilem mas for the social scientist. Consequently one of the main tasks of this chapter is to pinpoint some attempts to come to grips with such issues. Of special concern is the inherent radicalism of some sociological stances and often their explicit

ideological underpinnings. It will be noted that both the meaning of 'industrial' and the nature of 'society' are often intertwined with the content of 'sociological radicalism' and commitment to social action and a changed social order. These links can best be examined by taking two themes; the nature of sociological radicalism and the nature of sociological models.

SOCIOLOGICAL RADICALISM

The content of sociological studies is what seems to provoke most controversy outside the subject, social investigation itself providing evidence of the need for change, particularly in the acquisition and distribution of social, economic and political resources in society. Every batch of research findings reveals some new injustice: workers alienated by dehumanising technology; the tendency towards bureaucracy and secrecy of large-scale organisation; the violence of much family life; the persistence of sharp inequalities of wealth and life chances; the apparently unaccountable nature of much local and regional planning; in general, the inhuman use of human beings, their potential unrealised, and their hopes and ideals frustrated. Almost all detailed research creates anger or dismay among defenders of the *status quo*. Objective description of nearly every institution, organisation or group uncovers situations and patterns of behaviour which are at best irrational and at worst destructive of human choice. There is little wonder that in part the thrust of sociology is seen as radical, particularly of a leftish ideological brand.

How is it that sociology seems to confront existing social, economic and political orders with such a radical critique? In part it derives from a nineteenth-century European tradition which combined an analysis of the impact of industrial capitalism with a scientific mode of inquiry into human behaviour. It was a logical step from the scientific and empirical analysis of physical phenomena to applying the same model to people themselves and the patterns of social organisation which they created. Industrialisation was the central change to be examined and explained, so it became the target of criticism. Sociology developed amid the social upheavals and revolutionary ferment of a new social and political consciousness which challenged inherited property and dynastic marriage as the twin pillars of capitalism, and heralded the good society as one of common ownership and equality. Marx was not to know the consequences of such a polemic.

Max Weber saw the dangers, both to individual freedom and the integrity of social science, of such an attack upon industrial capitalism. Industrialism itself was an outcome of the growth of rationalism. Substantive rationality could be seen through the growth of science with the consequent secularisation of values and the 'disenchantment of the western world'. Functional rationality was evident with the growth of bureaucracy, the dominance of hierarchical authority

structures. Individual freedom was threatened, not so much by monopoly of the means of production by a ruling elite as by the massive and potentially lethal growth of bureaucracy. Weber also doubted the economic determinism which was central to Marx's polemic against capitalism. Human culture was not simply a spin-off from the economic system, neither was history simply a refraction of the class struggle. Human ideas and values were more complex than that and played a creative rather than a dependent role. It was not only economic forces with their attendant division of labour, financial institutions and the growth of rationalism which explained industrialism, but also the vision of the Protestant ethic of thrift, and this-worldly asceticism. Emile Durkheim also articulated the thesis that division of labour in society, the fragmentation of tasks and roles, was the source of both inequality and patterns of social organisation (Giddens, 1971). The basis of consensus changes as society becomes more complex; division of labour increases the likelihood of an anomic social order; values are no longer shared and members become detached from their basic reference groups. At the same time the structure of society may divide into competing interests and values with only the law acting as a mediating and containing force, standing between the anarchic elements that would tear society apart.

The radicalism of sociology derives, in part, from this nineteenth-century baptism of fire. Diagnosis of the ills of early industrial capitalism at least gives credence to the view that sociology has two aims: the existential liberation of the individual, and the revolutionary liberation of society. As Peter Berger (1971, p. 2) suggests, however, 'the relationship between sociology and freedom is not as simple, or as cheerful as the radicals would have us believe'. Understanding that relationship requires some discussion of the second major issue with which the nineteenth-century theorists were absorbed: the extent to which the study of man and society could be a science, adopting a rigorous conceptual framework, showing clear causal links between phenomena, verifying those links by testing and measurement and building up a body of laws similar in their level of applicability and universality to those of natural science.

Marx, Weber and Durkheim, as examples of the classical European tradition, were preoccupied with the scientific status of sociology, and the viability and desirability of separating fact from value; they were concerned about what Mills has called the possibility of an 'autonomous sociology' (Mills, 1959). Marx explicitly rejected that form of rationalism which separates the inquirer from the subject of his inquiry, wanting not just to analyse the world, but to change it. Of the three theorists under discussion, Marx perhaps stands alone in his rejection of the viability, let alone desirability, of separating fact from value, the emancipation of man from the purpose of philosophy. As he declares in his *Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right:* 'Philosophy can be realised by the abolition of the proletariat, the proletariat can only be abolished by the realisation of philosophy.' Marx's commitment to a

particular model of society, a particular view about the influence of the economic system, about the causes of alienation, and about the relationship between knowledge and action, leads one to sympathise with MacRae's comment that The influence of Marx on sociology has been great and is perhaps still increasing; in my judgment he was not a sociologist, and his influence has been unfortunate… he could not be a sociologist, for sociology is a form of inquiry, and he already knew' (1965). Certainly Marx was not in that tradition which distinguished value freedom from value relevance, which separated the *discipline* of sociology from the *ethics* of the practitioner, which accepts the possibility of objective knowledge and the necessity of refutability. As such, science as the tradition of rational inquiry, empirical assessment and critical impartiality finds little place in Marx's works.

Weber's contribution to the status of sociology as a science is considerable. His position can be characterised by three injunctions: always separate statements of fact from valuations; never pretend to derive evaluations from statements of fact alone (social science cannot demonstrate what ought to be or what one should want); never use the pursuit of objectivity as an excuse for moral indifference. Weber regarded social reality as infinitely variable. The task of sociology was to establish a conceptual framework which was adequate logically and at the level of meaning. The 'ideal-type' was useful both for historical explanation and understanding the action of the hypothetical actor. Meaning was a causal component in action. Weber argued that 'sociology is the science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action so as to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects' (Weber, 1949). The paradigm of science as objective rational inquiry was, for Weber, crucial and informed his formulation of the nature of social action, his assessment of the historical development of industrialism and his view of the appropriateness of the methods of natural science for understanding human society.

Durkheim's view about the appositeness of the scientific model of knowledge to an understanding of the relationship between man and society is undoubted. Sociology was concerned with 'social facts'; social facts are 'things' amenable to the techniques of quantification and measurement of natural science. Durkheim was concerned with empirical postulates from empirical induction, even though such empiricism was tied closely to some form of organicism, some view of society as existing independently of particular individuals; further 'sociology can be defined as the science of institutions, of their genesis and of their functioning' (1895). Durkheim thus argued for causal analysis of social phenomena, against psychological reductionism, in general a strongly positivistic stance believing that the methods of natural science were applicable to the social world.

Sociologists are divided about both of the foregoing issues. How can sociology be value-free? How far are the methods and aims of science applicable to understanding human intention and behaviour? Perhaps something can be said

about the second issue before exploring further the question of ideology in sociology and some available sociological models. Science has two distinct aims: to develop a body of knowledge about the physical world, its evolution, composition and structure; and to discover underlying laws, universal patterns and trends. Sociology shares these aims. It persistently attempts to apply to social life a scientific curiosity, to assess the evolution, composition, structure and effects of, for example, particular social deprivations, inequalities, and changes. Sociological research thus can be disquieting to defenders of the *status quo*. It is obvious perhaps that the radicalism of sociology stems, in part, from the debunking role it plays as a consequence of its persistent curiosity about the social world.

Sociology has yet to reach the point where it can claim to have discovered many universal laws, but it can certainly point to lawlike trends and some fairly universal characteristics of human behaviour and society. One important factor which restricts such universality is the fundamental difference between the subject-matters of the social and natural sciences. Human intentions and actions are not easily assessed and quantified. Motivations and interests intermesh in ways not obvious from what people do, or necessarily from what they say, or even from what people think they say and do. Also situations vary considerably so that the same actions can mean something quite different in different contexts. The relative passivity and 'hard' quantification of physical phenomena contrasts sharply with the reflexive, conscious and choice-related behaviour of people, knitted into networks of relationships, shaping and being shaped by situations and roles which change over time, pursuing multiple goals and developing distinct selves and identities through interaction. The sociologist does not have such a handy piece of equipment as an 'atom-smasher' with which to crack the kernel of social reality! Only by careful participant observation, comparative model-building, statistical analysis and sociological imagination can the sociologist begin to describe and explain particular causes and their linkage to particular effects. Some sociologists would argue that even such minimal linkages are impossible to make because, most fundamentally, human consciousness cannot be made amenable to causal assessment. Human intentions and consciousness are 'internal' to the individual, the only aspect that can be 'known' is human behaviour which is external and observable. The debate is quite a fierce one, however, in general, it does not result in the absence of systematic methodology and model-building along the lines of the natural sciences.

By now it should be clear that a sociological assessment of the scope of work and occupational life, of industrial and economic organisation, does raise central conceptual and empirical issues. Is it possible to develop a conceptual framework which does not *a priori* commit the sociologist to an ideological stance simply by virtue of the concepts used? To put the question another way: how far is the

objectivity of explanation pre-empted by the ideological underpinnings of different frameworks of analysis, particularly, in this case, the Marxist indictment of a society in which a market economy shapes work attitudes and experiences? Graeme Salaman has posed the links in the following ways:

> 'To understand work in any society it is necessary to understand the nature of that society. Whether or not a society is a capitalist one (and the question of the utility and applicability of that concept) is an important consideration in any analysis of work events and arrangements. After all, class is not simply a way of describing structured differences in life chances; it is also a *method of understanding the nature of a society and an economy*.' (1975, p. 11)

If one starts out with such a method of understanding, then subsequent analysis tends to focus on some questions and problems rather than others. That in itself is defensible as the proclivity of a particular sociologist; it should not however be confused with the discipline of sociology which involves consideration of different, often competing, conceptual and empirical claims. The competition of different frameworks, as Bryant suggests, is likely if only because

> 'there are two seemingly inexhaustible sources of conceptual variation in sociology. One is the ambiguous or multi-faceted character of social relations and exchanges which enables both men in the course of their ordinary lives, and sociologists in their analyses, to interpret the same relations differently. The other is the unending variation in forms of social life. In both cases conceptual variation constitutes and reflects differences in social life and is not necessarily to be deplored whatever damage it does to hopes for simple cumulation in sociology comparable to the cumulation in the natural sciences.' (1976, p. 344)

In this book the aim is to steer away from overcommitment to any one conceptual framework. All analysis of human society and behaviour requires a framework of values so as to make sense of what happens, since being human means using a symbolic framework of language; even the most neutral concepts are normative. However ideological commitment means something rather different. It means claiming truth for a particular model; it means subsuming reality into one integral perspective; it means believing one has arrived, open-endedness is over. Doubt gives way to certainty; the ideologue has stepped off the edge clutching his balloons, expecting to fly. Within social science there are several such models, each with heroes, disciples, creeds and flying-kits; sociology can be, however, an important solvent of ideology. As a discipline it thus is important

that it is informed by a critical rationalism which has not sold out to capitalism, Marxism or utopianism. The need is for a radical stance

> 'which refuses to comply uncritically with abstract society or engage in gnostic intoxication. That means it is Intellectual' in that it remains within the tradition of scientific rationalism, and 'ascetic' in that it refuses to reduce human existence to emotional subjectivism…which remains critical but abstains from ideological commitment.' (Zijderveld, 1972, pp. 46–7)

> The stance is the radical one of critical rationalism. It means accepting the principle of uncertainty. It means accepting that the discipline of sociology 'must be value free…the sociologist has no doctrine of redemption to bring into the political arena. What he has to contribute is the critical intelligence that is, or should be, the foundation of his discipline'; moreover, 'there are those who are still willing to commit themselves militantly to reason' (Berger, 1971).

SOCIOLOGICAL MODELS

The general thrust of discussion thus far has suggested that radicalism in sociology does impinge on the structure and content of models developed; the politico-economic critique of capitalism and the concern with both the nature of social order and the meaning of social action have provided important foci of attention. These foci have resulted in several distinct kinds of explanation and levels of analysis. The major perspectives are fairly clear, and these equate somewhat to the macro- and micro-emphases found in economics. At the *macro-level* concern is with the institutional structure of society, the established patterns of behaviour, the relationships and interests which have become stabilised over time and which form distinct spheres of organisational patterning. In terms of the *economic sphere* and the world of work and industry, certain questions are posed. What sort of economic system do we have and what are the major characteristics of the mixed economy? What are the patterns of ownership, wealth and income and how do these relate to the distribution of power and the formation and pursuit of interests and life styles? What is the nature of social hierarchy and how is it related to industrial hierarchy and organisation? What is the impact of technology on society and how does industrial change relate to changes in science and knowledge? What is the relationship between economic and political values, interests and ideals? Various sorts of questions are raised at this macro-level in relation to the *sphere of political life* and the structure and functioning of political parties, the nature of the democratic system and the role of government. General analysis of problems of representation, accountability, secrecy, interest group formation and conflict, all come under the macro-perspective.

The kind of macro-approach thus far described constitutes a major component of the sociological perspective on society. Usually this framework aims not just at describing such institutional spheres but also at exploring their historical and cultural interdependence. The first section of this book adopts such a macro-perspective, examining the structure of the social system as found in industrial society, with a particular emphasis on the economy and an institutional analysis of industry. Such an emphasis does have problems, not least of which is that it may give the impression of greater homogeneity and cohesion than in fact exists in reality. Also such a reality includes a whole world of culture, of values, beliefs and ideas, encapsulated partly in institutional ideologies, but partly also in the images and experiences from which people construct their social definitions and opportunities for action.

People are not just 'products' of society; they are conscious, choosing individuals, constructing their own social reality, living in the intersubjective world of everyday life. The *micro-level* of explanation in sociology seeks to explore the way in which this world is patterned, the nature of choice and interaction, the shaping of meaning, group membership and role-playing and the varieties of organisational involvement and experience of organisational constraint. People are symbol-creating and symbol-manipulating beings. Language categories are the main way in which such symbolism feeds into definitions of the self and human consciousness. The self emerges through a process of interaction, first in the family group then in the wider contexts of peer group, school and work. People do not just 'behave', they make choices and thus 'act' in terms of selecting aims and methods to achieve a variety of goals. Human action is purposive and involves the intermeshing of emotions, cognition and values in the process of choice, interaction and role-playing. Such intermeshing is not totally random or accidental; it comes about through membership of groups, through sharing and internalising group expectations and values, through becoming identified and involved with group activities and aims. People's *role networks* and differences in *role style* give some clues to the parameters of choice, since choices are linked to the contexts within which interaction occurs and the constraints perceived and experienced.

The micro-level then is concerned with the reality of everyday life, the importance of language, the nature of the self, the ways in which the self is shaped through group membership and interaction. The reality of everyday life is a corrective emphasis to the macro-institutional approach. It is a central concern in the third section of this book. The distinctive area of micro-analysis in this text does have limitations; the meaning of work is not the meaning of life. Neither is work experience the only one, or even the most basic perhaps, which shapes the identity of the individual. Gender and life-style cycle stage are two factors which have long been recognised as significant. The position adopted in

this text is that all three interact in shaping the self and the subjective experience of work and industrial life.

The macro- and micro-emphases seem fairly clear and unconter tious. Yet the two theoretical standpoints which underpin them are a source of dispute; the macro-approach takes its stance from the *structural-functionalist* position with its emphasis on *social systems;* the micro-approach tends more towards the *social action* perspective with an emphasis on *intentionality and intersubjective meaning.* As Dawe has pertinently observed,

> There are two sociologies…they are grounded in diametrically opposed concerns…and at every level they are in conflict. They posit antithetical views of human nature, of society, and of the relationship between the social and the individual. The first asserts the paramount necessity, for societal and individual well being, of external constraint: hence the notion of a social system ontologically and methodologically prior to its participants. The key notion of the second is that of autonomous man, able to realize his full potential and to create a truly human social order only when freed from external constraint. Society is thus the creation of its mem bers; the product of their construction of meaning, and of action and relationships through which they attempt to impose that meaning on their historical situations.' (1970, p. 214)

The compatibility of these two perspectives is one of the latent tensions in this book. So as to make clearer just how divergent each perspective is, an outline of the main claims of each would seem useful, along with some criticisms which can be levelled at each theoretical stance.

The structural-functionalist model makes the following claims:

(1) Society has certain basic needs, the prime one being the need to survive and maintain itself.
(2) These needs may be treated as goals and give rise to the structure of society.
(3) The structure of society is differentiated according to the functions performed by the different elements in relation to the goal of survival.
(4) The most useful analytical construct with which to define basic societal needs and structural elements is that of the 'social system'.
(5) The total social system is a society, and both organisations and individuals relate to the structure of the system by sharing its basic needs or goals.

Such a structural-functionalist approach defines institutional spheres in terms of the needs of the system. Of particular importance—in terms of the impact he has had upon subsequent social theory—is Talcott Parsons, although as Lockwood (1964, pp. 244–57) has cogently argued, Parsons's brand of functionalism has

tended to overemphasise the normative component of social life and thus the problems of integration and system equilibrium. The functionalist approach has been considerably modified from its original Parsonian form, notably by Merton (1957), Smelser (1959) and Gouldner (1971). Merton has argued that the key starting-point of functionalist analysis ought to be with social relationships and norms since these regulate the relationship between individual needs and socially approved behaviour. Such middle-range analysis would recognise the dynamism of 'institutions'. As Merton writes, 'It is not enough to refer to institutions as though they were all uniformly supported by all groups and strata in society. Unless systematic consideration is given to the *degree* of support of particular institutions by *specific* groups we shall overlook the important place of power in society' (1957, p. 122). Smelser has made a somewhat different contribution by using the system framework to analyse a particular historical period. The result is some substantive content for the rather abstract system approach. Gouldner has developed a sustained critique culminating in *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. The main thrust of this critique is an assessment of the background assumptions used in the construction of social theories, including functionalism and Marxism. Gouldner claims that all such theories have an 'infrastructure' of both 'political and personal relevance, which, according to the canons of social theory, they are not supposed to have'. The 'crisis' is the one of values in social theory but, 'with only slight exaggeration…for western sociology read American sociology and for American sociology read Parsons' (Bryant, 1976, p. 314).

Some criticisms of structural functionalism would seem useful, not least because of the close links between social theory and the analysis of work and industrial life:

(1) The concept of 'system' distorts the nature of social reality. The social world is much less coherent and integrated than the concept implies, the tendency to 'equilibrium' overemphasises the normative element, plays down the importance of power disparities and interest conflict in society, and depends too much on an oversocialised conception of man.
(2) The claim that social systems have 'needs', like those of physical systems, assumes too easy a transference from the biological to the social world. What are these social needs, and how do they relate to interests, purposes and imagination? 'Need' is a catch-all concept and, like that of 'class', should be defined carefully and used precisely, if at all.
(3) The claim that all systems possess goals imputes a teleological status to all institutions and behaviour. Institutions may have aims but these tend to be multiple, conflicting, imperfectly realised and change over time. The same is true of individuals. Certainly 'purpose' is a central component of social reality but reducing all social phenomena to the pre-packed 'goal-oriented'

or 'goal-achieving' formula obscures rather than clarifies the complexity of the issue.

(4) The concept of 'function' is ambiguous. Does function mean cause? Assessing the kinds of relationships between phenomena, gauging their reciprocity and autonomy might be better carried out if the same words are used to mean the same things. Anyway, does everything have to have a 'function' in order to be amenable to description and analysis?

(5) Functionalism is difficult to relate to the everyday world of members' attitudes and intentions. The categories are deductive, rather than experiential and 'grounded', and distort the social construction of reality and the important and subtle interactions which take place through language, typification, knowledge in the situation and the taken-for-granted aspects of everyday life.

(6) It is claimed, finally, that functionalism is ideologically motivated. It fits in too well with capitalism, reinforcing social order and political and social consensus, neglecting interests, power and conflict as components of change, and ignoring the historical nature of class and stratification.

These are just the bare bones of some of the criticisms of structural functionalism; the initial outline cannot be taken to be the whole story. The main intention is to provide some indication of the difference in perspective when compared to social action and interactionist approaches.

Social action theory and interactionism analysis includes within its scope, role analysis, reference group theory, labelling theory, identity theory, ethnomethodology and phenomenology. Some of these are far apart when specific emphases are examined; such a mixed bag makes strange bedfellows! To some extent they can be grouped under the 'symbolic interactionist' rubric, combining a rejection of behaviourism and positivism and a focus on the structure of meaning and the ways in which sociological constructions themselves are part of the universe of meaning. Thus

> 'the evidence available from the works of sociologists and social psychologists, such as Mead, Garfinkel and Cicourel, points to the fact that the process of intercommunication between individuals is not merely one of stimulus and response but involves perceptual judgments on the part of the actors which, in turn, are the product of the organising activity of consciousness. Social action is inexplicable without some concept of meaning which, in turn, depends upon some explanation of the emergence of mind.' (Walsh, 1972, pp. 41–2)

The kinds of claims made by the social action and interactionist perspectives in general are as follows:

(1) People are not passive recipients of the external world, simply 'responding' to sets of 'stimuli' but constantly create, shape and interpret social reality in terms of frameworks of meaning.
(2) This interpretative and shaping process distinguishes behaviour from action and is made possible by a universe of symbols.
(3) Symbolism, verbal and non-verbal, makes possible self-created worlds of social reality and links the individual to sets of ongoing socially constructed meanings.
(4) Individuals interact in terms of such shared meanings, especially the meanings they attribute to each other's actions and the situations in terms of which interaction takes place.
(5) Social interaction may be viewed as a process, a dynamic negotiation of intersubjective realities, in terms of which meaning becomes patterned, the self becomes defined and action choices become explicated.

The particular emphases of different action theorists leave plenty of scope for disagreement with the above propositions. However, in general, as these propositions suggest, the kind of explanation of social phenomena and description of the social world is very different to that of structural functionalism. Instead of deductive models of the Parsonian kind, there is an attempt to grapple with the complex variety of intersubjective reality. Much current sociology is in this vein and fruitful it is, too. However, there are some criticisms which can be levelled at the action perspective:

(1) All description and analysis is inherently selective and abstractive; to deny this and claim that this level embraces the 'real' meaning people give to their actions and interactions ignores the *general* nature of *theory*.
(2) Explanation of social action tends to drift into multiple refraction of perspectives, towards a situation where there is an anarchy of 'isms'.
(3) The emphasis on the *social* construction of reality underestimates the importance of biology, particularly genetics, in shaping the self and interaction.
(4) The requirements of logical consistency and empirical adequacy are incompatible, the latter can be realised only by sacrificing any claim to 'objective' explanation, particularly with the adoption of common-sense categories.

Thus far it has been suggested that sociological models are concerned with a macro-emphasis, with an institutional systems approach which derives its emphasis mainly from structural functionalism; and also with a micro-emphasis, with a social interactionist approach which derives its emphasis mainly from symbolic interactionist tenets. The *macro-emphasis* is the concern of *Part One,*

while *Part Three* examines the *subjective experience of work* and the intersubjective aspects of industrial life. Of course, one of the major problems with 'social reality' is that it is multi-faceted, and so we only capture part of it with our models. In this book we have been very aware that the models described are not total explanations, that macro- and micro-levels of analysis overlap and are often the same problems and issues conceptualised at different levels. For these reasons *Part Two is* concerned with the *interaction between macro- and micro-levels* in terms of organisations, particularly work organisations. The kinds of *structural constraints* people experience and the kinds of *involvement patterns* they develop are the main concern of this section, with an emphasis on those arising from the work situation and the industrial enterprise.

CONCLUSION

The sociology of industry is *about the nature and meaning of work* and occupational life, about the differences in opportunity and selffulfilment which it makes possible. The context of industry is not the only one within which work takes place, e.g. the home can be such a context (Oakley, 1975). But for most people work is inseparable from an industrial context of one kind or another. Variations in this context mean that work too varies, 'in its deprivations and delights, its opportunities and its monotony, its dangers and its costs' (Salaman, 1975). Such a perspective recognises such variations as they permeate the whole of the occupational spectrum, from assembly-line worker to professional scientist. The sociology of industry is also *about the sociology of organisations,* the attitudes and ideologies of power-holders at all levels of the organisational structure and about what people do in organisational contexts. Thus there is a concern for the deprivation and boredom experienced by people as well as the basis of both conflict and consensus within organisations. The sociology of industry is also concerned with *the type of society* in the context of which work and organisations exist.

This text holds no brief for capitalist or Marxist economies. It does distinguish however between the major characteristics of *industrial society* and the analysis of the dominant modes of production which can accompany industrialism. It is true that 'one important way of investigating this relationship [between work and other structures and organisations] is by considering the ways in which work activities and experiences influence the development of politically relevant knowledge and values of those involved' and 'a sociology of work-based and relevant knowledge could shed a great deal of light on the relationship between position within the economic order and attitudes towards that order and on the nature of legitimating ideologies' (Esland *et al.,* 1975, p. 27). It is another claim altogether that

> The combination of rational planning with politically neutralized bureaucracies serving the goal of economic progress has done much to desensitize workers and sociology itself as a way of understanding contemporary society. It is important that the sociology of work regains… political and social awareness…that work activity and experiences should be seen in the context of more comprehensive critiques of capitalist society and mass capitalist culture.' (Esland *et al.,* 1975, p. 32)

Such an argument and subsequent analysis would be better served if there was some comparison of work activity and experiences in capitalist *and* non-capitalist societies, given that capitalism is the major model of society adopted in order to examine what, in the British context, is a mixed economy. Thus the sociology of industry is about the structure of industrial society, its inequalities and freedoms, its deprivations and opportunities for self-fulfilment, the interdependence of family and work, economic, political and social life. Some care, however, needs to be taken about the ways in which such relationships are presented and the concepts and methods used to describe them.

RECOMMENDED READING

Abrams, P., ed. (1978), *Work Urbanism and Inequality* (London, Weidenfeld) An appraisal of changes in the occupational structure and how these relate to stratification and particular occupational groups.

Bell, D. (1976), *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (London, Heinemann) Argues that the social structure and culture of industrial societies are moving apart; the relevance of culture for work is posed in a dramatic and confrontational way.

Dubin, R., ed. (1976), *A Handbook of Work, Organization and Society* (New York, Rand McNally) Covers work and leisure, working behaviour, organisations, executives and managers, work in different social systems and postindustrialism.

Esland, G. *et al.,* eds (1975), *People and Work* (Edinburgh, Holmes McDougall) An Open University selection of readings on social, occupational and political aspects of work.

Fox, A. (1971). *A Sociology of Work in Industry* (London, Collier-Macmillan) A critical assessment of the contribution of sociology to understanding the nature of work and industrial organisation in contemporary society.

Hall, R.H. (1975), *Occupations and the Social Structure,* 2nd edn (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall) An integrative review of the context of occupations, their types and relations with the social structure.

Meakin, D. (1976), *Man and Work* (London, Methuen) An appraisal of the philosophical and sociological questions about the meaning of work.

Rose, M. (1978), *Industrial Behaviour* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books) An assessment of the relevance of social theory and social practice to work behaviour and attitudes.

Watson, T.J. (1980), *Sociology, Work and Industry* (London, Routledge) A basic text for students of industrial sociology, within a theoretical framework of interactionism, social action theory and 'Marxian insights'.

Weir, D., ed. (1973), *Men and Work in Modern Britain* (London, Fontana Books) An introductory text consisting of short papers on the structure, process, texture and context of work.

PART ONE

INSTITUTIONS AND SYSTEMS

Chapter 2
The Economy: Structure and Change

At the outset it is necessary to say something about the scope of economic and sociological analysis and the extent to which they overlap. Economics consists of the intensive study of one type of function in, or sub-system of, society: that of producing, distributing and exchanging goods and services. This is also the subjectmatter of one branch of sociology, namely economic sociology, but in a way less specific to economics and more general to social institutions. The behaviour of individuals and groups and the nature of societal processes are the concern of sociology, whether these are features of the economic or of some other sub-system.

The conception of the economy as a sub-system of society implies a wider conception of society itself as constituting a system. It is possible to view the economy as the parent system which itself consists of a number of component parts or sub-systems. Each of these component parts may further be seen as bearing the same functional relation to the economic system as this bears to the social system as a whole. Thus Parsons and Smelser (1956) have suggested that the economy has adaptive, goal-achieving, integrative and pattern-maintaining (latency) functions, represented respectively by the capitalisation and investment sub-system, the production subsystem (including distribution and sales), the organisational subsystem or entrepreneurial function, and economic commitments such as physical, cultural and motivational resources. A more concrete structure, such as a market or a firm, may also be analysed in a similar way. But, ingenious though such theoretical analyses of economic organisation and behaviour may be, it is doubtful whether they can take us very far in understanding social behaviour. Perhaps their chief value is in enabling us to map out the whole area of sociological interest at the level of social structures.

In examining the economic sub-system the matter is complicated by the fact that whereas, for example, the family as a sub-system of British society has no significant functional relationship with the family system of other countries, the British economic system is part of a world economy which has evolved a complex network of institutions serving to regulate the relationships and activities of its various parts.

Over the last century the position of the British economy has declined *vis-à-vis* other industrialised countries and—as measured by gross national product—has fallen from first to sixth place among the world's economies. The rate of growth of the British economy has, at least since the Second World War, been less than that of most industrial nations of comparable technology (Livingstone, 1974, p. 79). In the early 1950s Britain had the highest standard of living of any European country except possibly Sweden. But by the early 1970s Britain had one of the lowest standards of living in Western Europe.

A number of explanations have been advanced for this secular decline in the British economy. It has been said that wartime destruction in continental European countries led to higher post-war priority being given to capital investment and more productive technology. Weak and poorly trained management have been blamed. The more co-operative attitude of the unions and the concentration of workers in fewer unions in countries outside Britain have been cited as relevant factors. The 'loss of empire', that is, of profitable British overseas investments, no doubt also played a part in the decline.

Glyn and Sutcliffe (1972, p. 10) have suggested that the crisis in British capitalism 'has developed because mounting demands from the working class for a faster growth in living standards has coincided with growing competition between capitalist countries'. The problem, whether defined as decline or crisis, has ramifying effects on industry and all who are involved in it. Many of the issues and problems relevant to the study of the sociology of industry (reorganisation and redundancy in the textile and shipbuilding industries, for example) may be understood not only as problems of conflict or adjustment at an individual or group level but also as a function of economic problems at a system level.

CHANGES IN THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

In this section we shall summarise and analyse some of the main features of, and changes in, the economic structure in modern Britain. This will be done under three headings: the technology applied in industry, the values which underlie economic behaviour, and the organisation of industrial enterprises.

Technology

Our first theme under this heading is the growing importance of industrial as against agricultural activities. In 1851 agriculture and fisheries accounted for 22 per cent of the occupied population in Britain; the proportion fell to 8 per cent in 1911, 5 per cent in 1951, and is now about 3 per cent. The development of industry has been accompanied by widespread changes in our whole way of life: the growth of towns, cities and conurbations, of transport and communication

systems, and of consumer goods which have reduced household drudgery and vastly changed popular ways of spending leisure time.

New inventions, technological advances and shifts in world demand have altered radically the character of British industry in recent years. Industries in which new techniques have predominated —notably electronics, aircraft, motor and chemicals industries, new branches of machinery construction, and petroleum —are contributing a significantly larger share of the total output and exports, and providing wider employment opportunities for at least the more skilled sections of the labour force.

Our second theme concerns the increasing application of technological methods in industry. Expenditure on industrial and scientific research has increased steadily, and facilities for technical education have been greatly enlarged. But the existence of inventive genius and organised research is only one factor in what Florence (1969, p. 10) calls the self-perpetuating 'circular' character of the train of causation. Certain material, product and market conditions are necessary for inventive genius or organised research to have affected production. Although it is often said that we are entering an atomic age, technology has not moved forward evenly over industry as a whole. Automated factories already exist in such industries as chemicals and engineering, but the construction industry is closer to the craft age (though pre-fabricated factory building is on the increase).

Values

Values play an important role in providing the rationale for particular norms or rules of organisation or conduct. Appropriate values are equally necessary with material conditions to enable a certain kind of economic and social system to be developed and to operate. In modern industrial societies a very high value has been assigned to economic productivity. The need to maximise profits or wages and the need to work hard reflect values peculiar to our own and closely related societies; such values are found only rarely in other parts of the world (Schneider, 1969, p. 16). Even within the context of advanced industrial societies profit-maximisation, long held to be the main, if not the only, goal of economic enterprise, has come to be questioned. Thus Galbraith (1972) has suggested that the 'technostructure' (the name for all who participate in group decision-making or the organisation which they form) is compelled to put prevention of loss ahead of maximum return. Autonomy (the ability to set prices, organise product demand, ensure supplies, and so on), and the taking of business not for its profit, but 'to hold the organization together' are values which are coming increasingly to surpass those of profit maximisation.

Notwithstanding the crudity of such analogies as 'Great Britain Ltd', the pursuit of economic growth has been the equivalent at the societal level of profit-

maximisation at the level of the industrial organisation. But even growth is coming to be questioned as a terminal value. The view has been cogently argued by Mishan (1969) and others that the continued pursuit of economic growth by Western societies is more likely on balance to reduce rather than increase social welfare. They further suggest that we should reject economic growth as a prior aim of policy in favour of a policy of seeking to apply more selective criteria of welfare to re-create an environment that will gratify and inspire men. Although this view is at present a minority one, it serves to emphasise that values are problematic and that what we have come to think of as 'conventional wisdom' concerning economic means and ends may be ephemeral

Values differ from society to society, and *within* societies there may be different prevailing values. The sub-cultures of management and labour are different enough for these two groups to possess different values towards each other's roles, sometimes to the extent of conceiving their own to be basic to the productive process and that of the other group to be expendable or even parasitic. Such differences in values are one of the chief causes of enduring conflict in industry and in society.

Organisation

During the past hundred years or so the British economy, in common with the economies of other advanced industrial societies, has shown an expansion in industrial output and in imports; the economy has become increasingly differentiated and specialised as a manufacturing unit. The process of differentiation of goods produced and services offered has also been accompanied by the localising of particular industries.

Part of the process of development of the economy has been the trend towards increasing size of industrial factories or plants. The majority of business enterprises, however, remain small; of the 60,000 manufacturing establishments in 1972, at least 45,000 employed fewer than 100 people, while only 1,100 employed 1,000 or more people (Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1975). The size of units is limited in some industries by the conditions of production and in others by the character of demand. Thus in building repair work and in much road haulage the output is scattered and erratic, while in other industries small-scale operations occur where firms make types of product for which demand is limited.

Another trend in industry is the growing proportion of organisers, managers, and research, technical and administrative staff compared to manual workers. The ratio of staff to operatives in British manufacturing industry rose from 11–8 per cent in 1924 to 30.2 per cent in 1964 (Florence, 1969, p. 16). American evidence is that staff have increased less than the rise in productivity level. This probably holds good for Britain and is a consequence of increased output due to

the use of machines which displace the operative but add to the work of staff. The same tendency is seen in the Soviet Union, where the number of 'intellectuals' and white-collar workers increased from under 3m. in 1926 to over 20m. in 1959 (Semyonev, 1966, p. 130). The trend towards higher staff ratios is likely to continue in all industrialised countries, with the increasing application of science to industry and greater forward planning, budgeting, and other management procedures.

One important consequence of the increasing size of industrial organisations is the trend to monopoly or oligopoly. The notable increase in the rate of industrial concentration that characterised the British economy in the late 1960s has created an unprecedented situation in which a small number of corporations now own the majority of industrial assets in the private sector of the economy (Stanworth and Giddens, 1975, p. 5). Supporters of capitalism have long been in a contradictory position on monopolies: they are seen as having economic advantages resulting from larger markets, can enable production to be rationalised, but are also 'in restraint of trade'. But, despite legislation against them, they still flourish in Britain and America.

The latest monopoly technique—the takeover—has become the subject of much concern and some inquiry. Although statistics over time are sparse, it has been estimated that approximately 10 per cent of the United Kingdom's total non-nationalised assets changed ownership in 1967–8, and that 70 per cent of the top 100 largest firms were bidding or were taken over in the two years (Newbould, 1970, p. 198). An Acton Society Trust study of takeover bids and mergers found that they often occurred in declining industries faced with a falling demand for their products (sometimes accompanied by diversification of activities) and between companies where horizontal or vertical integration could bring economies of scale.

In recent years there has been a growth in the number of multinational companies operating in Britain. The book value of foreign direct investment in British industry (excluding oil, insurance and banking) nearly doubled between 1962 and 1968 from £ 1,430m. to £2,718m. (Gennard, 1972, p. 3). Multinational companies have been praised as the harbinger of a new economic order and damned as the newest form of industrial imperialism (McMillan, 1973, p. 25). Fears among trade unionists are that job security may be weakened because of the ability of corporations to switch production from one country to another and that those corporations may refuse to recognise and negotiate with British unions.

A question to ask when considering the structure of the economy is 'Who owns the wealth of the country?' It is sometimes asserted that increasing taxation has narrowed the gap significantly between the property-owners and the propertyless, but the facts lend little support to this. In 1967–9 the wealthiest 5 per cent of the population aged 25 and over owned 55 per cent of the wealth (Atkinson, 1975, p.

134). Although the comparable figure for 1950–2 was 68 per cent, the share of the top 5 per cent excluding the top 1 per cent (i.e. excluding those who are likely to relinquish part of their capital to their heirs before death) has remained broadly unchanged. However, income is more evenly distributed: in 1967 (the latest year for which estimates have been made) the top 10 per cent of income-earners accounted for only 24 per cent of the total income after tax (Atkinson, 1975, p. 51).

The organisation of industry and its effect on the economy as a whole, particularly in regard to labour matters, has been much influenced in post-war years by the growing power and authority of workers organised in trade unions. During the war trade unionists sat with employers' representatives on joint production committees in many industries, and the Trades Union Congress was called upon to play an important part in the formulation of economic policy. Union leaders were subsequently appointed to the boards and commissions responsible for industries brought under public ownership, and union membership has risen to its present figure of ten million. Unions have grown into large, national, relatively tightly organised bodies. Industry has become more complex and concentrated, and the parts of the economy more interdependent, thus giving union action wider repercussions.

VARIATIONS IN EMPLOYMENT LEVELS AND THE RISE OF 'AFFLUENCE'

For much of the post-war period the unemployment-rate in Britain varied between 1 and 2 per cent of the employed population—a situation conventionally described as full employment, since a majority of the unemployed were either temporarily stopped or unemployed for not more than eight weeks. Towards the end of the 1960s, however, the unemployment-rate began to rise, and by 1980 it had risen to around 8 per cent.

Taking the post-war period as a whole, an expanding economy and the stronger market position of workers *vis-à-vis* employers has led to 'affluence' of the working class, at least relative to the poverty of many of its members before the war. Two developments have aided the expansion of the consumer market in post-war years: the growth of advertising and of hire-purchase sales. It has been estimated that in 1979 approximately £2,100m. was spent on all forms of advertising in Britain, or about 2 per cent of the total national income. The expansion of the teenage market for consumer goods and services, especially for clothes, records and other products of the 'leisure' industries, is a direct result of the favourable market situation of most juvenile workers, with employers clamouring for their services and hence pushing up wage and salary rates. Although a circular process of demand and supply of labour and commodities is involved, the consumer is by no means the key factor in the situation. Rather, it

is the producer who as a rule initiates economic change, and consumers are educated by him if necessary; they are, as it were, brought to want new things.

The rapid growth of sales of household and durable consumer goods has been greatly helped in recent years by instalment purchasing. Despite fluctuations caused by intermittent government regulation of the terms of hire-purchase and credit sales agreements in order to help boost or damp down the economy, the total hire-purchase debt outstanding shows a strong upward trend and in 1978 reached about £5,500m. (Central Office of Information, 1980). The need to keep up, and if possible expand, demand for consumer goods has led to 'planned obsolescence' of products made not to last but to be replaced by later models more frequently than is really necessary. Obligations to repay hire-purchase debts have been said partly to account for an increasing tendency on the part of workers to choose paid overtime or a second job rather than more leisure time when basic working weeks are reduced.

RECOMMENDED READING

Allen, G.C. (1970), *The Structure of Industry in Britain* (London, Longman) Focuses on change in the composition and organisation of British industry during recent decades.

Atkinson, A. B (1975), *The Economics of Inequality* (London, OUP) An economic analysis of the nature and causes of differences in personal income and wealth.

Branton, N. (1974), *Economic Organisation of Modern Britain,* 2nd edn (London, English University Press) An extensive review of business enterprise, sources of finance, the labour market, the role of the state, etc.

Florence, P.S. (1969), *Economics and Sociology of Industry* (London, Watts) Not much sociology, but a comprehensive review of economic and industrial trends and developments.

Galbraith, J.K. (1972), *The New Industrial State,* 2nd edn (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books) An economist's wide-ranging overview of the processes of change in modern industrial societies.

Glyn, A. and Sutcliffe, R.B. (1972), *British Capitalism, Workers and the Profits Squeeze* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books) Relates changes in the economy to the social system and particularly to class conflict.

Livingstone, J.M. (1974), *The British Economy in Theory and Practice* (London, Macmillan) A clearly written if consensual analysis, especially Part II on objectives and priorities in the economy.

Mishan, E.J. (1977), *The Economic Growth Debate: An Assessment* (London, Allen & Unwin) Considers whether recent economic and social developments are meeting basic material and psychological needs.

Smelser, N.J. (1963), *The Sociology of Economic Life* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall) A 'systems' analysis of the relations between economic and non-economic aspects of social life.

Chapter 3
Industry and Education

The relations between industry and education are reciprocal, and have consequences for the structure of both institutions. On the one hand, there are the demands of employers for trained workers, or for those sufficiently well educated to be suitable for appropriate training; on the other hand, industry itself has an educational 'subsystem', including apprenticeship and on-the-job training schemes of various kinds. For the individual there is the half-way stage between being a student and being a worker that is implicit in the provision by some employers of day-release and 'sandwich courses'. There is also the process of occupational choice and transition from school to work, which may involve problems for the individual of role and status in a changed social and physical environment.

THE INFLUENCE OF INDUSTRY ON EDUCATION

One of the most obvious ways in which the world of work affects the world of learning is the choice of subjects in schools and the ways in which these are taught. What is often called the vocational bias in education means that education is regarded as a direct preparation for a particular kind of occupation. Employers want a convenient method of sorting out suitable applicants for jobs; a paper qualification obtained by examination is one such method, and hence the school curriculum often tends to be treated simply as a means to examination success.

Several types of school have a vocational bias, in a direct or indirect sense. Technical schools, which are attended by only about 6 per cent of the secondary level pupils in Britain, are designed to afford entry into skilled manual and some non-manual occupations. Secondary modern or comprehensive schools, which are attended by about three-quarters of children between 11 and 15, often have vocational courses that can sometimes be a greater source of interest than purely academic subjects, but in recent years there has been a trend towards education for non-work life. Among secondary modern schools in Sheffield, Carter (1962) found that, although some courses had a vocational bias, the children were not

conditioned to specific types of work, but their interests and aptitudes were encouraged in the light of opportunities of local employment.

The 1944 Education Act, which legislated for secondary education for all, has formed the basis of subsequent educational policy. Three types of school—modern, grammar and technical—were provided for, 'differentiated in terms of their curricula, but equal in prestige'. However, while it has been possible to achieve some degree of parity of conditions, the essential corollary of 'parity of esteem' has been more elusive. As Banks (1968) remarks, 'in so far as the grammar school selects an able minority of children and prepares them for middle-class occupations it is still fulfilling an elite function and representing an elite philosophy of secondary education'. The trend towards greater occupational rewards for educational qualifications has brought the educational system into closer relation with the occupational structure.

Those who accept that the school has legitimate functions in preparing children for vocational life point to a number of advantages that this may have. It may reduce the opposition of parents (and of children themselves) to extended schooling if this is seen as a means of getting a better-paid job. It may help to make the school syllabus more interesting and relevant to everyday life. And it may help to reduce the problems associated with the transition from school to work.

Criticisms of the vocational bias in education have centred around a concern that the links between education and industry may be at the expense of the role of education in other spheres of life. Thus Bantock (1963, p. 114) writes that 'one's feeling about the Crowther Report [on education between fifteen and eighteen] is that the needs of the practical life and of vocationalism have taken up their abode unashamedly and that it is the element of humanisation which has been forced into a corner of the living-room, though the need to recognise its presence there has not been forgotten'. There were similar reactions to the Robbins Report on higher education. None of the criticisms affects the fact that the needs of people in the occupational world inevitably impinge on the educational world, though the extent to which this happens in different types of society may be the subject of comparative study (Hans, 1961, p. 64). The difference of opinion arises from value-judgements, and centres on the relative weight that should be given to vocational and non-vocational education.

Technical education

In the nineteenth century industry as a whole was apathetic and even hostile to technical education. The inferior prestige of science, and particularly technological studies, has acted as a brake on both the expansion of provision in science and technology and the attraction of students to such courses. The low status of the scientist in industry was the result chiefly of the pre-eminence in the nineteenth century of mainly non-scientific industries and the perpetuation of the

neglect of scientific instruction in recruitment and promotion policies. A major factor accounting for industry's lack of support for technical education has been the small proportion of technically qualified men in higher management.

Several factors have contributed to the post-war expansion in technical education. Successive economic crises and foreign competition in export markets have underlined the importance of the application of scientific methods to production, especially in the newer industries such as chemicals and electronics. Government-sponsored research organisations have played a part by demonstrating the practical value of research. The increase in the scale of industrial organisations has enabled the largest of them to undertake more research and training of personnel in various branches of science and technology. Employers' associations, though not teaching bodies, have in some cases concerned themselves closely with the development of education and training for management, including the technical side.

Technical education is extremely heterogeneous and is carried on in a variety of educational establishments. Apart from secondary technical schools, there are technical colleges, technical institutes, polytechnics, colleges of further education, schools of art and craft, and so on. In recent years a number of colleges of advanced technology have been established which run courses of a standard comparable with that of university degree courses, and these have mostly now become universities. There are also more recent qualifications, such as the CNAA degrees. Technical colleges are organised in four tiers according to the nature of their work. Below the colleges of advanced technology, regional colleges do much similar work but also less advanced studies; below these, area colleges do mostly technician and craft work; and, at the bottom, the local colleges do only this low-level work.

One controversial question concerns how much technical training should be provided by firms and how much by outside educational bodies. Specific training for a single job peculiar to the work and processes of the firm is usually regarded as the responsibility of the firm. But it is argued that more general education can and should be given outside the firm. To a large extent, size of firm determines whether technical education or training can be provided. In large firms training schemes are feasible, but smaller firms without the necessary manpower and facilities are forced to rely on externally-based arrangements. With technical training provided by firms there is also the problem of one firm 'poaching' the labour that another firm has had the expense of training.

Another and wider controversial question concerns the location of technical training within a broader context of general education. Peter Venables (1974) asserts that vocational determinism is out and technical training no longer a sufficient justification for an educational institution. Technical colleges, he believes, must become broadly based colleges of further education, i.e. colleges for the local community rather than appendages of industry, in which training of

many kinds finds its proper place among a wide diversity of educational activities.

The spread of automation is likely to have important effects both on technical training in particular and on education in general. Because of the complexity and abstractness of the new industrial techniques, a theoretical university education will increasingly tend to carry more weight than apprenticeship and on-the-job training. One consequence of this is to make promotion from the shopfloor more and more difficult and to reduce occupational and hence intragenerational social mobility. Working foremen, with no more technical training than those they supervise, will tend to be replaced by better-qualified people, perhaps graduates who spend a short period at the first level of supervision as a preparation for a higher management post.

THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION ON INDUSTRY

Educational and training courses that take place wholly or partly within the firm reflect to some extent the purposes and values that are attached to education in the wider society. Such courses, including the system of apprenticeship, together with the effect of a better-educated labour force on the composition and distribution of man-power resources, constitute the chief influences of education on the industrial world.

Apprenticeship

The system of apprenticeship has changed little since the Middle Ages when, as a paternalistic relationship between the craftsman and the trainee, it formed an integral part of the guild system. Today, the paternalism has largely vanished, but many of the associated customs remain. Apprenticeships are served, mostly for periods of four or five years, from the ages of fifteen or sixteen. During that period the youth has a mixture of on-the-job and back-to-school training, for which there are no universal standards laid down and no terminal tests or examinations of competence required. Some employers train their apprentices well, while others do not. Some firms impose stringent intelligence and adaptability tests, while others take on a few lads because they have always had apprentices around the workshop. Although the 1965 Industrial Training Act provides for imposing training-levies on entire industries (thereby making it less profitable for firms to ‘buy’ apprentices with higher wages as they emerge from training), there is no legal obligation on any employer to provide training. Small wonder that the apprenticeship system has been described by one critic (Paterson, 1966) as ‘that makeshift, class-ridden, inadequate, anachronistic contract which perpetuates master-servant relationships and the confusion, if not the

exploitation, of the young in a sphere which cries out for enlightened and flexible forms of occupational training for *all* young people'.

Although now some twenty years old, the findings of an inquiry by Williams (1957) are still largely relevant today. Apprentices were rarely, if ever, actually taught their trade. The system relies on skilled men to teach them, and many are not good teachers. Williams, among others, advocates admission to the ranks of skilled workers as a result of a test of competence instead of the passage of time. Another problem is that although apprentices theoretically emerge as skilled craftsmen, much of the work they are put to would be regarded objectively as semi-skilled, because of the fragmentation of many industrial processes. Since the great need of industry is for semi-skilled technicians, the apprenticeship system encourages unrealistic and rigid job definitions.

A more recent study by Ethel Venables (1974) concentrated on work experiences subsequent to apprenticeship. She conducted a follow-up inquiry among 2,000 men who were over 21 in 1966. She concluded that her results 'provide some evidence of the human and social costs of part-time further education and of the feelings engendered among those who were offered an educational **ex**perience which is now being openly admitted to be worse than and cheaper than that which was offered to their more privileged contemporaries'.

Day-release and sandwich courses

Off-the-job training, including the academic side of apprenticeship, consists of such arrangements as day-release to technical colleges, and sandwich courses. Both serve the function of filling in the gaps that most on-the-job training leaves. Day-release means that young workers are given time off from work—usually one day a week—to attend courses of study at technical colleges of various types. There are three main levels, leading to professional, technician and skilled craftsman occupations. The purpose of the course largely determines its length, varying from three to five years at the technician and skilled craftsman level up to seven years or more for professional qualifications. The professional courses usually include one or two evenings or Saturday morning attendance each week.

Day-release is generally assumed to be a privilege conferred on young employees—usually apprentices—at the discretion of their employer. But engineering craft apprentices in federated firms have the *right* to day-release for technical training up to 18—normally one day a week, payment to be made at the time-rate of wages. Release from engineering, shipbuilding and electrical-goods industries accounts for more than one-third of all release. Industries which give relatively little day-release are generally either those which require little training of their workers or which provide on-the-job training.

Sandwich courses are so called because 'layers' of full-time college study and industrial experience alternate over a period of years, for example, six months in

industry succeeding six months in college for three or four years. Sandwich courses present many administrative difficulties on both the industrial and educational side, and have been slow to develop. As compared with day-release, sandwich courses give much better opportunities for integrating academic study with industrial practice, which is especially important in training for management. A study by Cotgrove and Fuller (1972) suggests that the influence of sandwich courses on occupational socialisation and choice is minimal. However, the strength of these courses may be the extent to which they provide a more relevant educational experience, and contribute to motivation and achievement and to the maturation of the student.

Manpower and education

Up to the First World War there were three main groups in industry, corresponding to various phases of technical development: unskilled manual, skilled manual, and commercial and clerical personnel. In recent years machines have taken over much clerical work, and the unskilled manual occupations now contain a relatively smaller proportion of the labour force. The distinction between manual and non-manual, which rests on the older and somewhat false distinction between workers 'by hand or by brain', is becoming blurred. We are moving towards having a labour force containing a broad stratum of semi-skilled workers doing varied work, and trained technical employees. Accordingly, it is claimed that vocational training for the mass of workers will have to be increasingly on the model of the semi-skilled technician (Schelsky, 1961). Abstract and 'human relations' qualities will be more often required to organise and supervise the work.

The increasing displacement and occupational mobility of labour brought about by the introduction of new machines and techniques has special consequences for the education of employees. To invest too heavily in a specialism may give a person capabilities that are so specific to one job that he or she is unable to undertake another job without retraining. There is a great need for retraining of displaced workers; in 1979, 22,000 people passed through the 69 official Skill Centres, but this represented only a fraction of the potential candidates for training.

Another link between industry and education is the tendency for large companies to encourage their senior employees to send their children to public schools. Some firms (such as Shell) have established insurance schemes to help pay school fees (Johns, 1965, p. 111). Others provide closed scholarships for employees' children. Still others make substantial contributions to the finances of public schools. Not only are private firms helping to subsidise the public schools, but they are also encouraging the science side to be developed. Industry

has also given similar help to universities, with the emphasis less on social status and more on technical and managerial education.

SCHOOL AND WORK

The transition from school to work may be considered under two headings: the aspirations and expectations that school-leavers have concerning the occupational world, and the process of occupational choice.

Aspirations and expectations

Schoolchildren form certain impressions of the occupational world from different sources. At school they pick up bits of information about various occupations, though this information may be a little more direct when the syllabus includes such subjects as current affairs or social studies. The family is often an important source of information (and sometimes misinformation) about jobs and of instilling, in varying degrees or not at all, a motivation for achievement. Also, the mass-media of communication may impart direct information given by people interested in vocational guidance and may also convey impressions and stereotypes of occupational roles as portrayed in films and on television (Crowley, 1976).

Various studies have been concerned with how schoolchildren and young workers view aspects of the occupational world. A survey by Musgrove (1966) of boys and girls aged 14 to 20 in a northern industrial region showed that work was instrumental for them, but for other than crudely material ends; it was referred to largely as a learning situation (in a broad sense) by both manual and nonmanual employees. Hill's (1965) study of boys in 14 maintained grammar schools in the Midlands indicated that among the section who had not made up their minds on the choice of a career (56 per cent of the total) the overwhelming majority were more interested in conditions of work and material rewards.

Maizels (1970) concluded from her survey of children in the London suburb of Willesden that there is a general lack of correspondence between the needs and expectations of young people, on the one hand, and what is provided by the relevant community services, including industry, on the other. Vocational aspirations were higher, on average, than were subsequent achievements. There was, overall, a reduction in the average level of skill, training and education required in the jobs actually obtained compared with those originally preferred.

The extent to which juvenile expectations of work are realised must often have a profound effect on the individual. This has led Glickman (1975, p. 43) to suggest that the critical point of interest for the analysis of the transition from school to work is not when the young person enters his first job, but the point in time at which the job enters him. As Keene (1969) points out, the work

environment influences the development of the young person as a citizen. The example of fellow workers and supervisors may be as important as that of parents. In this respect the 'work experience' schemes run by some schools are of interest. Selected groups of senior children visit factories and offices to gain practical knowledge of the world of work. The criterion of suitability of employers is that they really should provide their visitors with a job to do, but should not regard them as a potential source of full-time employees. The 1973 Education (Work Experience) Act allows work experience to be incorporated in the school education programme (Carmichael, 1976).

Theories of occupational choice

There has been a good deal of attention paid in recent years to the process by which young people come to choose a particular occupation. Earlier theories were developed in America by Ginzberg *et al.* (1951) and Blau *et al.* (1956). In this review we shall concentrate on more recent British work in this field.

Musgrave (1974) has put forward a conceptual framework as a first approach to a theory of occupational choice. The central focus of this is the process of socialisation, which is seen strictly as learning to take roles: 'Anticipatory socialization is important. At each stage of socialization roles may be rehearsed in such a way that transition to the next stage is more easily accomplished.' By getting to know role prescriptions associated with particular occupations, the young person is said to be able to choose an occupation that more or less matches his wishes from among the limited range available to him.

Coulson and her associates (1967) have criticised Musgrave's approach as an 'attempt to explain social behaviour in terms of an over-simplified functionalist theory which rests on a consensus model of society'. By ignoring the significance of variation and conflict, Musgrave is able to define the 'significant others' of the new employee as 'managers and work-mates', without considering that their demands may be very different. He also implies a value-orientation towards a static social order, in which only unusual people change their jobs or work alone. Ford and Box (1967) make a more fundamental criticism of the use of the term 'choice' in connection with first employment: 'Surely, one might argue, the transition from school to work in most cases (of boys and girls leaving school at fifteen) cannot be described as *choice* at all? These children do not know the full range of jobs open to them and have no efficient criteria for differentiating one job from another.'

Two of the best-known theories of the entry into employment are those of Ginzberg and Super. Both stress that we need to consider the entry into employment as a process. But whereas Ginzberg attaches prime importance to the individual's growing awareness of his own interests and capacities, Super places greater stress upon the role of the individual's social environment in

structuring the individual's conception of his interests, abilities and capacities. Roberts (1975) believes that these, and similar theories which suggest that individuals' occupational choices develop through a series of identifiable stages, are inadequate. He proposes instead an alternative theory with 'opportunity structure' as the key concept. Careers can be regarded as developing into patterns dictated by the opportunity structures to which individuals are exposed, first in education and subsequently in employment, while individuals' ambitions, in turn, can be treated as reflecting the influence of the structures through which they pass.

RECOMMENDED READING

Brannen, P., ed. (1975), *Entering the World of Work* (London, HMSO) A collection of papers on the transition from school to work and the relationship between education and employment.

Cotgrove, S. (1958), *Technical Education and Social Change* (London, Allen & Unwin) Examines the social forces which have shaped the growth of technical education in England.

Halsey, A.H. *et al.*, eds (1961), *Education, Economy and Society* (New York, Free Press) A reader which includes sections on the educational consequences of economic change and education, social mobility and the labour market.

Venables, E. (1974), *Apprentices out of their Time* (London, Faber) An inquiry concerned mainly with part-time further education, with some very critical conclusions.

Williams, W., ed. (1974), *Occupational Choice* (London, George Allen' & Unwin) A selection of papers from the *Sociological Review* dealing with the process of occupational choice and entry into employment.

Chapter 4
Industry and the Family

The interaction between industry and the family is on two levels: relations between industrial organisation and family structure as sub-systems of society and, on the role-person level, relations between the occupational and familial life-spheres of individuals. We first consider the influences that types of modern industrial organisation have on the pattern of family life and the ways in which occupational roles influence family roles. We then inquire to what extent family patterns exert pressures on industrial organisation and behaviour, and how the individual's commitment to family life influences his job performance. Various types of relationship between work and family spheres are examined. Finally, we consider the extent and consequences of married women working and of the spread of the dual-career family.

THE INFLUENCE OF INDUSTRY ON THE FAMILY

The influence of industry on family life may take direct and indirect forms. In the direct form, the circumstances and attitudes associated with a certain kind of occupation affect circumstances and attitudes in the family sphere. In the indirect form, the association between occupation and family is mediated through social-class membership, that is, being in a given occupation is associated with being in a certain social class whose members show characteristic behaviour patterns and attitudes. Much of the empirical study of the relation between occupation and family life rests upon 'social-class' data. So, in considering the influence of industry on various aspects of family life, the extent to which social class may also be a factor should be borne in mind.

Husband-wife roles

Industry, directly or indirectly, helps to shape the roles that are played within the family, as well as the relationship between these roles. In general, family and work spheres have become increasingly differentiated, due mainly to the specialisation of work roles in industrial society. However, when we look more

closely at the degree of integration of work and family life at various socioeconomic levels we see marked differences.

The role of the husband in the upper-class family usually has little relationship to his role at work, and there may be little carryover of the prestige and authority gained at work into family life. Work commitments tend to minimise the amount of time and energy that the husband can devote to his family, which becomes a subordinate part of his life. In the middle class, the financial standing and status of the family is more dependent on the occupation of the husband. But to the extent that he follows a technically complicated occupation that is incomprehensible to his family, his wife cannot identify strongly with his work. However, the working-class husband's occupation gives neither high income nor status in society at large. In communities where it is traditional for the husband only to work, the separation of occupational and family life is almost complete. In working-class families where the wife also goes out to work, the additional income is often used to make the home a more comfortable place to stay in, and the husband's family role may be more like that of the middle-class husband.

From their research Blood and Wolfe (1960) characterised the main role of the wife in relation to her husband's occupation as collaborative, supportive or peripheral. Farm wives much more often than urban wives collaborated with their husband's jobs. The wives of white-collar workers most often thought they helped their husbands by giving encouragement, considerateness or entertainment (supportive), while the wives of blue-collar workers either contributed housework or nothing (peripheral). The mixed effects of company policy on the family life of mobile executives have been noted by Bennis and Slater (1968, p. 90). By trying to include the wife and family in their thinking, the top decision-makers in many large corporations have acted alternately to stabilise and to rupture the marital bond; the former through including the family in corporation activities, providing therapeutic facilities, and so on; the latter by demanding that the husband's organisational commitment always comes first, and by penalising the husband for the wife's faults of personality and behaviour.

Another influence of work factors on husband-wife roles is seen in the various ways in which husbands can seek to reconcile the demands of work and family life. Concentrating on studies of middle-class 'spiralists' (those with progressive careers and residential mobility), Edgell (1970) links success at work and family life in the ways shown in Table 1. The three rows represent three possible solutions to the problem of conflicting influences, one in favour of work, one in favour of home, and a third in favour of both or neither. The spiralist who is 'married' to his work and successful in it (like the 'upper-level' husband discussed above) is likely to segregate his work role from that of his wife in the home and (more doubtfully) to exercise a dominating influence in the home. The husband who is unsuccessful in his work may compensate by making home his central life-interest, sharing family roles and influence with his wife. But the

Table 1

Orientation to success at work	*Central life interest(s)*	*Roles*	*Family life relationships*
High	work	segregated	husband-dominated
Medium	home and work	role conflict	inconsistent
Low	home	joint	egalitarian

husband orientated to success in both work and family roles will probably experience conflict between them and fluctuate in his attachment and relationships. As with much theory, this approach to a typology of work and family roles and relationships is developed from existing research and needs to be tested and possibly modified by research designed for that purpose.

Kin relationships

The network of relationships with members of the extended family shows the influence of occupation, both directly and indirectly. Bott's (1971) intensive study of a small number of English urban families suggests that ties among kin are likely to be stronger if they are able to help one another occupationally. In class terms, families with close-knit networks are likely to be working-class, but not all working-class families have close-knit networks. The strength of the family's neighbourhood network depends more directly on the husband's occupation within a given class. If he is engaged in an occupation in which his colleagues are also his neighbours, his network will tend to be localised. If he is in an occupation in which his colleagues are not his neighbours, his network will tend to become loose-knit.

Millward (1968) has examined a further aspect of the interaction between kin relationships and work behaviour: that of the different arrangements by which mainly working-class young women contribute to family income between leaving school and getting married, He distinguishes two main types of arrangement: 'giving in' means that the girl hands in her wage-packet to her mother and receives pocket-money: 'on board' is when the girl gives her mother an agreed sum for board and lodging and keeps the rest for herself. Although the process of 'going on board' is to be seen as an essentially domestic matter, it appears that on any occasion when the girl's earnings are substantially raised the subject is likely to come up in family discussion. Millward and his colleagues used the domestic arrangements by which workers contribute to family income to help explain changes in family life and behaviour at work.

Socialisation

The father's experiences in the world of work are transmitted to the child both directly via occupation and indirectly via social-class position. For some occupations the home may be the office or shop, and the family will be aware of many of the father's job activities. In some families the father will be very uncommunicative about his work, while in others the father may communicate virtually every detail of his work to his family. This is partly a matter of the types of personality involved, but is also related to the 'visibility' of the father's occupational role and the extent to which work is an integral part of life. Thus in farming households it is easy for children to start doing jobs around the farm without conceiving of these as 'work', and quite likely that they will also become farmers because the range of alternative occupations appears more restricted than to urban dwellers. By contrast, the technically complex and therefore less visible occupational role of many middle-class urban fathers means that they cannot serve as role models for their children.

The class position of the father has important influences on the socialisation of the child (Schneider, 1969, pp. 499–502). At each level of society there tends to be a typical role pattern for children. Among upper-class families the care and raising of the child is often left in the hands of others besides the parents. The socialisation of the child is directed at transmitting to him the values and norms of the upper classes. By contrast, middle-class children and parents spend much more time together. Socialisation in the middle class aims to teach the child to behave 'properly', and more depends on the child's ability to compete successfully with others for the best education and hence for the best jobs. But working-class children are rarely driven to succeed or to live up to high standards of propriety; the emphasis is on obedience and keeping out of trouble.

Research in Detroit reported by Miller and Swanson (1958) attempted to relate methods of child-rearing to the type of father's occupation. Occupations were divided by the researchers into those that demand initiative, individual action and risk-taking (entrepreneurial) and those emphasising conformity to established practices and the decisions of superiors (bureaucratic). The authors' hypothesis was that certain types of occupation attract certain types of husbands and wives and, in turn, create philosophies that are reflected in family behaviour. The hypothesis was borne out by results: 'entrepreneurial' parents were more likely to train their children in self-control at an earlier age and in a greater number of respects than were 'bureaucratic' parents.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAMILY ON INDUSTRY

Most available evidence points to the greater influence of industry on the family than vice-versa, but it must not be supposed that family patterns and values have

a negligible influence on industrialism or occupational life. As an example of the importance of the family in facilitating or hindering social change, Goode (1964) has compared the efforts of Japan and China to industrialise during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Starting with similar social and economic conditions, Japan became far more industrially advanced than China. Family differences between the two countries contributed to the differences in the rate of industrialisation in several ways: the inheritance system in Japan made it easier to accumulate wealth for investment, nepotism was less a handicap than in China, and those who rose socially did not need to help the undeserving members of their families.

The Japanese industrial system, despite being as technically advanced as that in many Western societies, provides an example of what Form and Miller (1960) call a 'family-mediated' type of industry-community relations. The Japanese factory (at least until the late 1950s, when Americanisation began to develop rapidly) tended to be family-like in the roles and norms of its employees; employment was normally for life, there was emphasis on intragroup harmony rather than on individual competition, and paternalistic care of the employee, even in his private life (Abegglen, 1958). A similar pattern may be seen in those Western industrial organisations where family values are dominant, often associated with family ownership of the enterprise or with religious or co-operative communities.

Family life is of concern to employers because a well-adjusted family member tends to be regular and punctual, better satisfied in his job, and a good team-worker (Miller and Form, 1964). Trade unions also generally approve a family system that produces loyal members, and this is especially so in certain craft unions where the 'union ticket' is still often passed from father to son. A person's home life may affect his job performance, and in large organisations there is sometimes a psychological consultant to smooth out home problems that may interfere with an employee's ability to work well.

Types of work-family relation

We have seen that, at the institution-system level of analysis, the relation between industry and the family may vary between sub ordinating family life to the needs of industry to mediating purely industrial values with family values. At the role-person level, however, we need to look more closely at the factors influencing work and family inter-relation and to develop a theoretical framework into which research findings may be fitted, so far as possible.

As a starting-point we may take one of the postulates of the Rapoports (1965): work and family roles tend to be isomorphic (affecting each other in such a way as to induce similar structural patterns in both spheres) or heteromorphic (inducing different structural patterns). Of the studies and observations cited so

far, the family in which the wife collaborates with her husband in his work, the family whose home is attached to the father's office or shop, the farming family, and to some extent the modern Japanese family, all exhibit isomorphism of work and family life, or an extension of one sphere into the other. The other studies may be analysed into two further groups. If isomorphism represents a *positive* relationship between spheres, there is a *minimal* (approaching nil) relationship as well as a *negative* relationship between them. A minimal or neutral relationship between work and family spheres is exemplified in families in which the husband's occupational role does not impinge on his family beyond affording it a certain style of life. Occupations with regular hours, with no marked physical or psychological effects on the holders, and that do not encroach on free time, are cases in point.

Having considered the patterns of extension and neutrality of life spheres, we are left with the pattern of opposition. This pattern is seen typically in those manual occupations that generate in the husband a need for family life to function as compensation. Thus to repair the damage exacted by his work the miner tends to expect his wife to feed and comfort him, making few demands in return (Dennis *et al.,* 1969).

Some of the features of these three patterns of relationship between work and family spheres—extension, neutrality and opposition—are summarised in Table 2. The conclusions of some further research on work and family patterns may be fitted into this typology. A study by Podell (1966) showed that those who tended to be specific (orienting to others as means) or affectively neutral in their occupational role expectations were more likely to view their occupational and familial lives as distinct and separate. Those who were occupationally diffuse (responding to others as 'total persons') and affective were more prone to want their family included in their vocational world. These correspond to the neutrality and extension patterns respectively. The study by Aberle and Naegele (1961) of middle-class fathers' occupational roles points to the element of opposition between work and family behaviour that exists for those in some business occupations. The business world limits responsibility and authority, judges people by what they can do rather than by who they are, and often makes aggressiveness pay off—the opposite of which generally applies to successful family life.

Another example of opposition of spheres was revealed by Dynes *et al.* (1956), who found that unsatisfactory interpersonal relationships in the family were significantly related to high occupational aspiration and satisfactory family relationships to low occupational aspiration. However, this probably reflects a culturally-based psychological need to succeed in at least one life-sphere rather than a relationship between occupational and family-life variables. Finally, research showing the extent to which members of certain occupations have their central life-interest in the family sphere helps to test the hypothesis that

Table 2

	Type of relationship between spheres		
	Extension (positive)	*Neutrality (minimal)*	*Opposition (negative)*
Type of occupation	farming, small shopkeeper, certain professional or craft	technical, routine non-manual	mining, fishing, some 'impersonal' occupations
Occupational characteristics	home and work location (partly) co-extensive	low visibility of occupation to family	physically or psychologically damaging work
Husband's familial role in relation to occupational role	continuous with work	alternative to work	recuperation from work
Role of wife in relation to husband's occupation	collaborative	supportive	peripheral

impersonal occupations tend to lead to a higher affective investment in the family, and personal occupations to a lower investment in the family. Among a sample of bank employees, 35 per cent gave family-oriented responses to a group of questions on central life-interest, among youth employment officers 25 per cent and among child care officers 19 per cent—and these occupations are on a scale of decreasing impersonality (Parker, 1972).

MARRIED WOMEN WORKING

Women constitute one-third of the labour force in Britain, and of these nearly two-thirds are married. Census and General Household Survey figures show that the proportion of all married women gainfully employed has risen steeply over the last few decades—it was 9 per cent in 1921, 21 per cent in 1951, 32 per cent in 1961, and 47 per cent in 1972. About half of them work part-time. The age group that has had the greatest increase is the 35–44 years age group. The children of these women have usually reached school age, thus affording the mothers more spare time in which to take up a job.

The factors making an increase in the employment of married women possible may be considered under three heads: opportunity, capacity and motivation. Concerning *opportunity* there have been five main factors:

(1) *Shortage of labour*. During most of the post-war period there has been a shortage of labour, aggravated by a longer education period for juveniles and an increasing proportion of dependent old people to working population. Firms have been encouraged to establish branches in isolated areas to make use of possible reserves of married women.
(2) *Changes in the occupational structure.* Increased expenditure on consumer goods has led to an expansion in the retail trade, which employs large numbers of women. Welfare and administrative workers for the social services, whose numbers have grown, are mainly women (Klein, 1965, pp. 14–17).
(3) *Social disapproval weakened.* The presence of increasing numbers of single women in industry, greater equality in marriage, and the emancipation of women generally, have resulted in the breaking down of traditions about a woman's place being in the home. However, these traditions persist in certain areas, for example, mining communities.
(4) *Discrimination removed.* The 1975 Sex Discrimination Act forbids employers to discriminate against married persons of either sex.
(5) *Changes in industry*. To encourage the employment of married women some factories have introduced special shifts, allowing time for married women to do their domestic duties. With the introduction of new machines, manual work has become lighter and more amenable to women.

With regard to *capacity,* the health of the average working-class housewife has been improved with the benefits of the welfare state. The middle-class housewife has generally had no experience of primary poverty that saps vitality and initiative. Labour-saving devices, by reducing the amount of work required to run the home, have helped to increase the capacity for outside employment.

The *motivation* for married women to work has been the subject of several investigations (Brown *et al.,* 1964, Jephcott *et al.,* 1962, Klein, 1965). The great majority of married women stress that they have financial reasons for working, though in most cases this is to secure a higher standard of living generally or certain specific extras, such as children's education, rather than economic necessity. The desire to escape boredom and loneliness at home and to gain companionship at work has been shown to be an important additional motive, while for some, but relatively few working-class wives, the job itself is intrinsically interesting. Status-striving is sometimes a motive, as when working-class families are transferred to new housing estates.

The employment of part-time women workers raises certain problems in the work-sphere. It involves more work, for example, extra staff may be needed in personnel, wages and medical departments of firms. Absenteeism is greater among women workers, making supervision and production more difficult. There is a greater tendency for working women to leave their jobs, though the

study by Jephcott and her colleagues (1962) of a Bermondsey factory revealed that women left their work not because of domestic duties, but because of improved opportunities elsewhere. Part-timers who stayed at least six months were likely to achieve a longer service with the company than full-timers.

Seear (1968) investigated the employment, training and careers of women in industry. She found that 'the majority of women… are required to perform semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, a situation which is individually frustrating and wasteful in terms of national labour resources'. The jobs women are employed in are also those most likely to be modified or eliminated by technological change, making it necessary to prepare them for less routine work. Only one woman in about twenty is employed in a managerial capacity, however, and there is reluctance to train and promote women. Until recently, women manual workers' average earnings were approximately half of men's, though this will no doubt change as the policy of equal pay is increasingly implemented.

In the family sphere wives who earn money are more economically independent of their husbands than non-working wives. Greater equality in work between husbands and wives also seems to lead to greater equality in family decision-making. Thus Heer (1958) found that in Irish families, both in the working class and middle class, the working wife exerts more influence in family decision-making than the non-working wife.

Fogarty and his colleagues (1971) carried out a study of women's opportunities in professional and graduate work generally and of the relations between family patterns and work careers. They used the concepts of salience, commitment and integration to move towards a theory of family patterns and work. *Salience* refers to the degree to which people attach importance to, and gain satisfaction from, different areas of their lives. Individuals vary in the degree of *commitment* they have to the idea of women working outside the home. The concept of *integration* is used to define the range of ways in which men as well as women combine the spheres of work and family. The authors believe that commitment is the key concept in determining women's choice of family pattern and/ or work. They distinguish *non-commitment,* where the woman is quite happy to accept the domestic role and to return to a career if at all only when it is convenient all round to do so; *secondary commitment* is where the woman wants to have a career, but accepts that this must be secondary to the requirements of her husband's career; and *full commitment,* where the woman pursues her career with involvement equal to that of her husband and believes that conflicts should be worked out on the basis of joint optimisation.

PROBLEMS OF THE DUAL-CAREER FAMILY

In the conventional family the husband is employed outside the home and the wife works only in it. With the growth of opportunities for married women to work,

the pattern of the dual-worker or dual-career family has become increasingly widespread. The dualcareer family is one in which both husband and wife work continuously at their occupations as well as taking on domestic roles (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1976, p. 198). Couples vary in how committed each partner is to work or family roles and the amount of time spent on them. Sometimes the wife works continuously but part-time; the work may be perceived as something of a hobby and of secondary priority in the family's affairs. More egalitarian dualworker families are those in which both partners not only work continuously but consider that each is to be given equal priority in the family's decisions and activities.

The Rapoports (1976, pp. 286–96) also discuss the strains to which the dual-career family is subject. Briefly, these are:

(1) *Over-load.* The couple have too many responsibilities, and domestic help is not the answer because the intrusion of the helper into family privacy is an additional strain.
(2) *Lack of environmental sanction.* The wife may be in an occupation where women are not entirely accepted, or she may be subject to criticism for letting others look after her children.
(3) *Personal identity and self-esteem.* Both husband and wife have to overcome criticism based on traditional sex-role stereotypes.
(4) *Social network dilemmas.* The relationships of dual-career families with kin tend to diminish and those in service relationships with them to increase.
(5) *Multiple role-cycling.* There are problems for both partners of dovetailing family with work commitments.

The dual-career family pattern is most common among middle-class couples, but is also developing among working-class families. The Pahls (1971) studied the effect of this pattern on the lives of managers and their wives, although in many cases the more traditional pattern of the wife not working outside the home was found. Among these wives conflicts of role were apparent as they changed, particularly at weekends, from being housewife, mother, wife, daughter or neighbour. To understand what a woman feels about being a housewife, the Pahls concluded, it is necessary to know what her definition of the situation is. This is likely to vary according to whether her reference group is, for example, a set of graduates or factory workers. On the subject of housewives, Oakley (1974) points out that the work of women has received very little sociological attention, and she has attempted to remedy this by an analysis of the family and work role of the housewife.

RECOMMENDED READING

Moss, P. and Fonda, N. (1980), *Work and the Family* (London, Temple Smith) Deals with work-family relationships and dualities, including the role of the state as regulator.

Oakley, A. (1974), *Housewife* (London, Allen Lane) An historical and sociological study, from a feminist viewpoint, of the family and work role of the housewife.

Pahl, J.M. and R.E. (1971), *Managers and their Wives* (London, Allen Lane) A study of career and family relationships among a sample of middle-class couples.

Rapoport, R. and R. (1976), *Dual-Career Families Re-examined* (London, Martin Robertson) Case-studies of five families in which both husband and wife pursue active careers and family lives.

Rapoport, R. and R. eds (1978), *Working Couples* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books) A collection of papers on various aspects of the experience of dual-worker families.

Young, M. and Willmott, P. (1973). *The Symmetrical Family* (London, Routledge) A socio-historical study of family life in the London regions, with particular emphasis on the roles of work and leisure.

Chapter 5
Industry and Social Stratification

Social stratification means the division of members of a society into levels or strata that are united by some common attitude or characteristic (Schneider, 1969, p. 148). Stratification is not a sub-system of society in the same sense as the economy, education or the family; rather, it is a generalised aspect of the structure of all complex social systems. Nevertheless, it is possible to examine the relationship between social stratification as it is manifest in industry and in the wider community.

THE INFLUENCE OF INDUSTRY ON THE STRATIFICATION SYSTEM

Social stratification in modern industrial societies takes two major forms: class and status. Other forms of stratification, such as estates and castes, are not applicable. There is a large and controversial literature on matters connected with social class and status (Bottomore, 1965). 'Class' is generally used to denote divisions of people according to their economic position in society, whether they are conscious of that position or not. 'Social status' represents not a division of society but rather a gradation of positions determined by a variety of factors including, but not limited to, economic ones. Historically, the concept of class was an important feature of Karl Marx's theory of society, emphasising successive class struggles between owners and non-owners of the means of production, while Max Weber drew attention to another type of stratification deriving from the recognition of status which may cut across class structure.

The industrial basis of the stratification system in the wider society is clearly implied in the concept of social class. Marxists believe that modern industrial societies are divided into two major social classes according to ownership (capitalist class) or non-ownership (working class) of capital or property. Others who accept that there is a class division in society treat it more widely as a division between those with and without power, irrespective of whether that power is economic or not (Dahrendorf, 1959). In the latter case it then becomes a matter of contention whether the non-economic power is in fact associated with

economic position, that is, to what extent there is a generalised elite in society that has superior power or authority (legitimated power) in all or many social spheres.

The link between industry and stratification by status is weaker, mainly because of the wider range of bases for imputing status. If status situation is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honour (Gerth and Mills, 1948, p. 187), then factors beyond economic and non-economic power and authority can be used to define status—such factors as consumption of goods, education, family background, and so on. However, this does not mean that no connection can be traced between such bases for ascribing status and economic position itself. As in the case of the influence of industry on the family, its influence on the stratification system may be a direct one via economic power and authority position in industry, or an indirect one via the spillover of status in industry into status in the community and the link between market situation and life-style.

In Britain official statistics published by the Registrar-General describe 'social class' and 'socio-economic group' in terms of occupation. Non-academic research bodies often use an economic classification that is intended to identify life-styles typical of income groups rather than occupations, though it must be remembered that income is based largely on occupation. A survey by Kahan and others (1966) showed that, when a sample of the British public was asked what sort of people it regarded as belonging to the middle and working classes, 61 per cent gave occupational characteristics for the middle class and 74 per cent for the working class. A number of studies both in Britain and America indicate that people tend to put themselves in a higher (or sometimes lower) social class as compared with the official rating of their occupation or with the assessment of an interviewer. These subjective judgements reflect a desire on the part of some individuals to identify with a stratum in society other than that in which their occupational membership puts them.

Three studies throw light on the factors that lead some people to emphasise their class position and others their status and generally to take a 'class' or a 'status' view of society. Lockwood's (1958) account of *The Blackcoated Worker* shows that although the clerk is, in class terms, 'proletarian', he usually identifies himself with the middle class. It is in the work situation of the clerk, rather than his market-determined income, that gives the clue to his 'class-consciousness' and his negative attitude towards unionisation. A sub sequent article by Goldthorpe and Lockwood (1963) examines the phenomenon of 'working-class affluence'. By separating out the economic, relational and normative changes in working-class life, they conclude that, despite the economic progress of the working class in relation to the middle class, the gulf between the two remains very wide. They maintain that there is little basis for the thesis of *embourgeoisement* in the sense of the large-scale assimilation of

manual workers and their families into middle-class lifestyles: status goals seem much less evident than economic goals. Finally, Prandy (1965b) concludes from his study of scientists and engineers that those who are in positions of authority tend to accept the 'status' view of stratification that they are part of a graded hierarchy, while those who do not share in the exercise of authority tend to have attitudes of a more 'class' type.

Studies of occupational status

As we have seen, stratification by social class is based on objective economic position, while stratification by status is concerned with finer and sometimes non-economic gradations. The question of whether those individuals objectively assigned by occupation or economic position to a certain class agree with that placement has led to the term 'false class consciousness' being used to describe those who identify with the 'wrong' class. With status stratification, however, the whole matter is far more open. Many inquiries have been concerned with the differential statuses that certain occupations are thought to have. Some of these inquiries are described as relating to occupational 'prestige', but it seems better to use 'status' to refer to a position within a group or society and reserve 'prestige' for something more personal that an individual brings to a status.

Probably the best-known British study of the social grading of occupations is the one by Hall and Jones (1950). They asked 1,400 people to rank 30 occupations in order of social grading, that is, they asked for their informants' views of what they thought was the general opinion. They concluded that there was no major difference in regard to the grading of selected occupations. The difference in average judgement was likely to be greater in grading occupations in the central region of the occupational scale than at the top or bottom, and there was a tendency for judgements about the social status of selected occupations to become more variable with the lower occupational status of informants.

Young and Willmott (1956) confirmed this last point in their study of the social grading of occupations by manual workers. They found a considerable measure of dissensus among these workers, who tended to grade occupations according to their usefulness to society, putting manual workers above non-manual. The authors commented that 'in future enquiries it would be as well to ask people not only for their view of the general opinion about the standing of jobs but also for their own personal opinion'. In other words, we need to know the meanings that people attach to their own and each other's actions, in this case the action of judging that certain occupations should be accorded higher status than others.

Criticism of studies

Studies of the social grading of occupations may be objected to on the grounds that they force people into making distinctions that they do not normally make. The idea behind most occupational status studies is that occupations are scalable, that is, they can be located on a single scale from high to low according to their status. But, as Reiss (1961) points out, 'occupational rankings derived from the rating procedure…do not yield a unidimensional scale for all occupations…there are good reasons for assuming that status is a multidimensional phenomenon and that there is more than a single dimension to most of the conventional indicators of status'.

One reason for the lack of universal agreement about the status of occupations may be that status is the only one way of classifying occupations: the vertical way. Morris and Murphy (1959) have suggested the term 'situs' to describe a more horizontal classification by equally valued functional categories. The use of the situs dimension provides us with a technique to assess the relative effect of type of work, as well as of class or status, on attitudes and behaviour. This is reflected in the growing interest in sociological studies of particular occupations, rather than of the hypothetically common experiences of individuals at a certain class or status level.

Status congruency

Differences in judgements of status may be partly explained by analysing the different sources of status. A job can carry status because of the rewards (economic or psychological) attached to it, because of prestige, authority or functional importance (Pellegrin and Bates, 1959). These four sources of status may be congruent or not. If a person is high on status in one respect he will tend to feel relative deprivation if he is low on status in other respects. This leads to a 'strain towards congruency' of status attributes. It also operates on the group level—if one job is better than another by most values of a group there will be efforts by the generally higher-ranking group to bring all the status factors into line (Homans, 1962).

There is the wider question of the extent to which status differences in the work *milieu* carry over into non-work life. A job with high status can help entry into such things as golf clubs or fraternal associations because the individual's status is held to be 'portable'. On the other hand, the motivation for some non-work activities involving positions of status, for example, in religious life or local government, may be the seeking of compensation for lack of status in occupational life.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE STRATIFICATION SYSTEM ON INDUSTRY

Industrial enterprises, collectively and individually, have a system of stratification that has internal and external aspects. Internally, the division of various types of workers and managers into strata may be held to be functional or dysfunctional for the enterprise or the industrial system as a whole. Externally, it is possible to trace the ways in which status stratification in the community influences the status privileges that are accorded to certain individuals in their occupational roles.

Just as there are social classes or status groups in society at large, so within industrial enterprises there are hierarchical levels of authority to which varying degrees of status are attached. The various roles in industry are structured by levels of authority, with the chief executive at the top and the ordinary workers at the bottom. Furthermore, these levels of authority are associated with inequalities in working conditions. For example, in one national survey 98 per cent of operatives were required to clock in, compared with 6 per cent of senior managers who had to book or clock in; 90 per cent of operatives lost pay if they were late, while only 4 per cent of senior managers did so (Field, 1974, p. 33). Fringe benefits are also unequally distributed: for example, in 1968 employers paid into their pension funds more than three times as much money on behalf of each staff member of the funds as they did on behalf of each manual worker who was also a member (Westergaard and Resler, 1976, p. 90).

What are the reasons for the existence of a stratification system in industry? Defenders of the status system in industry stress the need to recruit managers and technical experts by offering 'appropriate' rewards, including those of high status. Critics of status consciousness in industry point to its divisive consequences, such as failure of communication between strata and (in class terms) the attitudes associated with the recognition of 'two sides of industry', i.e. management and workers.

There is ample evidence of the concern with status in industry on the part of both management and workers. Many managers expect their hours of work and privileges associated with their employment to be sharply distinguished from those of lower grades. A process of social differentiation is often active within a management structure as well as between managers and other employees. Clements (1958) found that senior management positions tended to be filled by men who were of higher social origin and who were even trained for senior management posts at an earlier point in their careers.

Workers show concern for status in different ways. Those who are moved to another job at the same pay but with lower informal status often become deeply resentful (Brown, 1954, p. 140). Differences in wage-rates between various jobs are also important in establishing status. Workers are often more concerned with

how their wages compare with others (the 'differential') than with absolute amounts—hence the difficulty of devising a generally acceptable incomes policy.

To what extent can status position in the workplace be kept separate from status position outside the workplace? It seems that some degree of separation between the two statuses is possible for many workers. The principal factors helping this are the tendency for people no longer to carry the 'marks' of their occupation with them into non-work life, shorter working hours, and the comparative rarity of having work as a central life-interest, at least in terms of informal relationships (Dubin, 1976, p. 282). Divorce between status at work and in the community is, however, less possible in rural than in urban areas, because status is ascribed to categories who share clusters of characteristics but with whose component members one does not necessarily interact (Frankenberg, 1966, p. 263).

That the consumption standards (an obvious status attribute) of the working class have become more like those of the middle class cannot be denied, although social strata within industry and the authority relationships on which these are based have remained broadly unchanged. As Goldthorpe and his colleagues (1968a, p. 78) remark, 'despite his affluence, the worker's experience of the social divisions of the workplace, of the power and remoteness of management, and of his own inconsiderable chances of ever being anything but a manual wage-earner all generally dispose him to think of himself as a member of the class of "ordinary workers", and to seek collective rather than individualistic solutions to his problems'.

From an international comparison of organisations in five countries, Tannenbaum and his colleagues (1974, p. 229) concluded that participativeness is a basis for minimising the impact of hierarchy and for reducing inequalities. The more participative, socialist plants were more likely to come closer to realising equalitarian ideals than the less participative privately owned plants. But some capitalist plants were found to be no more hierarchical than some socialist ones.

Stratification theory and industry

Stratification theory, and the theory of social class in particular, have progressed in a very uneven manner (MacKenzie, 1975, p. 170). We know something of the ways in which economic inequalities are created, sustained and changed, but the *explanation* of interclass differences in values, ideologies and patterns of behaviour is poorly developed. Contributions to stratification theory in Britain have largely been consequences of investigating particular problems. British sociologists have concentrated on concrete issues such as the meaning of

'working-class affluence' and the correlates of different types of working-class situation.

For a consideration of more theoretical issues involved in stratification we must turn to American sociologists, who have been carrying on a somewhat polemical debate on the subject for the past thirty years or so. Much of this debate turns on whether stratification is 'inevitable' in any society, and therefore relates more to the philosophy of stratification than to its sociology. But the exchange of views has also dealt with some substantive issues in 'macro'-sociology and at some points is relevant to the question of stratification in industry. Huaco (1970) has surveyed the whole series of exchanges, and the following is a summary of his article.

In 1945 Davis and Moore put forward their theory of stratification, in which they argued that there is a 'universal necessity which calls forth stratification in any social system'. On the one hand, they maintained, different positions have different degrees of functional importance for preserving society; on the other hand, the amount of talent and training available in the population is scarce. So the system attached greater rewards to the functionally more important positions in order to ensure that the individuals with greatest talent and training occupy these positions. In 1948 Davis added the modification that mobility of the more talented and trained individuals into the more highly rewarded positions is prevented partially by status ascription through the family.

In 1953 Tumin questioned the logical status of the notion of differential functional importance as being unmeasurable and intuitive. He also questioned the differential scarcity of personnel as an adequate determinant of stratification. He argued that in practice most stratification systems artificially restrict the development of whatever potential talent and skill may exist in the population. Davis replied, agreeing that stratification restricted talent and training, but maintaining that the 1948 version of his theory had met this objection by explaining ascription in terms of the role of the family. In a reply to Davis, Tumin further challenged the necessity of 'unequal rewards' by suggesting the feasibility of 'functional equivalents', for example, intrinsic job satisfaction and social ser vice may be adequate motivations 'for seeking one's appropriate position and fulfilling it conscientiously'.

In succeeding years a number of criticisms and rejoinders were made by various writers. Huaco attempts to sort out those portions of the Davis-Moore theory 'which have been destroyed by the critics from the more solid and promising fragments'. He believes that the postulate of differential functional importance is a fallacy, there being no evidence that different positions make different degrees of contribution to the preservation of society. Also, the assumption that societies whose stratification systems approach a pure achievement order have greater survival or endurance than most ascriptive societies is probably false. Nevertheless, three remaining parts of the theory seem

to Huaco to be valid: (1) unequal rewards attached to different positions are a cause of the mobility of individuals into certain positions, (2) the existence and operation of the institution of the family is a cause of status ascription, and (3) differential scarcity of qualified personnel is a cause of 'stratification' (unequal rewards attached to different positions).

Originally formulated as part of the structural-functional explanation of the nature of society, the Davis-Moore theory of stratification has thus effectively been modified to the point where its claims are restricted to the formulation of propositions about the effect of structural features of society on the attitudes and behaviour of its members. Social action theorists have not developed a theory of stratification, although it is not difficult to see the general lines that this would take. The division of society into strata is problematic. Strata in society or in industry do not exist 'out there' separately from actors' definitions of the situation. The existence of stratification in a society ultimately rests on a majority of its members legitimising the differences in authority attached to the various strata. In particular, the superordinate position of the higher stratum (order-givers, managers, leaders) is not possible without the consent of a majority of the lower stratum (order-takers, the managed, the led).

RECOMMENDED READING

Bottomore, T.B. (1965), *Classes in Modern Society* (London, George Allen & Unwin) Deals with sociological theories of class, class differences and the political and cultural significance of classes in industrial societies.

Goldthorpe, J.H. *et al.* (1969), *The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure* (Cambridge, CUP) Third in the 'affluent worker' series, in which the thesis of working-class *embourgeoisement* is tested and found wanting.

Huaco, G.A. (1970), 'The Functionalist Theory of Stratification', in M.M. Turner, *Readings on Social Stratification* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall) A critical examination of the Davis-Moore theory and subsequent developments during the heyday period of functionalism, 1945–63.

Tannenbaum, A.S. *et al.* (1974), *Hierarchy in Organizations* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass) An examination of hierarchy and participativeness based on an international comparison of organisations in five countries.

Wedderburn, D. and Craig, C. (1974), 'Relative Deprivation in Work', in Wedderburn, D. (ed.) (1974), op. cit. Reviews the data available about inequality at work and the significance of changes for aspects of social class.

Westergaard, J. and Resler, H. (1976), *Class in a Capitalist Society* (London, Heinemann) A study of class inequality: its nature and extent, conflicts and tensions arising, and prospects of change.

Chapter 6
Industry, the Community and the Polity

In this final chapter dealing with the relation between industry and other sub-systems of society we shall consider under the broad heading of 'the community and the polity' some of those aspects of society not covered in previous chapters. By 'the community' we mean a continuous geographical area in which mutually dependent groups act together to satisfy their needs through a common set of organisations and institutions (Anderson and Parker, 1964, p. 102). By 'the polity' we mean the sub-system of society oriented to the generation and allocation of power, the relation of the polity and government being conceived as approximately parallel to that of the economy and business.

INDUSTRY AND THE COMMUNITY

Industry influences the community

Industry, in the broad sense of technology, economic enterprises and persons associated with these, has pervasive effects on the communities it serves and from which it draws its resources. These effects may be considered under three heads: values, physical effects on the community, and purposive attempts of industrial interest groups to influence society.

Industry feeds into the community people whose behaviour and attitudes reflect their experiences at work. Weber showed that, in addition to technical possibilities and material conditions, the appropriate values were necessary to the development and maintenance of traditional capitalist society. Similarly, an appropriate set of basic values is necessary to the maintenance of modern capitalism. People generally must accept their position both in the industrial structure and in the wider social structure. Because production is dependent on consumption, they must also be persuaded to buy the goods and services that industry is capable of producing—industry has the function both of making the goods and encouraging the

demand for them (Galbraith, 1962, p. 122). This involves values at the 'macro'-level of society, but there are also more local and specific changes in

values brought about by changes in industry. For example, the effect on Oxford of the growth of the motor-car industry may be cited: its change to a high-wage town led to alterations in old-established ideas about the informal hierarchy of jobs among the wage-earners (Mogey, 1956, p. 5).

Industry has certain physical effects on the communities in which it operates. In various ways the community feels the effects of what is happening in industry. Where towns are heavily dependent on a single industry or firm, the fortunes of that industry or firm will determine whether the town prospers or declines. The establishment of new industries in an area will affect the total number and spatial distribution of workers. To take the South Wales industrial area as an example, new employment regions have taken over from the small, relatively independent mining and tinplate towns. These new regions tend to have new centres of employment, between which are areas of comparative industrial stagnation from which work forces for the new centres are drawn. Another and more sinister type of physical effect of industry on the community is the pollution that is occasionally caused by toxic materials being accidentally, even deliberately, released by industrial plants.

The purposive attempts of industrial interest groups to influence society may be seen in their efforts to make a favourable impression on public opinion. Advertising, in addition to its manifest function of promoting the products of the enterprise, has also the latent function of promoting the enterprise itself (in the case of 'prestige' advertising this function becomes a manifest one). Many large firms organise parties of visitors to tour their establishments. On the side of labour, the 'public relations' activities of trade unions are generally less in evidence, apart from the appearances of union leaders on television to put their case in disputes with employers. Unlike the majority of daily newspapers that tend to put the employers' or a 'national' point of view, union journals circulate mainly among union members.

Another and more theoretical way of looking at the mutual influences of industry and the community is to identify types of industry-community relations. Although there are separate economic interest groups within industry such as those of commerce, industry, agriculture, finance and organised labour, for some purposes most of these groups (excluding labour) may be regarded as one wider interest group that interacts with the community, itself a composite of various interests. Form and Miller (1960) have suggested that there are five types of relationship between this wide economic interest group and the community:

(1) *Business-dictated.* Employers dictate working hours without much concern for their effect on home life, and workers must accommodate their family life to industrial operations (this is likely in a one-industry town with a limited labour market or an industry-dominated town with weak or unorganised labour).

(2) *Business-dominated.* Similar to the above, but management negotiates certain conditions of work with the union, while retaining work rules and hours as a management prerogative (likely where management authority is strong, with a fairly strong union but some surplus labour).
(3) *Labour-mediated.* Unions attempt to share management's right to determine working hours, and there may be labour-management councils (strong labour union, industry dependent on local skilled labour).
(4) *Equilibrium.* Unions are strong, and so are other community influences, for example, civic associations, management decisions have to be considered in the light of their effect on the local community (highly integrated community).
(5) *Family-mediated.* Family values are dominant (family ownership of the enterprise, religious or co-operative communities).

These types of relationship between industry and community have been worked out in connection with American industrial and social conditions and need to be modified if applied to Britain. Thus the business-dictated pattern would be hard to find in Britain, except in the sense that certain types of workers are motivated by high pay or a sense of vocation to subordinate their family and leisure lives to the demands of work. The authors also suggest that there are four approaches to industry-community relations: (1) *structural functional,* involving social ramifications of industry into other sub-systems, (2) *compensation,* in which industry is seen as a source of sociability not possible in the local community, (3) the *welfare* approach to community affairs, industry taking part as a responsible partner, and (4) *power,* industry being the major source of power affecting the community.

The community influences industry

The above theoretical approaches to industry-community relations may be illustrated by examples of ways in which community norms and values exert influence on industrial structure and behaviour. We may concentrate on cases in which management has to adjust its practices to the social and cultural realities of communities in which it operates. (The substitution of 'management' for 'industry' represents a shift from system to action analysis. A parallel substitution would be 'community interest groups' for 'the community'.) The processes of adjustment between the needs and attitudes of workers and the behaviour that management requires of them are not easy to trace; the extent to which one side accommodates to the other is a function of the power relations between them. Adjustment on the side of industry (i.e. management) may be seen typically in the cases of minority groups of employees, of which juveniles, women and immigrant workers may be taken as examples.

As we saw in Chapter 3, there are various ways in which management accepts the fact that some juvenile workers need to complete their education by taking part in day-release, sandwich and other training courses. The community's idea of appropriate education takes precedence over at least some employers' aim of maximising profits by employing juvenile labour. In the case of women workers, many factory managers have found it necessary to make special arrangements concerning shifts and to accept 'controlled absenteeism' when the married women want time off to look after their domestic duties.

The employment of immigrant workers, particularly coloured workers, poses a different kind of problem for industry. The degree of integration of coloured workers into the labour force is part of the wider issue of the integration of coloured citizens into the community at large. Bonney (1975) has examined two contrasted theories of work values and behaviour in black lower-class lives. One theory—the 'single-value system'—holds that lower-class members share the dominant goals and values of the wider society but lack the resources and opportunities to succeed in attaining them. The other theory explains deviant patterns of behaviour in terms of commitment to deviant values and a supportive sub-culture.

In various ways the community feels the effect of events and changes that take place in industry and it sometimes seeks to exert influence on these. Labour-management relations are usually felt to be mainly the concern of employers, unions and the government, but when strikes or redundancies occur a wider public is interested because of the effect on the economic well-being of the community. At the national level the wages and salaries paid to employees and the prices charged to consumers have become of interest to those other than persons directly affected, as part of a wider concern with the problem of inflation. At the role-person level the social life of employees has a bearing upon industrial organisation, efficiency and morale. It is now a commonplace of industrial sociology that attitudes and behaviour in industry such as absenteeism, labour turnover, pressures for minimum or maximum effort cannot be explained by reference to conditions in industry alone, but are also dependent on norms, values, roles and expectations in non-industrial spheres.

INDUSTRY AND THE POLITY

Industry and political influence

Industry operates in a societal environment and has certain relations of power with that environment. Power is generated and exercised within industrial organisations and also outside these, the latter area being our chief concern here. The forms of influence that industry has in the political sphere may be divided

into two types: organised group, and dual-role individual. In seeking to influence central and local government policies, representatives of industrial interests may form themselves into organised pressure groups, while the personnel of industrial undertakings may also have part-time political roles through which to promote their economic interests.

Pressure groups are part of the modern political scene: they have been defined as organised groups possessing both formal structure and real common interests, in so far as they seek to influence the process of government (Stewart, 1958, p. 1). One of the major forms of pressure group is the economic, including employers, manufacturers and traders, on the one hand, and organised labour (trade unions and professional associations), on the other. Although in recent years the Labour Party has extended its appeal to groups on its political right and the Conservative Party its appeal to groups on its left, each has core support from the trade union movement in the one case and business interests in the other. These pressure groups operate through processes of consultation and advice. Some references to consultation appear in statutes but mostly it has little formal expression in the outward structure of government except by means of advisory committees. In addition, the general strategy of pressure groups in seeking to influence decision-making bodies is carried out through tactics of influencing public opinion by petition, advertising, public meetings, the activities of individual MPs and those of lobbyists.

The ability of members of industry (usually management members) to influence political policies by direct participation in government is an aspect of control by interlocking elites in industry and government. Retired ministers in Conservative governments often, and in Labour governments occasionally, take seats on the boards of top industrial companies and banks. The nationalised industries have provided many opportunities for top appointments of industrialists and trade union leaders. At the level of local government, it is significant that employers, managers and professional people are overrepresented four times on local councils in proportion to their numbers in the general population (Moss and Parker, 1967). It is not suggested that there is normally anything improper in combining the roles of businessman and councillor, although occasionally individuals are accused of taking advantage of their public office for personal gain.

Political and legal constraints on industry

Most of the relationships between industry and other sub-systems of society that we have considered in previous chapters and in the first part of this chapter have shown industry to have a greater effect on other sub-systems than vice-versa. In the case of the political-legal sphere this is not so. Although the *degree* of control of industry thought desirable has been hotly debated, there is today no

question that *some* controls are necessary to maintain economic and social stability and ensure some kind of reconciliation between economic and other social interests. Legal regulation of industry has been clearly established, but there is still controversy as to how far it should go.

The role of government (or more broadly of the state) in industry may be considered under a number of headings: as controller, regulator, promoter, entrepreneur and planner (Grove, 1962). The state has acquired economic functions in a haphazard and piecemeal fashion, so it is hardly surprising that these are exercised by many different bodies: central departments, local authorities, independent public boards, commissions and corporations, and even private boards that have been specially endowed with public powers. The ways in which direct government control of industry is exercised include budgetary policy, discriminatory taxation, hire-purchase controls, the control of public investment and of the distribution of industry.

In its role as regulator the state provides a framework for the orderly operation of business enterprise. It does this mainly by incorporation of companies, measures for the protection of the consumer and the investor, control of restrictive trading agreements and of wages and conditions of work. The state also sponsors and promotes the interests of industry in various ways. It promotes industrial and agricultural research, and is interested in improving industrial productivity and efficiency. Public ownership and regulation plays a part in industrial reorganisation, and there is regulated marketing of certain products through marketing boards. Other measures of direct support for trade include tariffs and other protection for domestic industries and the promotion of exports. The government is also interested in improving industrial relations and provides employment and training services and technical education.

In its role as entrepreneur the state directly participates in the economy in four ways: it is an important purchaser of goods and services for its own use; it is a large employer (about 1m. out of a working population of about 24m.); it exercises a considerable direct influence on other parts of the public services which it finances and supervises but does not manage; and it produces and trades on a limited scale for its own use. Finally, as planner the government extends its role as controller. The machinery for directing and guiding the economy has traditionally been highly decentralised but, irrespective of differences between the main political parties, the economic difficulties facing the country have led to a greater role for central government in planning industrial development and activity.

Industrial relations and the law

The piecemeal and somewhat reluctant intervention of the state in the affairs of industry is paralleled by a similar piecemeal and reluctant intervention of the law

in the field of industrial relations. As Wedderburn (1966, p. 13) remarks, the law tends to make its appearance only when things go radically wrong. The reasons for this must be sought in the forms in which collective bargaining between employers and unions has developed in Britain and in the history of trade unionism. Collective bargaining has been essentially voluntary and covered by very few decisions of the judges because it was rarely brought into any court.

In 1971, however, after an abortive attempt by the previous Labour government to introduce legislation, the Conservative government passed the Industrial Relations Act. Its chief provisions included the right given to workers to belong to a registered trade union, as well as not to belong to any kind of union; the holding of written collective agreements to be legally enforceable contracts unless they contained an express provision to the contrary; legal protection against unfair dismissal for employees with two or more years' service; and the definition of a number of 'unfair industrial practices' (mostly circumstances in which strikes are called or other industrial action taken).

In 1974 the Labour government repealed the 1971 Act, but subsequently reenacted some of its parts, notably the unfair dismissal provisions (Thomson and Engleman, 1975, p. 159). Apart from industrial relations, there are two main areas which fall within the province of labour law. These are (1) the employment relationship between worker and employer, governed by common law and by enactments such as the 1974 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act and the 1975 Employment Protection Act, and (2) the statutory control of certain conditions of employment, including the level of wages in 'wages council' industries where it is difficult to organise workers in unions, and safety and related conditions at work.

Occupation and political behaviour

It is possible to trace an association between type of occupation and political attitudes and behaviour, though the data are often in terms of social class or socio-economic group. About two-thirds of the working class usually vote Labour and 70–85 per cent of the middle class vote Conservative. Although Labour Party members are generally distributed occupationally in proportion to Labour voters, more Conservative Party members come from non-manual groups in proportion to Conservative voters (Blondel, 1963, p. 91). In both parties manual workers are not represented among the leaders in proportion to their numbers among the electors. An occupational analysis of the October 1974 Parliament showed that manual workers (about 50 per cent of the population) provided 23 per cent of Labour MPs and only 1 per cent of Conservative MPs (Butler and Kavanagh, 1975, p. 215). Professional employees were heavily overrepresented among MPs of both parties.

Studies of particular localities and occupational groups supplement the findings on a national scale. In Derby it was found that there was very little difference between the political participation of non-manual and skilled manual workers, but unskilled manual workers participated less often (Cauter and Downham, 1954), It is reasonable to suppose that greater autonomy and participation in work decisions predisposes a worker to greater interest in political matters. Also, particular occupations seem to be associated with political as well as industrial militancy, such as car-workers and dockers. Types of work that feature occupational communities with a shared ideology tend to be associated with left-wing attitudes and voting. Thus Cannon (1967) found that compositors, who earned above-average wages, tended more often to vote Labour than other members of the skilled working class.

A number of studies have investigated the effect of plant size and of knowing one's boss on a personal basis as factors influencing political attitudes and behaviour. Nordlinger (1967) found that, although larger factory size is related to Left voting, when plant size is controlled for, face-to-face contact between worker and employer is not *directly* related to Conservative voting. Ingham (1969) came to much the same conclusion from his inquiry among Bradford workers and offers a plausible explanation: 'Given a labour force whose community structure fosters left wing political values, increased worker-management interaction may, in fact, lead to an intensification of these values by virtue of the fact that the roles and activities of the "other side" or "them" become more visible.'

RECOMMENDED READING

Form, W.H. and Miller, D.C. (1960), *Industry, Labor and Community* (New York, Harper) Analyses the external relationships between business and labour interests and other community agencies.

Grove, J.W. (1962), *Government and Industry in Britain* (London, Longman) Discusses government activities deliberately intended to regulate or promote the working of the economy.

Harvey, E.B. (1975), *Industrial Society: Structures, Roles and Relations* (Homewood, Ill., Dorsey Press) Relates theories of industrialisation to industrial structures, roles and sub-cultures.

Miliband, R. (1969), *The State in Capitalist Society* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson) Examines patterns of economic power and the role of the state in the competition between different 'interests'.

Rimmer, M. (1972), *Race and Industrial Conflict* (London, Heinemann) A study in a group of Midlands factories of the problems of integrating immigrant workers.

Thomson, A.J.W. and Engleman, S.R. (1975), *The Industrial Relations Act* (London, Robertson) Traces the impact of the Act on changes in industrial relations and the effect of these changes on other institutions.

PART TWO

ORGANISATIONS AND ROLES

Chapter 7
Organisations

Organisations are a central part of modern industrial society and of the urban context and form the backcloth of contemporary human behaviour and choice. We are profoundly shaped as individuals by organisations, by the constraints they impose, the processes they develop, the interests they articulate, the goals they realise. In an individual sense organisations are part of everyday life; we are educated in one kind—the school, work in another -the firm or enterprise, and may have our leisure catered for by a variety of other types of organisation. It is clear that organisations impinge on almost every aspect of individual experience; they form a mesh and social fabric which we all share. Such sharing, however, is complex and diverse. Situations, relationships and interactions fuse and flow, penetrating a variety of groups and contexts. The objective in this chapter is to explore such complexity and diversity, particularly the ways in which sociology has conceptualised the patterning of that social reality we call organisations.

In the past decade there has been an explosion of research and discussion about organisations. Concern has been with how they relate both to society and the individual. Much attention, too, has been paid to understanding the organisation itself in attempting to describe and analyse its characteristics. The intention here is to reflect these developments. As with the rest of this book, the approach is consciously sociological, concern in this chapter being to understand organisations themselves rather than deal with macrosocietal issues or micro-individual issues. The conceptual and empirical material available for inclusion is still patchy. We still do not know, for example, much about gender in relation to organisations (Kanter, 1975) nor, on a comparative basis, about how organisations are shaped by the structural and attitudinal consequences of different economic systems. The conceptual framework suffers because of empirical gaps. The aims here are both theoretical and practical: theoretical in the sense of appraising different perspectives on organisations, practical in the sense of providing information for those who shape them and work in them and who need to understand and formulate strategies and policies.

Several basic questions guide the analysis and discussion: How far does the scope of organisations extend? What are their essential features? What

relationships exist between their external contexts and internal social, technological and political structures? How do features of organisations relate to the aspirations, attitudes and identities of the people connected with them?

THE STRUCTURALIST SYSTEM APPROACH

We have already noted that social organisation is a central characteristic of urban, industrial society. Some attempt must be made, however, to distinguish this general patterning of social structure from the more discrete and specific sense in which the concept of 'organisation' has been developed and used. Social organisation is the broader set of relationships and processes of which *organisations* are a part; thus social organisation exists at all levels of the social structure, organisations themselves forming the 'middle ground' between macro- and micro-perspectives. One way of tackling the subject is to refer to 'formal' or 'complex' organisations. Blau and Scott (1963) and Etzioni (1975) adopt this approach. Etzioni suggests that

> 'Organizations are social units (or human groupings) deliberately constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals. Corporations, armies, schools, hospitals, churches and prisons are included; tribes, classes, ethnic groups and families are excluded. Organizations are characterized by division of labour, power and communication responsibilities, divisions which are not randomly or traditionally patterned but deliberately planned.'

For Etzioni, such planning necessarily involves the existence of power centres and transfer of personnel. More recently, following Blau and Scott (1963), Hall (1977, p. 9) has proposed that 'an organization is a collectivity with a relatively identifiable boundary, a normative order, authority ranks, communication systems, and membership co-ordinating systems; this collectivity exists on a relatively continuous basis in an environment and engages in activities that are usually related to a goal or set of goals'.

From these two definitions one could conclude that organisations are planned, rational and goal-seeking entities. Such a conclusion does have problems, however. Much organisational life and interaction is not directly related to organisational goals; goals too may be multiple and boundaries indistinct. Even when the organisation is viewed as an 'open system' (Katz and Kahn, 1967), there is still doubt about the elements which comprise it and the empirical elements which make up the input-throughput-output processes. It would perhaps be better to accept Fox's argument that 'minimally the organization comprises systems of roles, of sanctions and communications' and that 'the

essence of the organization is regular, standardized and recurrent behaviour' (1971, pp. 28–30).

The view of organisations as systems, or more correctly the view that the construct of 'system' is adequate to encapsulate what organisations are and do, has been severely challenged. This challenge has arisen from two sources. First from writers who think that there is a great danger of neglecting the all-important reality of control, power and conflict in organisations. Salaman and Thompson (1973) choose this theme in a keynote introduction to *People and Organizations,* and do so for four reasons: (1), because the theme 'is central to sociological theory, to an examination and explanation of social structure and social action'; (2), because of its importance, from Weber onwards, 'to those who have studied organizations or theorized about them, as well as its central significance to those who are employed or treated by them'; (3), because it is important to consider 'not just those who work *for* organizations but those who are worked *on* by them… people who are exposed, as we all are, to actual organizational treatment and processes in their everyday lives…who are its customers, clients, inmates or victims'; (4), concern with organisational control and power 'stems from the paradoxical way in which society—or an organization—is both an objective and subjective reality' (Salaman and Thompson, 1973). The concern with organisations as power structures is an important corrective to regarding them as systems, with goals and needs in a happy equilibrium.

A second major challenge to the structuralist system approach arises from an interactionist perspective; are organisations real, or anything more than individuals who come together in interaction? The case is cogently argued thus:

> 'the systems approach tends to regard behaviour as a reflection of the characteristics of a social system containing a series of impersonal processes that are external to the actors and constrain them. In emphasizing that action derives from the meaning that people attach to their own and others' acts, the action frame of reference is constrained by the ways in which people socially construct their reality.' (Silverman, 1970, p. 141)

The importance of such an interactionist framework is undoubted, since 'to relate one structural variable to another, for example organizational form and economic environment, may fail to take account of the orientations of the people involved and the meanings they attach to efficiency, economy and so on…to pay insufficient attention to these can involve the sociologist in empty determinism' (Silverman, 1970, p. 135). Not only can the kind of distortion which Silverman suggests occur, but there may also be a tendency to ignore behaviour itself, or what organisation members do. The day by day work that is done…gets scant attention', while 'there is a great deal of attention paid to the ways in which members are controlled, and to the nature of the inter-relationships between

elements of organizational structure' (Esland *et* al., 1975, p. 27). What people do, or how they behave within organisations, is part of that interaction process without which the definition of organisations as control structures or open systems would be senseless. As Hall points out, however: 'to claim that behaviour in organizations is organizationally based, rather than individually or interactionally, it is not intended to mean that *all* behaviour in organizations is so *determined'* (1977, p. 12). The extreme claims of different sociological perspectives are giving way to a recognition that what is important is their adequacy in explaining the ways in which people are processed by organisations (McKinlay, 1975) and in a reciprocal relationship influence those same organisations.

MODELS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Sociology is not the only social science interested in organisations. There are different disciplines each with their models. Pugh (1971) has identified six particular models, and since the rest of this chapter examines the contemporary status and contribution of some of these, it would seem useful to outline them here, albeit briefly:

(1) *Economic theory* takes as the organisational model the firm. The firm is regarded as acting rationally in pursuit of its goal —maximum profit or minimum loss. Simulation models are developed, building on the model of the firm and its part in the economic process. Man is viewed as a consumer of wants, motivated by rational and calculative ends.
(2) *Technology theorists* are a second group and claim that technology is a major variable which conditions both the environment of the organisation and its internal structure. The work by Woodward (1970), Thompson (1967), Perrow (1970), and Trist (1963) is of this kind. Since technology is a critical variable in work organisations, some of these theorists are exam ined in more detail later in this and the following chapters.
(3) *Individual theorists* focus on the attitudes, personality attributes and experiences of the individual within organisations. Maslow (1954) and Herzberg (1966) fall within this category with their analysis of work satisfaction, hierarchy of needs and motivation to self-growth. So also does the analysis by Argyris (1964) with his thesis that 'self-actualization' is only possible in the 'axiologically good organization'. The classic analysis by March and Simon (1958) comes within this framework, emphasising the individual. They claim that organisations can be defined and examined through the decision-making processes of individuals, despite such decisions being constrained by hierarchical and task differentiation.

(4) *Group theorists* derive from Elton Mayo and the Hawthorne studies. The importance of group norms and leadership patterns is emphasised and the claim is made that organisational constraints and individual orientations and experiences can be adequately understood only if group life is taken into account.
(5) A fifth model of the organisation has been developed by *structural theorists*. Weber's famous (or infamous!) model of bureaucracy (in Gerth and Mills, 1948) is the classic here and has led to numerous empirical studies and theoretical critiques. The central claim is that organisations can be defined in terms of regularities of hierarchical authority, task allocation and functional co-ordination. The work by Burns and Stalker (1961), in which the influences upon, and problems with, mechanistic and organismic structures are discussed, and the work by Pugh (1968) are in this structuralist tradition.
(6) The final category is that of *management theorists,* exemplified in the writings of Fayol (1949) and Urwick (1956). The concern of such theorists is with maximum productivity. The acceptance of hierarchical authority as 'normal', the treatment of people as machines, and the propagation of common-sense maxims as scientific statements, have all been attributed to such theorists.

How organisations relate to their external environment, how they are structured, and the effects they have on their members are disputed issues, not just within sociology but the social sciences generally. Organisational reality, like social reality, is multiple. The problem is how to get past the definitional starting-line. One answer is that of the pragmatist; identify the problem (for example, lack of fulfilment in work or the representativeness of trade unions), apply your models and see which one explains most. Another solution is to try to identify which elements of the organisation are 'essential', that is, develop a typology. When faced with the complexity and diversity of organisational life, scholars have most often resorted to this strategy. So much so that, as Burns observes, 'the history of sociology…is littered with the debris of ruined typologies that only serve as a battle-ground for that academic street-fighting that so often passes for theoretical discussion' (1967, p. 121). Typologies come in all shapes and sizes; of particular concern are those which have had either most theoretical impact or have proved useful in research and analysis.

One such typology involves classification of organisations in terms of *goals*. Talcott Parsons (1960) has developed a typology suggesting that there are four types of organisations depending upon their contribution to society: (1) production organisations meet the adaptive needs of the societal system; (2) political goals are pursued by the second type of organisation, i.e. the polity, and meet the goal-attainment needs of the system; (3) integrative organisations are those which shape, motivate and reduce conflict; (4) pattern-maintenance

organisations are those which are concerned with educational and cultural activities. Several writers have opted for a similar schema, in particular Katz and Kahn (1966), even though their focus is on open systems. Classification of organisations by 'goals' poses severe conceptual and empirical problems, not least the ambiguity of the concept, the multiplicity of 'goals', the inadequate differentiation of organisational structure and the processes they contain.

A second basis of classification has been to establish a single criterion by which all organisations can be judged. Etzioni (1975) and Blau and Scott (1963) notably have made such an attempt. Etzioni stresses the *compliance* relationship between the organisation and its members. Compliance is the relationship between the authority, or power-means, which organisations use, and the members' involvement patterns. Coercive means are said to produce alienative involvement, e.g. prison; remunerative means relate to calculative involvement, e.g. the firm or business enterprise; normative means are related to moral involvement, e.g. voluntary organisations. The main thesis is that there will be a tendency towards congruency between the type of authority (relational variable) and the lower participants' orientation (psychological variable) because of internal and external pressures upon the organisation to be effective.

As Burns (1967) has pointed out, there are some major problems with the Etzioni typology. If there is such a tendency towards congruency, how is it that organisations have become incongruent to begin with? What happened to the environment of the organisation? For whom and what are organisations supposed to be effective? It is also questionable to what degree individuals permit the pressures towards compliance to affect how they view themselves and their roles; and the precise way in which other factors, particularly size and technology, influence the relationship.

Blau and Scott (1963) use as a main principle of differentiation that of 'who benefits?' They propose that the segment of society which consumes the output of the organisation can be used to distinguish different types, the nature of members' participation and the main problems. Thus mutual-benefit organisations are those in which the members themselves are the main beneficiaries. The business concern is the second type, with the owners benefiting. The service organisation is the third type and benefits mainly the clients. The final type is the commonweal organisation, in which the public is the major beneficiary.

Burns suggests that this approach by Blau and Scott raises important problems. Often in relation to the firm, those who benefit do so at the discretion of the controllers, i.e. the managers. Also, the notion of 'prime beneficiary' presumes a stable and coherent group which benefits. The reality is much more fractured and permeated by power-conflict.

The general conclusion in relation to both Etzioni and Blau and Scott is that organisations are too complex to be classified simply in terms of a single

criterion or dimension. An adequate classification would have to take into account 'the array of external conditions, the total spectrum of actions and interactions within an organisation, and the outcome of organisational behaviour' (Hall, 1977, p. 41). One way of moving towards this has been the development of an empirical taxonomy of organisations. This has been attempted using characteristics derived from a critical appraisal of the Etzioni and Blau and Scott schemas (Hall, 1967). But the results still suffer from a central weakness, namely, that the variables selected, such as complexity, specificity, formalisation, may not be the important ones or the only ones which can be used to examine and explain organisational reality.

Technology has for long been regarded as an important variable in relation to work organisations, but recently Perrow (1970) has made out a strong case for regarding it as an independent variable exercising a central influence over all organisational structures. Technology, he suggests, is related directly to the material processed by an organisation and the kinds of search processes used to deal with exceptional cases. The nature of the 'raw material' varies:

> 'it may be…a living being, human or otherwise, a symbol or an inanimate object. People are raw materials in people changing or people processing organizations; symbols are materials in banks, advertising agencies and some research organizations; the inter actions of people are raw materials to be manipulated by administrators in organizations…and so on'. (p. 195)

Organisations that have people and symbols as their raw material have more inconsistencies and exceptions to cope with than those where the material is less variable. The differences in material are related to differences in search processes and thus the task and social structure of the organisation. The poly-centred structure tends to emerge in organisations with non-routine tasks, while its opposite, the formal centralised structure is related to technologies where tasks are routine.

The formulations by Perrow and the attempt to develop a comparative typology using technology as a key variable have been criticised by Argyris (1972). He argues that no attempt is made by Perrow to study the impact of variables other than technology, for example, administrative controls and leadership styles; that 'the basic idea of an appropriate fit between technology, organizational structure and administrative action is a static concept', and further:

> 'since individuals' perceptions are not considered in the generalizations, the theory makes predictions which may not be true. For example, the theory would predict significantly different behaviour and attitudes on the part of workers on an assembly line and students in universities. Yet a theory which includes a psycho-perceptual view could predict the

> similarities, for example, the routineness of life, the constraints of unilateral authority, the pressure to produce.'

Finally, Argyris points out that 'there is no apparent way of generating insights about new organizational forms that depend largely or partially on the properties of individuals or groups' (1972, p. 44).

Thus far some attempt has been made to examine a number of classificatory schemes which adopt one variable as the basic dimension to describe organisational structures and processes. To a large extent these are all unsatisfactory; they fail to encompass the complexity and diversity of organisational life. One illustration of this inadequacy is a growing recognition of the diverse environments within which organisations operate, including political, economic, legal, demographic and technological variations, As Child has pointed out, the argument from environment emphasises variability, complexity and illiberality (1972, p. 2). Lawrence and Lorsch found 'an important relationship among external variables (the certainty and diversity of the environment…), internal states of differentiation and integration, and the process of conflict resolution' (1967, p. 157). Pugh and others, in a major empirical investigation found that a number of contextual variables were strongly linked to the ways in which organisations were structured internally. The internal patterning of activity, authority and work-flow was related to organisation size, technology and interdependence.

Organisations do exist in different contexts subject to different pressures and influences. Child has recently observed that

> 'at the present time some of the most influential models of organization explicate little more than positively established associations between dimensions of organizational structure and contextual (i.e. situational) factors such as environment, technology or scale of operation. These models proceed to the simplest theoretical solution which is that contextual factors determine structural variables because of certain, primarily economic, constraints the former are assumed to impose.' (1972, p. 1)

The importance of Child's argument is to draw attention to the holders of power, the 'dominant coalition', mediating between contextual variables and structural patterns. Thus

> 'it [the notion of dominant coalition] provides a useful antidote to the sociologically unsatisfactory notion that a given organizational structure can be understood in relation to the functional imperative of system needs which somehow transcend the objectives of any group of organization members'. (1972, p. 17)

CONCLUSION

This has been a rather brief skirmish with some of the defining characteristics of organisations and various attempts to analyse them. Many issues have been neglected. It is clear, for example, that much more needs to be said about the link between organisations and different kinds of social structures. Different social structures have different cultural, political and economic antecedents which may well modify any universalistic trends, as Child argues in Chapter 15 in relation to the convergence thesis. Also absent from the discussion is an assessment of the impact *on* the organisation *of* the individual. Organisational structures are, to some extent, the products of human interaction. Although attitudes and behaviour may be shaped by such factors as technology, authority, role definitions and communication networks, interpersonal influences and face-to-face interaction are probably more important than some sociologists would accept.

Much of the dynamic of organisational life is lost if too much stress is placed on analysing either individual attributes or organisational ones. Argyris (1973), in developing a stinging attack upon sociology, points out that it is misleading to claim that organisa tions can be studied as wholes if critical parts are ignored—such as individual behaviour, small group behaviour or intergroup behaviour. He suggests that a focus on *behaviour* would make it less easy to divide the world into sociology and psychology, with its trench-warfare. Sociology, he argues, is operating with a static correlational mode and a mechanistic model of man: 'Man is not conceptualized as proactive but passive with little influence on the organization.' Since he is attacking Lockwood and Goldthorpe, Blau and Schutz, among others, perhaps sociologists should take note.

The remaining chapters in Part Two of this book emphasise the importance of adopting a perspective on work organisations which explores the interaction between structural, attitudinal and behavioural variables, which recognises the significance of power in relation to group-formation and behaviour and structural change, and the nature and consequences of technology in work organisations.

RECOMMENDED READING

Benson, J.K., ed. (1978), *Organization Analysis* (New York, Sage) A useful case-study approach to the relevance of organisational models in understanding how organisations work.

Bradley, D. and Wilkie, R. (1974), *The Concept of Organization* (Glasgow, Mackie) An introduction to the study of organisations. covering contexts, goals, structure, people and morality.

Etzioni, A. (1975), *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations,* 2nd edn (New York, Free Press) An important theoretical analysis of types of compliance in organisations and their correlatives.

Hall, R. (1978), *Organizations: Structure and Process* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall) A comparative assessment and useful source book for students of organisational analysis.

McKinlay, J.B., ed. (1975), *Processing People: Cases in Organizational Behaviour* (London, Holt, Rinehart) A symposium of original papers on a range of organisations which shape important areas of social life.

Mouzelis, N.P. (1975), *Organization and Bureaucracy,* 2nd edn (London, Routledge) Deals with classical studies of bureaucracy, the managerial tradition and converging trends in organisational theory.

Salaman, G. (1979), *Work Organisation* (London, Longman) An attempt to apply theoretical models to case-study analysis of work organisations.

Salaman, G. and Thompson, K., eds (1980), *Control and Ideology in Organisations* (Milton Keynes, Open University Press) A collection of papers probing the importance of ideology and values in shaping organisational decision-making and practice.

Silverman, D. (1970), *The Theory of Organisations* (London, Heinemann) Analyses alternative approaches to the study of organisations, chiefly systems and social action theories.

Chapter 8
Approaches to Workplace Behaviour

In this chapter we shall review the more influential and important approaches to the analysis of workplace behaviour and shopfloor social relations in industry. As a result of empirical research and theoretical analysis the rather simplistic assumptions which characterised earlier approaches have been called into question, and explanations of workplace situations have tended to become increasingly complex.

EARLY APPROACHES TO HUMAN BEHAVIOUR AT WORK

Explicitly sociological approaches to workplace behaviour can be regarded as dating from the investigations at the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company in Chicago between 1927 and 1932, which became the basis for the Human Relations 'movement'. A proper understanding of their contribution and significance, however, demands that some attention be given to earlier analyses of human behaviour at work. The three most influential of such approaches were perhaps those of classical economics, Scientific Management and early industrial physiology and psychology (Friedmann, 1955; Rose, 1975).

The assumptions economists made about the behaviour of individuals, as entrepreneurs or workers, were oversimplified and made notorious by Elton Mayo, the 'father' of the Human Relations movement, in his attack on the 'Rabble Hypothesis': 'Natural society consists of a horde of unorganised individuals; every individual acts in a manner calculated to secure his own self-preservation and self-interest; every individual thinks logically and to the best of his ability, in the service of this aim' (1949, p. 37).

This sort of approach to human motivation and behaviour was also accepted by many others including the proponents of Scientific Management, whose work it underlay. F.W.Taylor and his associates attempted to apply scientific methods to industrial work. Their approach included the assumptions that men could be related to their work rather as machines to be made as efficient as possible; that, properly used, incentives would evoke more, and more efficient, work by the

employee; and that the financial rewards from the increases in efficiency which would result from the use of Scientific Management could be used to increase the income of both managers and workers and thus secure the harmonious co-operation of both groups.

These ideas aroused a great deal of controversy and opposition even at the time. One important source of such criticism was the research of industrial physiologists and psychologists regarding the effects of cumulative fatigue and the variations in abilities between workers. Such research directed attention to environmental conditions—heating, lighting, colour, hours of work and rest pauses -and to their effects on workers' behaviour; it stressed the importance of the 'human factor'; and it became concerned with the problem of 'monotony', an inherently subjective notion (Rose, 1975, pp. 65–100).

THE HAWTHORNE EXPERIMENTS

The Human Relations movement arose as a reaction against all these approaches with their individualistic and over-rational emphases, and their tendencies to explain workers' behaviour as a response to their environment defined largely in material terms. The Hawthorne experiments developed out of research on lighting in the earlier tradition, the investigators being forced to take social factors increasingly into account to explain their results. The three main stages were a study of a small group of women workers in the relay-assembly test room, attempting unsuccessfully to relate output to hours of work and rest pauses; an extensive interviewing programme using increasingly non-directive methods; and observation of a group of men in the bank-wiring observation room for a period of six months, revealing complex 'informal' organisation and group control over levels of output and other forms of behaviour (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939; Landsberger, 1958).

The historical importance of these studies is undoubted. It could be claimed as a result of the experiments that the earlier approaches were shown to be inadequate in that neither physical working conditions nor monetary incentives had a direct and independent effect on output and behaviour (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939, pp. 160–1). The worker could no longer be regarded as a socially isolated individual who acted rationally and independently of his fellows to maximise his income. The existence of 'informal' organisation was 'discovered', and group influences on workers' behaviour and output were observed in great detail, though the varying nature of such influences was less clearly accounted for. In addition, the study outlined the beginnings of a model of the factory as a social system, and of the worker as 'social man'.

The Hawthorne experiments have probably been more often discussed than any other piece of research in industrial sociology. Landsberger (1958) has argued that much of the relevant literature can best be regarded as criticism of

the use made of the research results, the ways in which they have been popularised, and the general approach and philosophy of the Human Relations 'school', rather than as criticism of the experiments themselves. It is true that some of the methods used appear unsophisticated in comparison with subsequent developments in this field, and in particular studies of single specially selected small groups were relied upon as the basis for far-reaching generalisations. Many of the observations and results are capable of alternative interpretations to those given by the investigators (see, for example, Carey, 1967; Blumberg, 1968; Cubbon, 1969). Nevertheless, the studies performed the important functions of showing that certain basic assumptions were inadequate and of directing subsequent research to a number of hitherto neglected factors.

RESEARCH ON HUMAN RELATIONS IN INDUSTRY

The main themes of much of the research in the Human Relations tradition originated in problems raised by the Hawthorne experiments, though perspectives from other sources have also been incorporated and the themes themselves have been developed in quite varied ways. One important direction of research was the study of the structure and functioning of small groups in industry, and of the whole organisation, developing an analytical framework for this purpose around the concept of 'interaction' (Homans, 1951; Whyte, 1951, 1955, 1969). Another direction involved the exploration of industry-community links (Warner and Low, 1947). The most central, however, was probably the investigation in experimental and quasi-experimental studies of the relationship between certain key factors—styles of leadership and group participation in decision-making as 'independent', and productivity and morale as 'dependent' variables. Such an emphasis was strengthened by the work of Lewin and others experimenting with 'authoritarian', 'laissez-faire' and 'democratic' styles of leadership in small groups, in which the most satisfied groups were those with democratic leadership (e.g. White and Lippitt, 1953).

A well-known and typical example of such studies is the experiment in a clothing factory in which Coch and French (1948) found that groups allowed to participate in planning changes of work showed less resistance to the change, higher levels of output achieved more quickly after the change, and less dissatisfaction than groups which had not been allowed to participate in this way. Some further research, however, was less conclusive; indeed a replication of the Coch and French experiment in a Norwegian factory did not produce significant differences in production (French *et al.,* 1960). The inadequacy of a narrowly based social-psychological framework for inquiry became increasingly apparent, and more recently both critics and proponents of this type of research have stressed the need to consider explicitly the broader organisational and social setting (Wilensky, 1957; Schein, 1965).

THE INFLUENCE OF ELTON MAYO

The Hawthorne experiments themselves were first popularised by Elton Mayo and his interpretation of their significance and that of a small number of other studies of working groups has had a very wide influence (Mayo, 1933, 1949; Smith, 1974). Mayo was alarmed by the social disorganisation and conflict which he saw as deriving from the breakdown of the 'established' society of the pre-industrial period. Man's scientific and technical discoveries had led to the break-up of this established society but his knowledge of social processes was inadequate for the creation of an 'adaptive' society. Mayo saw the solution to the problem of *anomie* in the modern world in the development of social skills, particularly by managers and administrators, and the maintenance by them of the 'spontaneous co-operation' in industry which the Hawthorne experiments and other research had shown was possible. Within industrial organisations in cohesive small work groups men could find the sense of belonging and the social purpose which they had lost. He saw conflict as pathological: it could and must be resolved by developing a sense of shared purpose within industrial organisations and the realisation that social satisfactions as well as material rewards were of importance to the worker.

These ideas have not only provided an underlying philosophy for much research in industry; they have also influenced managerial practice and, perhaps even more, managerial ideologies (Bendix, 1974; Baritz, 1960; Child, 1969b). In Britain and the United States especially much Human Relations training has been undertaken, particularly of supervisors, though experimental and other studies have generally failed to demonstrate that such training achieves the desired results (Harris and Fleishmann, 1955; Goldthorpe, 1961). The limitations of training based on Human Relations, and the ambiguity of many of the results of research designed to test Human Relations propositions, have added to the growing body of criticism of this tradition of investigation.

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS TRADITION

Human Relations, narrowly conceived as merely the Hawthorne experiments or the work of Mayo, or so all-embracing that it includes almost everybody who ever mentions 'human relations in industry', has been subjected to recurrent barrages of criticism over the last thirty years. Not all points of criticism are equally applicable, or indeed applicable at all, to all the investigations within this tradition, but it is possible to try and summarise them and to see why more recent analyses of workplace behaviour have emphasised other considerations.

The most obvious target for criticism has been Mayo's sweeping analysis of the problems of industrial societies. This has been attacked as involving a

misinterpretation of the nature of preindustrial society, and as seeing only one of the many possible solutions to the problems of the present (Sheppard, 1954; Kerr and Fisher, 1957). Many of the factory workers studied by Mayo and his colleagues were first- or second-generation immigrants living in rapidly growing and changing urban areas, and their *anomie* cannot be seen as a necessarily permanent feature of industrial societies. Further, Mayo ignored the possibilities of building social integration through associations such as churches, community groups and trade unions rather than the factory work group.

Much writing in the Human Relations tradition is not concerned with such problems, but nevertheless suffers from limitations which are not unconnected with the weakness of the Mayo perspective. The most central of these limitations is in the analysis of the causes and nature of industrial conflict. The emphasis on interpersonal relations and on the social satisfactions to be gained from membership of a cohesive work group has distracted attention from the question of economic rewards, from the conflict of interests over the distribution of the income of the enterprise as wages or profits, and the power differential between management and workers. Mayo's concern for harmony in the wider society has been paralleled by a concern with co-operation and equilibrium within the factory, and a failure, on the whole, to see the functions of conflict and its inescapability in a 'free' society (Bendix and Fisher, 1969; Friedmann, 1949).

Many of the other criticisms which can be made are related to this fundamental one. Thus, with some exceptions, trade unions and industrial relations have been largely ignored in Human Relations research. Unions did not exist in the Hawthorne works in 1927— though the company may have spent considerable sums to prevent their organisation (Landsberger, 1958, pp. 51–2)—but subsequent research cannot always make that claim. They have been difficult to accommodate within the Human Relations approach, and there has been no clear examination or understanding of their 'origin, functions or essential nature'. Similarly, analysis of industrial relations has tended to remain within the plant, or even be limited to face-to-face relations. It is difficult to explain within a Human Relations frame of reference why certain industries should have consistently high and others consistently low strike records (Kerr and Siegel, 1954).

A further and often justified criticism of Human Relations research is that it 'stops at the plant gates'. Much of the research, most notably that in the social-psychological tradition, has considered work groups and worker-supervisor relations in isolation from the wider organisational and social setting. Even where the organisational setting has been seen to be important, there has rarely been recognition of the economic and social forces outside the plant which constrain management and workers' behaviour within it. For example, the influence of the Depression on the Hawthorne Experiments was noted but neither at the time, nor later, were the implications for the understanding of organisational behaviour fully worked out.

These limitations of the Human Relations approach have been ascribed to failure by the investigators to recognise and make explicit their own value-orientations, their preferences for collaboration and stability in society rather than conflict and change (Bendix and Fisher, 1969; Koivisto, 1953). Furthermore this bias is linked to an acceptance of management's definition of the goals of the enterprise; the divergent and conflicting values of groups in industrial societies have not been recognised (Moore, 1947). This is related to both the choice of problems for research and the implications of research for managerial practice. Despite its contribution to social scientific knowledge and understanding, much of the research (intentionally or not) has served to increase management's control over workers, because of the value-orientations of the researchers. The most notorious example of this is perhaps the personnel counselling programme at the Hawthorne works, which was introduced in the light of the success—as a means of releasing tension—of the non-directive interviewing during the experiments, and which, according to Wilensky and Wilensky (1951) 'has helped the company retain its control over the worker'.

The limitations of the Human Relations approach can also be related to basic theoretical and methodological weaknesses. Much of the research has been empirical, with few theoretical developments and limited use of the theories and concepts of others. In particular, levels of analysis and explanation have not been clearly distinguished. Human Relations studies have been particularly concerned with interpersonal relations in small groups. The enterprise has been conceptualised, and in a limited way analysed, as a social system, but on the whole the organisational and institutional levels of analysis have been neglected. Yet an adequate explanation of behaviour in work groups demands an awareness of the influence of organisational and institutional factors; otherwise particular findings will be generalised without regard to context.

LATER 'HUMAN RELATIONS' APPROACHED

In recent years research in this tradition has taken rather different directions, so that those involved have been labelled as exponents of 'neo-human relations' (Goldthorpe *et al.,* 1968, p. 178). The new developments have been the result of both attempts to take account of the criticisms outlined above and the assimilation of ideas from other sources (see Vroom and Deci, 1970).

The Hawthorne experiments were taken to provide evidence of the need to think in terms of 'social man'. Awareness of the nature of man's 'needs' has led to discussion of 'self-actualising man' or 'complex man' rather than 'social man' (Schein, 1965). It has been suggested that needs can be classified in a hierarchy ranging from simple needs for survival, safety and security to self-actualisation needs in the sense of a man making optimum use of all his resources; and that meeting such needs to provide job satisfaction may involve both good 'hygiene'

(removing factors like poor working conditions which lead to dissatisfaction) and providing motivating factors (e.g. recognition and achievement which fulfil the needs for esteem and self-actualisation) (Maslow, 1954; Herzberg *et al.,* 1959; see also Wall and Stephenson, 1970). The awareness that they were unable to meet these 'needs' has led to the advocacy of alternative managerial philosophies and forms of organisation (Argyris, 1957; McGregor, 1960).

This work by organisational psychologists is undoubtedly considerably more sophisticated, theoretically and methodologically, than many of the pioneering efforts in the Human Relations tradition. Thus there is a strong awareness of the psychologically 'alienating' nature of many jobs in modern large-scale organisations, due to the nature of their technology, division of labour and social organisation. Two main points of criticism, however, can still be made. In the first place, the concept of the enterprise remains basically a unitary one in which the inherent conflicts of interest of employer and employee are not fully acknowledged, so that it is assumed that it should be possible to satisfy all employees' 'needs' without loss of organisational effectiveness, or indeed that the former is a necessary condition of the latter. Secondly, one cannot proceed from a general specification of individual human needs to the wants and expectations of particular individuals: 'wants and expectations are culturally determined *variables,* not psychological constants' (Goldthorpe *et al.,* 1968, pp. 178–9).

THE 'TECHNOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS' APPROACH

One aspect of industrial organisations which was noted but largely neglected in the Human Relations tradition was the nature of the technology, or the production system, of the factory or workplace. The influence of technology as a constraint, or even a determinant, of social relations and behaviour in industry has been explored by researchers who have been labelled as using a 'technological implications' approach. Concern for the social consequences of the material means of production has, of course, a long and important history in social science (Marx and Engels, 1958; Durkheim, 1933, Book 3); the use of a 'technological implications' approach, however, involved making detailed distinctions between types of production system within modern industry. Various attempts have been made to distinguish such types and to identify the social characteristics which appear to be associated with each of them. Such attempts were confined initially to manufacturing industry, and independently produced remarkably similar conclusions; in the last few years the same approach has been extended to other sorts of organisations, and has also been subject to increasing criticism.

Woodward (1958, 1965) was primarily concerned to explain the structure of management organisation in a large sample of firms. To do this she found it

useful to distinguish between unit and small-batch production, large-batch and mass production, and process production. Her scheme was based on differences in technical complexity and the degree to which it was possible to exercise control over manufacturing operations and to reduce areas of uncertainty. Like others she pointed out that these types form stages in the chronological development of industry towards increasing standardisation of products and increasing mechanisation. However, this was not to be taken to mean that the development is in any sense inevitable or unilinear, so that a firm using process production methods is necessarily 'progressive'; the appropriate production system depends on the objectives of the enterprise.

A French sociologist, Touraine (1962), also distinguished three main stages in the development of technology and saw them as arising from the interaction of two contrasting processes. On the one hand, there is the disintegration of the worker's skills; the work previously performed by one man is broken down into its component parts. On the other hand, such a process makes possible the mechanisation of these tasks and the development of an integrated production process which is in a sense automatic.

Blauner (1964) appeared to differ from the other two in distinguishing four main types of technology; this arose from his division of large-batch/mass-production into 'machine-minding' industries, such as textiles, and 'assembly-line' industries, such as the automobile industry.

Each of the authors emphasised certain reservations. Thus, though most industrial enterprises can be typified as having one or another type of technology, not all tasks in the organisation will be similar to those typical of that type of production process (e.g. maintenance work in all types of industry involves craft skills) and some organisations may be difficult to categorise. None of the writers has suggested that social relations are technologically determined; rather technology sets limits within which, for example, management policies operate, and there is scope for different allocations of the tasks to be done. The scope for choice may itself vary with technology, being greatest perhaps in mass-production situations. The economic structure of the industry may also lead to important differences, as may the character and expectations of the labour force.

Though these reservations appear to weaken the explanatory value of the 'technological implications' approach, its proponents have claimed that the two extremes of the technological scale are in many respects more similar to each other than to large-batch and mass-production systems. Thus, the meaninglessness of the worker's tasks and his powerlessness were seen as greatest on the assembly-line. Influences on social relations on the shopfloor are complex and varied, but here too it was argued that there are similarities between the two ends of the scale. In 'craft' industries workers may not be functionally interdependent but may share common craft identity and membership of an occupational community with some or all of their fellow employees. Because of

a certain freedom of movement on the job they also have opportunity for the growth of social relations with other workers. At the other end of the scale process technology commonly demands teamwork from small internally structured work groups which can be a source of social satisfaction and make for a highly cohesive organisation. 'Machine-minding' and 'assembly-line' technologies, in contrast, tend to tie the worker physically to the machine or place on the line and yet also leave him without membership of a clearly defined work group.

With respect to management-worker relations too it has been suggested that large-batch/mass-production systems give rise to more intense conflict than the two ends of the scale due to the differing nature of the situational demands of the production processes. It is in these situations that the pressures on the worker to maximise output tend to be greatest. With less standardised products, less complex technology, and more highly skilled workers it may be accepted that workers are unlikely to work well 'with a gun at their backs'; and with process production there is generally less pressure and the plant itself can contribute 'a framework of dis cipline and control', which may be less resented than authority exercised by a superior (Woodward, 1958, p. 29).

The apparent importance of technology as an explanatory variable and the rather general nature of these typologies led to a number of alternative attempts to categorise industrial situations in similar terms (see Perrow, 1970; Hickson *et al.,* 1969). Whatever the conceptualisation of technology, however, this approach to the explanation of social relations implies basically that technology determines, or narrowly constrains, the role structure of the organisation which in turn determines or constrains social relations, attitudes and behaviour. This set of assumptions has been questioned in a variety of ways. In their more recent work, for example, Woodward and her colleagues have argued that in differentiating types of batch-production firms the most important variable is the degree of uncertainty they have to cope with, and this is dependent on both technology and the control system of the organisation (Woodward, 1970; see also Davies *et al.,* 1973). In a large-scale comparative study of work organisations, Hickson and his colleagues (1969) found no evidence to support the hypothesis that 'operations technology' is of primary importance in determining structure; size was much more important.

SOCIO-TECHNICAL SYSTEMS AND ORGANISATIONAL CHOICE

Probably the most theoretically sophisticated discussion of the importance of technology is to be found in the development by members of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations of the concept of 'socio-technical systems' as a framework for research:

> The concept of socio-technical system arose from the consideration that any production system requires both a technological organization—equipment and process layout—and a work organization relating to each other those who carry out the necessary tasks. The technological demands place limits on the type of work organization possible, but a work organization has social and psychological properties of its own that are independent of technology…A socio-technical system must also satisfy the financial conditions of the industry of which it is a part…It has in fact s ocial, technological and economic dimensions, all of which are interdependent but all of which have independent values of their own.' (Trist *et al.,* 1963; see also Emery and Trist, 1969)

A socio-technical system is regarded as an 'open' rather than a 'closed' system: it is related to its environment by exchange processes and is able to achieve a 'steady state' from differing initial conditions and in different ways.

The socio-technical systems concept provided the framework for studies of coal-mining in Britain and the cotton industry in India, both of which supported the assertion that in a given technological situation there is a degree of 'organisational choice'; that is, the grouping of tasks into roles and the social relations between role-occupants could be varied quite considerably (Trist *et al.,* 1963; Rice, 1958, 1963; see also Brown, 1967). The choice made by management was seen as being dependent on certain assumptions as to what would prove most efficient. In place of management's conventional production-engineering assumptions—high degree of task specialisation, regard workers as isolated individuals, separate planning, co-ordinating and control functions from the work group the researchers advocated the deliberate creation of work groups consisting of workers able to perform several tasks, and the restoring to these groups of a measure of 'responsible autonomy' so that they could regulate and co-ordinate their own activities, their pay being related to the quantity and quality of output. Changes along these lines were made in both situations and resulted in marked improvements in productivity and morale.

This emphasis on the possibility and importance of the choice of social organisation within given technological constraints has been made by other writers. Child (1970, 1972), for example, has also pointed out that the 'strategic choices' made by 'dominant coalitions' in organisations are not only influenced by factors such as technology and size, but also reflect their own preferences and perceptions of the situation and their ability to influence their environment. Any choice may be a compromise between conflicting priorities. Further work by members of the Tavistock Institute has highlighted the difficulties in many situations of securing the same sort of correspondence between 'task groups' and 'sentient groups' (socially supportive 'informal' groups) as was possible in the mining and cotton industry studies (Miller and Rice, 1967). If such choices and

compromises are important, however, then the values and objectives of those in a position to influence them become a crucially important part of any explanation.

THE SOCIAL ACTION APPROACH AND 'ORIENTATIONS TO WORK'

A second and more fundamental line of criticism of the technological implications approach has been more concerned with the assumed relationship between particular role structures, technologically determined or not, and attitudes and behaviour, and has emphasised the importance of the expectations and 'orientations to work' of the actors themselves in any explanation of social relations in industry. In a relatively early study, for example, the absence of the expected relationship between 'task attributes' and attitudes and behaviour led to the suggestion that although workers with town backgrounds did prefer more complex and intrinsically interesting jobs, workers with 'big city' backgrounds had different 'motivational predispositions' and sought the highest pay possible on the least demanding tasks (Turner and Lawrence, 1966). This stress on the importance of the actor's definition of the situation is a criticism of both the Human Relations and the 'technological implications' approaches, and has been associated with the growth of an alternative 'social action' approach to the study of industrial attitudes and behaviour (see Silverman, 1970; Elger, 1975).

The most direct criticism of the technological implications approach from this point of view came in an area where it seemed strongest, studies of the automobile assembly-line. A lot of research had emphasised the way in which this production system inevitably produced highly fragmented and repetitive tasks, with little intrinsic satisfaction, severely restricted the formation of sociable groupings of any kind, accentuated management-worker differences, placed the worker under considerable pressure to maximise output and provided few possibilities of promotion or rewards other than relatively high pay (Walker and Guest, 1952; Chinoy, 1955; Blauner, 1964; Beynon, 1973). There were certain anomalous findings however: Guest (1962) had shown how the succession of a new manager could lead to an improvement in industrial and interpersonal relations; Turner and his colleagues (1967) argued that technology could not explain the different strike records of motor-car companies in Britain using the same system of production; and others had advocated job enlargement, job rotation, group working or the appropriate style of supervisory leadership as leading to increased social satisfactions for workers (Walker *et al.,* 1956; Chinoy, 1964; see also Davis and Taylor, 1972).

In the course of studying 'affluent workers' in three firms in Luton, Goldthorpe and his colleagues discovered that although assembly-line workers did dislike the actual tasks they had to perform this was not associated with any marked dissatisfaction with the job, with the firm as an employer or with

management and supervisors. These workers did not look for close social relations with fellow-workers nor for supportive supervision; a good supervisor was someone who would leave them alone. The researchers explained these findings as being due to the workers' 'instrumental' orientation to work, seeking a high level of economic rewards at work for expenditure on their homes and families which were the central interest of their lives. This explanation was supported by the finding that in the other two factories studied, a process-production chemical plant and a batch-production engineering factory, the same orientation to work was associated with similar attitudes and behaviour despite the technological differences (Goldthorpe *et al.,* 1968a; Goldthorpe, 1966).

Goldthorpe and his colleagues suggested that orientations to work are formed largely outside the factory—being influenced in the case of the 'affluent workers' by their family, community and class situations; and that in conditions of full employment workers would tend to choose their place of work in terms of their orientations, leading to largely self-selected work forces with shared expectations. Thus attitudes and behaviour at work must be explained by reference to non-work factors and not in terms of the social system of the factory itself. This line of argument has received support from Ingham's study of the relationship between plant size and absence and labour turnover (1967, 1970).

The emphasis in the 'social action' approach on the actor's definition of the situation provides a valuable corrective to the functionalist mode of explanation embodied in most emphases on the importance of technology (and also to the psychological assumption that there are universal human needs). It has also given rise to a number of interesting investigations of the 'images of society' of different types of worker, their possible origins in work and community experiences, and their implications for attitudes and behaviour at work, which have been valuable in extending research well beyond the 'factory gates' (Bulmer, 1975b). It has been of value too in drawing attention to the ways in which processes in the labour market can lead to selection or self-selection of a particular labour force. The central concept of 'orientation to work', however, is not without problems.

In the first place it is not clear that all employees have clearly defined priorities regarding their employment, or, if they do, whether they can be successfully investigated. Secondly, orientations to work do not usually comprise one over-riding priority (in the way in which the 'affluent workers' stressed the importance of high earnings), but contain a number of incommensurable objectives; which of these will be stressed depends on the context. Daniel (1973), for example, has shown how increases in wages are demanded in the context of negotiating a productivity agreement, while job satisfaction is stressed in the later context of working under the new agreement; and he has argued that different considerations are likely to be important in the explanation of job choice, behaviour in a job and the reason for leaving a job (Daniel 1969).

Further, it cannot be assumed that orientations to work are normally influenced entirely or even mainly by non-work factors; in this respect too the 'affluent workers', whose work was of so little intrinsic importance to them, were atypical. More usually the experience of work itself affects orientations to work; this has been shown to be the case for those entering industry for the first time and in many cases continues to be the case (Brown, 1973, 1974). If the experience of work influences definitions of the work situation, then the technology and other aspects of the work situation must be considered as of potential importance in explaining patterns of social relations, attitudes and behaviour. Certainly crisis situations, such as strikes, unemployment and redundancy, can lead to marked changes in definitions of the employment relationship (Lane and Roberts, 1971). In addition, non-work factors such as the community situation of the worker may themselves be in part a product of the industrial background and traditions of the locality, as is notably the case, for example, in mining and shipbuilding (Dennis *et al.,* 1969; Brown and Brannen, 1970).

Finally, the influence of orientations to work on behaviour in the labour market remains problematic. For a workforce to be self-selected in terms of a particular orientation to work not only is relatively full employment necessary but also adequate knowledge of the characteristics of jobs and genuine opportunities to obtain one which seems likely to satisfy the worker's objectives. The existence of 'internal' labour markets within firms and the absence of detailed and accurate information about jobs makes this unlikely in many cases (Blackburn and Mann, 1979), as does unemployment or a limited range of jobs in a particular area. In such cases the orientations to work of a particular workforce may well be heterogeneous, unless shared pre-work socialisation has produced homogeneity, with consequences for attitudes and behaviour at work much less clear cut than in the 'affluent worker' case.

CONCLUSION

Any explanation of workplace social relations and behaviour cannot therefore depend solely on the nature of workers' 'orientations to work' any more than it can depend solely on the type of technology. Indeed some recent studies have attempted to show how these and other factors interact in a particular situation and need all to be taken into account to provide an adequate explanation (see Wedderburn and Crompton, 1972; Beynon and Blackburn, 1972). Sociological analysis must be concerned with both 'structure', the physical and social constraints on human action, and 'action', the ways in which men construct and interpret the social world, including the institutions which constrain them. Recently fresh stimulus has been given to debates about the appropriate framework for analysis by the contributions of those advocating a Marxist approach focused

on the 'capitalist labour process' (see Braverman, 1974; Nichols, 1980). Such a perspective emphasises both the historical specificity and variability of particular patterns of shopfloor social relations, and that workplace behaviour must be seen in the context of managements' attempts to control their employees. The influence of managerial strategies is also stressed in Gallie's (1978) comparative study of workers in the highly automated oil industry. The employment contract is the starting point for Chapter 9 which discusses some of the research which considers work groups as potentially active and which relates patterns of action both to the values and interests of the actors and to the contexts of their action.

RECOMMENDED READING

Blauner, R. (1964), *Alienation and Freedom* (Chicago, Chicago University Press) Uses existing research to argue the case for the importance of technology; has been justifiably criticised but contains much of value.

Child, J., ed. (1973), *Man and Organisation* (London, George Allen & Unwin) A collection of recent British contributions to research in this area.

Gallie, D. (1978), *In Search of the New Working Class* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press) An important empirically based critique of Blauner's arguments about process production and its implications for workers.

Goldthorpe, J.H. *et al.* (1968), *The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes and Behaviour* (Cambridge, CUP) This influential study contains a critique of both human relations approaches and the emphasis on technology, as well as original research findings.

Landsberger, H.A. (1958), *Hawthorne Revisited* (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press) A valuable summary of the Hawthorne investigations and a review of the criticism.

Nichols, I. ed. (1980), *Capital and Labour* (London, Fontana) 'A stimulating collection of readings which provides a clear account of the Marxist approach to the analysis of the 'capitalist labour process'.'

Roethlisberger, F.J. and Dickson, W.J. (1939), *Management and the Worker* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press) The principal account of the Hawthorne experiments is a classic which is still well worth reading.

Rose, M. (1975), *Industrial Behaviour: Theoretical Development since Taylor* (London, Allen Lane) A lively, informative and insightful discussion of the main approaches to the analysis of social relations in industry.

Chapter 9
Shopfloor Strategies and Reactions to Change

Explanation of shopfloor behaviour can usefully begin with an examination of the employment contract. Whatever additional attractions may be discovered in work by the employee, or fringebenefits provided by the employer, industrial and other work organisations as we know them depend for their existence on the sale of labour-power by the employee in return for a wage or salary. The relationship between employer and employee is essentially a 'calculative' one (Etzioni, 1961; Goldthorpe *et al.,* 1968a, pp. 37–42). The contract which regulates this exchange, however, even if it is defined to include customary and normative elements as well as those which may be legally enforceable, is generally, and some would argue necessarily, a remarkably 'open-ended' agreement. It may specify wages and hours but with the exception of strict pieceworking or sub-contracting situations does not specify in detail the work to be done. This may be because the employer wishes to retain some flexibility in the deployment of his labour force, or because it is difficult if not impossible to specify in advance precisely what is required of the employee. The employment contract is only worked out and 'closed' in the day-to-day interactions between workers and their employer, or his agents—managers and supervisors.

Recent writing about the employment contract has emphasised three sorts of contribution to his enterprise which the employer may wish to obtain by employing labour. Baldamus (1961) has argued that in the case of non-skilled workers their wages are compensation for 'effort' expended in work. Effort, however, though it can be related to certain physical characteristics of the work situation, is an inherently subjective phenomenon which it is impossible to measure and specify beforehand. The employment contract therefore becomes an 'effort bargain' in which the rate for the job and/ or what is a 'fair day's work' are negotiated on a continuing basis by workers and supervisors (see also Behrend, 1957).

In many cases, however, wages and salaries are also payments for the application of skills and experience (Stinchcombe, 1969). Though there may be certain 'objective' measures of 'skill' such as formal qualifications, the definition of skill too depends to a large extent on subjective judgements regarding both the

value of an employee's qualifications and experience and the level and type of skill needed to accomplish particular tasks satisfactorily. Disputes and negotiations about differentials and about the apportionment of work are frequent in industry.

All employees, even the least skilled, are also expected to exercise their judgement or 'discretion' in carrying out tasks (Bendix, 1974; Jaques, 1967). The exercise of 'discretion' becomes increasingly important as one moves up the organisational hierarchy, though the degree of trust accorded to shopfloor workers—the degree to which they have the possibility of taking decisions and exercising responsibility—can vary considerably, with important consequences (Fox, 1974). Jaques (1956) has argued that responsibility can be measured but this is not widely accepted; the degree of responsibility expected and the payment due for it thus also remain matters for negotiation on the job.

In any particular work situation therefore there is scope for considerable disagreement between management and workers about the nature of the tasks to be performed and/or the rewards appropriate for performing them. As wages and salaries are costs to the employer but income for the employee, there are conflicting interests as to the outcome of their interaction over such issues. In addition, the worker can only sell his labour power by entering the organisation and remaining subject to his employer's authority; this necessarily involves a loss of freedom on his part and the nature of the exercise of authority by the employer is a further potential source of conflict.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND OTHER INFLUENCES ON WORK GROUPS

To outline the situation in these terms, however, is to leave open the question as to whether and how these potential conflicts will be manifested. In particular we must ask under what circumstances in shopfloor situations do employees *collectively* take action to 'negotiate' the terms of their employment, to attempt to control aspects of their work situation; and if they do act collectively, what influences the composition and boundaries of the 'group' in each case.

It is important, first of all, to recognise that 'work group' is a very ambiguous term, and that one must distinguish between occupational categories, task groups and sociable groupings in industry. This has not always been done, yet the differences between them, the degree to which they exist at all in any industrial enterprise, where they do, the degree to which their memberships overlap, and what if any action they take, are of crucial importance. By occupational category we mean those with the same occupation (labourers, clerks, skilled fitters, and so on) who may, but need not, form task groups—those, of the same or several occupations, who actually work together. Workers from the same occupational category and/ or task group may also form sociable groupings (the

'informal' groups of the Human Relations tradition), or such groups may form independently along the lines of age, ethnic, religious or some other differences. Thus in the shipbuilding industry, for example, men in the same 'trade' generally have a strong sense of common identity, though they may work in small 'task groups' with men with other skills; and the membership of task groups may change fairly rapidly to meet production demands, being much less stable than the men's 'informal' sociable groupings (Brown *et al.,* 1973).

Secondly, it is important to recognise that we cannot assume, as the Human Relations 'school' tended to do, that industry is composed of primary groups with solidary relations between their members. A substantial number of workers are relatively isolated on the job, and, more important, for many workers work is not a 'central life-interest' so that, although they may be on good terms with their mates, they do not regard them as friends nor have any real 'affective involvement' with them (Goldthorpe *et al.,* 1968a, pp. 45–63; Etzioni, 1975, pp. 165–6). Similarly workers in the same occupation and work situation do not always develop a sense of common identity and willingness to take collective action (Sykes, 1969a), although this may emerge over time and with a change in circumstances. Timperley (1970), for example, was able to observe the 'general hands' at a new airport (comprising a number of different task groups) as a definite internal organisation emerged. This enabled the men to develop a procedure for dealing with tips (which only some of them received), to organise social activities for themselves and their families, and to take collective action through representatives in defence of their interests in economic rewards and in equality and fairness, *vis-à-vis* management and the trade union. Timperley suggested that this autonomous development on the part of an occupational group was facilitated by the physical location and work organisation of the workers, by the non-intervention of the union, and by the problem the men faced in trying to secure higher wages during a pay freeze.

Of course, as this study suggests, groups of all three sorts may be potentially active, attempting to structure the situation in terms of their own interests, and not merely be the passive recipients of management initiatives. The problem is to explain how and why groups take action. This has been attempted by Sayles (1958) who categorised work groups primarily in terms of their behaviour— the methods they evolved to solve their day-to-day problems, their response to management and supervision, and the type of people they recognised as leaders— and explained their different patterns of action primarily in terms of the groups' positions in the production system. On the basis of interviews and other data relating to 300 task and/or occupational groups in 30 plants in a variety of industries in the United States he distinguished four types. In each case the behaviour remained characteristic of the group over a period of time even when personnel changed.

'Apathetic' groups (e.g. many unskilled workers) had low levels of grievance activity, no clear leadership and little internal unity; they were not ranked as very co-operative or as high-producers by management, and played little part in union affairs. The rather more united 'erratic' groups (e.g. automobile assembly-line workers) were easily aroused into grievance activity but of a poorly controlled sort, inconsistent in terms of their own apparent goals; leadership was often highly centralised, and such groups, ranked as unsatisfactory employees by management, played an active part in the union especially in the organisational stages. With the highest level of grievance activity, 'strategic' groups (e.g. key groups such as welders) continuously, consistently and rationally used pressure in support of their interests; with a very high degree of internal unity, they participated strongly in union activities, supplying much of the leadership, but also had good records as employees with management. The most stable groups were the 'conservative' ones (e.g. garment-cutters and toolroom personnel); highly united internally and ranked as the most satisfactory employees by management, they used restrained pressure to redress specific grievances and were generally less active in union affairs.

The explanation of these differences was sought in the ways in which social relations were affected by the technology and division of labour within a plant. The level of grievance activity appeared to be related primarily to the status of the work group in relation to other groups in a plant—those in the middle ranges were the most active; and the type of pressure exerted appeared to be related to the internal organisation of the group—activities were well planned and controlled in groups with independent operations.

Sayles's analysis, which also included accounts of changes of behaviour over time in response to relative improvements or deteriorations in groups' positions following grievance activity, demonstrated how differences in behaviour could be related to the social structure and system of production of a plant. These groups were seen as pursuing their common economic interests and seeking to change the situation to secure their interests, in contrast to the 'informal' groups to which the Human Relations researchers drew attention as a source of social satisfaction and stability for the worker. It is doubtful whether these four types of groups will be found in all situations, or exhaust the range of possibilities; however, in studies in the coal industry (Scott *et al.,* 1963) and in shipbuilding (Brown *et al.,* 1972) the importance has been demonstrated of the social relations within different occupational groups and of their position in the enterprise occupational hierarchy for their industrial relations behaviour.

Sayles's explanation emphasised only factors which were internal to the factories studied, and especially ones related to the production system. In the study of shipbuilding, however, it could be shown that both internal and external changes had combined to alter the bases on which workers typically took collective action. As a result of trade union amalgamations, new government-

sponsored training schemes, and the standardisation of wages and conditions of employment following a merger and a productivity agreement, traditional occupational and sub-occupational divisions were weakened and very much larger groupings of workers were in a position where they needed to act collectively over wages and similar issues. Traditionally the labour force in shipbuilding, though sharing a common culture and work and community background, had been divided in terms of occupation, pay level and payment system, internal and external labour-market situations, and detailed conditions of work; most collective action had been typically by the small group of men immediately affected. Such action would have been ineffective in the changed situation, and the new 'style' of behaviour was action by all the members of the same trade union even though they differed in terms of their occupations and work-places (Brown *et al.,* 1972).

This sort of development has not been confined to shipbuilding; mergers of firms and the nationalisation of whole industries, rationalisation of pay structures and of conditions of employment have had similar consequences in other industries. It is important, however, to recognise that such consequences are by no means inevitable. Nichols and Armstrong (1976) have shown how in a group of chemical plants which were part of a large multi-national company there were very powerful barriers keeping the workers 'divided', despite the existence of sources of discontent. These barriers included the technology and division of labour in the plants, the traditional weakness there of workplace trade unionism—intensified by highly centralised collective bargaining, the sophistication of managerial policy and practice, and the absence of a clear and acceptable ideology legitimating moves to greater workers' 'control'. In such a situation action tended to be unorganised; such individualistic responses are not uncommon in other contexts too.

RESPONSES TO PAYMENT BY RESULTS

The use of incentive payment systems is one way in which the employment contract can be made more determinate; if wages are related to output, directly or through some form of bonus scheme, then the uncertainties about the relationship between work and reward become less. If the worker works harder and produces more he will receive higher pay, an apparently 'fair' arrangement. All such schemes, however, involve some form of subjective estimating of what is a reasonable level of effort on a particular task, and they are therefore likely to give rise to extended 'official' and 'unofficial' negotiations to determine the rate for the job. In addition such schemes commonly have undesirable consequences from the worker's point of view, such as instability of earnings, the fear that the rate may be cut if earnings reach too high a level, competition between workers for the best jobs, and so on (Lupton, 1961).

It has been known for a long time that workers attempted to exert some control over the operation of such schemes; F.W. Taylor complained of 'systematic soldiering' in industry, and Mathewson (1969) studied restriction of output among unorganised workers in great detail at the end of the 1920s. The Hawthorne investigators' discovery of output restriction in the bank-wiring observation room was not therefore new, but when compared to the relay-assembly test room (where a small group incentive had been considered to have had some effect on output) and to some other situations, it raised the question of the circumstances in which employees will collectively limit their output and for what reasons. The Hawthorne investigators saw the behaviour of the bank-wiring observation room men as anomalous and explained it as governed by a 'logic of sentiments'—an attempt to stave off technological and organisational changes. In contrast Roy (1952, 1953, 1954) quite rightly stressed the rationality of the group of men in the engineering workshop he studied who operated a number of 'fiddles' for a variety of 'good' economic and social reasons.

Perhaps the most illuminating study of this phenomenon, however, was Lupton's (1963) study of two workshops by means of participant observation. He was forced to consider not only the organisational context but also factors external to the factories concerned in order to explain the contrasting behaviour of the two work groups. In both workshops workers were paid on an incentive scheme, but whereas in one case, a workshop assembling small transformers, the workers did not respond as intended by management but used an elaborate 'fiddle' to stabilise their earnings and effort, in the other, a waterproof-garment factory, no such collective regulation of output occurred. The difference was not due to any superiority of one incentive scheme over the other from the workers' point of view, nor to any differences in social satisfactions or in leadership skills or efficiency on the part of management and supervision.

The explanation lay, Lupton argued, partly in the differences which were 'internal' to the work situation, which contributed to the lack of a 'will to control' on the part of the garment-workers. In their workshop the productive system was characterised by a minute breakdown of operations and a short time-span, and the method of wage payment was straight piecework with no complex system of allowances providing opportunity for 'cross-booking'. Sociable groupings did not coincide with task groups and no collective attitude to output and earnings developed, the predominant attitude being 'looking after number one'. However, these factors, none of which were found in the other workshop studied, were related to the social and economic environment of the workshop. The industry consisted of small firms in an unstable and highly competitive market; seasonal unemployment was common; labour costs were a relatively high proportion of total costs; traditionally workers had been able to set up in business on their own; the trade union was weak, especially at workshop level.

There was no opportunity for an 'indulgency pattern' such as characterised the other workshop with its completely different environment.

Given these differences of environment, social relations and production and payment systems within the workshops, the behaviour of the respective groups of workers appeared to Lupton to represent a realistic appraisal of their interests in the light of the knowledge available to them. In a similar way Cunnison (1966) has also argued that in another workshop in the same waterproof-garment industry (where production was organised differently) the norm of 'militant competitive individualism' was an understandable response to a stringent incentive payment system given the shared values the workers derived from their community background and the other roles they played in their families and elsewhere.

A great deal has still to be investigated concerning the influences on collective action in the workplace, and there is not yet any definitive list of relevant factors, if indeed there ever can be. Research so far, however, has demonstrated the value of a perspective which seeks to understand groups' actions as the rational pursuit of valued objectives within a particular context. It has also been able to explain the absence of collective action in terms of both the characteristics of the situation —technical, economic and social—which may militate against the formation of groups conscious of their own interests, and the values and expectations of the actors concerned.

TECHNICAL CHANGE AND RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

Major technical changes are bound to have repercussions on social relations within industrial organisations, and indeed outside them as well. They represent a particular, and common, type of situation in which a collective response might be expected from those affected.

As Burns and Stalker (1961) have pointed out, industrial organisations can be conceived as comprising not only a 'working organisation', but a 'status structure' and a 'political system' as well. Technical changes are likely to affect not only the tasks to be done and work-role relationships, but also the absolute and relative rewards and status of different groups and individuals, and their power and autonomy within the organisation. In general it can be argued that resistance to change will occur when group or individual interests are threatened, including power and status within the organisation. The degree to which this is true, and the particular manifestations of resistance to change will, however, be influenced by a variety of other factors.

The most important of these appears to be the definition of the situation by those affected, for example, the extent to which management's power to make changes is accepted as legitimate and/or likely to be used in employees' interests.

Orientations to change tend to be more favourable among workers who are younger, more highly educated and with a higher occupational status (University of Liverpool, 1957; Touraine, 1965). The way in which changes are introduced is also important; conditions of secrecy, with no information until a late stage, are likely to give rise to greater anxiety and resistance to change than are cases where information is given, or even more so where those involved participate in planning the changes (Mumford and Banks, 1967). A major change in production system may well meet with more resistance than mere improvements of existing processes.

Since the days of the Luddites there has been opposition to changes which threaten the very existence of an occupational group especially one with craft skills. With more advanced and integrated production systems it has been suggested that worker and union action tends to move to the level of the industry, or of the whole economy, to safeguard their interests, rather than trying vainly to prevent changes in a particular plant (Touraine, 1965). The growth of larger multi-plant firms and the increasing involvement of the state in the planning and management of the economy also mean that resistance to change will involve negotiations and possibly conflicts with the top management of multi-national firms and/or the government and not just the local 'bosses'.

Studies of technical and other changes in the steel industry illus trate a number of these points. In a North Wales steel plant, for example, a series of major innovations proceeded very smoothly with full consultation with the unions. On the whole, however, no occupational group was seriously adversely affected by the changes. Redundancy was avoided because of the wartime shortage of labour and, later, the expansion of the plant. Management prerogatives were clearly defined and accepted as legitimate, as was the seniority principle in promoting workers. Management-union relations were harmonious and workers' interests were effectively represented, in the case of the process-workers largely by lay officials (Scott *et al.,* 1956).

In contrast a situation where technical changes were being introduced during a recession in the North-East steel industry did give rise to a number of conflicts between management and workers. These could be seen, however, as being concerned with 'real' claims for compensation for 'real' losses due to the effects of technical change, and as part of the process of formulating new principles to govern social relations at plant level in the changed situation (Eldridge, 1965, 1968).

There are similarities too between the North Wales steel plant and the findings of a study of changes in the South Wales tinplate industry from hand-rolling to automated production. In both cases management organisation became more complex, specialised and formal, and in many ways more remote; and the relative functional importance of process-workers and maintenance craftsmen shifted to the advantage of the latter. In both cases, too, attitudes towards the

changes could only be understood in terms of the *relative* satisfactions and deprivations they brought; in the tinplate industry, for example, appreciation of physically lighter work was outweighed by dissatisfaction at the loss of autonomy on the job on the part of the cohesive, largely self-selected, interdependent task groups which had existed in the hand-rolling plant (Chadwick-Jones, 1969).

More recently attempts to rationalise the steel industry, to reduce manning and to concentrate production in fewer larger plants have all been strongly opposed. The attempt to introduce a productivity agreement in a South Wales steelworks in the late 1960s, for example, was very protracted due to conflicts between management and workers, and especially between different occupational groupings organised in separate trade unions, concerning levels of pay and differentials, and manning and the loss of jobs (Smith, 1971). The closure by the British Steel Corporation of a number of smaller steelworks in the early 1970s was vigorously resisted by 'action committees' which cut across union lines, but were not always supported nationally. The more recent wholesale 'rationalisation' of productive capacity in the industry did evoke a national response, but even then local organisation and initiative were important in determining the effectiveness of any action and this could be affected by many factors, for example perceptions of the likelihood of success or the attractiveness of redundancy terms.

SHOP STEWARDS AND WORKPLACE BARGAINING

Much workplace activity has taken place without there being any official trade union organisation at shopfloor level. The existence of shop steward organisation, however, and the opportunity which this gives for much more 'formalised' workplace bargaining, are important and independent influences on collective action in the workplace.

Workshop representatives, now generally but not always known as shop stewards, could be found in some industries in Britain as long ago as the early nineteenth century, though with some exceptions, notably the printing industry, they did not then feature in the official organisation of the union (Goodman and Whittingham, 1973). A powerful shop stewards movement, especially in the engineering industries, developed during the First World War, initially particularly concerned with wartime labour problems such as dilution, but this did not survive the post-war depression with any strength (Pribicevic, 1959; Hinton, 1973). The shop stewards movement was strongly influenced by socialist and syndicalist ideas, advocated radical changes in the ownership and control of industry and was seen as a threat by the official trade union leadership. During and especially since the Second World War shop stewards have increasingly played a significant part in industrial relations in a whole variety of

industries and the importance of their role has been widely recognised (Donovan, 1968; McCarthy, 1967).

There are a variety of reasons for the growth in numbers and importance of shop stewards. The need for workshop representation arose partly because collective bargaining on an industry-wide basis left many issues to be determined at workplace level, especially but not only if incentive payment systems were in use; and partly because in many trade unions branches were based on residence not workplace so that some additional organisation was needed if members were to be recruited and represented, membership maintained and subscriptions collected at the place of work, tasks which neither full-time nor branch officials could easily carry out. The opportunity was provided by full employment and the increasing size and more widespread acceptance of trade unions, which greatly strengthened the power of the worker *vis-à-vis* the employer. Further pressures for some form of workshop representation probably came from the need for a means of control and influence for the ordinary worker faced with increasingly large and bureaucratic employers and trade unions, and from the changing aspira tions of workers, demanding more say as to their conditions of work and employment.

The power of shop stewards derives primarily from their position as representatives of their members, though their position as representatives of the union as a whole, now generally recognised in union rule-books and elsewhere, is also important. In situations where management cannot rely on coercion but must secure to some extent at least the willing co-operation of their employees such representatives must be listened to and negotiated with. Indeed many managements welcome, or at least tolerate, shop stewards, because it is more effective for them to deal with an organised work force than an unorganised one, which cannot easily be influenced and whose reactions can be much less predictable. Some surveys have found that personnel and other managers prefer to deal with shop stewards rather than full-time officials, even if this is not the 'official' procedure; such local representatives are more familiar with the issue and the firm's circumstances, more readily available, and perhaps more easily influenced (Clegg *et al.,* 1961; McCarthy and Parker, 1968). Shop stewards are not just representatives, however, but can have an independent influence on workplace social relations; and they are likely to do so because of certain tensions inherent in their role.

A number of studies have shown that the attitudes and opinions of shop stewards do not merely reflect those of their constituents (Cousins, 1972; Nichols and Armstrong, 1976) and that at least some shop stewards attempt in practice to control the direction and intensity of their members' demands (Beynon, 1973; Batstone *et al.,* 1977, 1978). In a study in the motor industry, Batstone and his colleagues distinguished between 'leaders' and 'populists' among stewards, and argued that 'leaders' were more successful in influencing

their members' opinions and 'managing' their 'discontent', and in increasing wage levels and maintaining workers' shopfloor controls. Their power to do this came from their positions in a network of influential stewards which provided important resources, such as information and personal support, but could also employ sanctions to uphold the norms of steward leadership; and also from managers, who welcomed a strong bargaining relationship with such stewards, and—in the case of convenors—from full-time officials.

The position of shop steward involves a multiplicity of relationships which make conflicting demands on the holder; in most situations to sustain the role successfully over a period of time the steward must play an active part in reconciling such conflicting demands. Members require the favourable settlement of their grievances; full-time officials require him to maintain union organisation and uphold union policy; managers expect him to act 'responsibly', and to go through procedure and to be able to predict his members' reactions to their innovations; other stewards expect solidarity and support for agreed policies. Thus the shop steward must continually 'negotiate' his role, for instance maintaining a reputation and a relationship with foremen and managers which allows him to get results on 'important' issues (which may involve neglect of 'trivial' grievances), without losing his members' support nor contravening union policy. The exact balance struck depends on such factors as the nature of management-worker relations, the power of the shop steward organisation, the ideology and motivation and the skills of particular stewards, the solidarity of the workforce and the relative power in the market of management and labour. Research has shown important differences in the roles and activities of shop stewards, both in the same industry (see, for example, in the motor industry, Clack, 1967; Goldthorpe *et al.,* 1968a; Beynon, 1973; Batstone *et al.,* 1977) and in different industries (W.Brown, 1973; Sykes, 1967; Nichols and Armstrong, 1976; Parker, 1975b; Nichols and Beynon, 1977).

Further sources of cross-pressures can arise in plants where there are a number of separate unions, especially if several organise the same grades of employee, and in plants which are parts of a national or multi-national combine. In the former case the policies and actions of the shop stewards committee may run counter to those of a particular union represented on it; the development of combine committees in multi-plant companies, to secure common policies to be presented to the one employer, poses many practical and policy difficulties for stewards and may be opposed by unions nationally as the development of a rival structure to official organisations (Beynon and Wainwright, 1979).

It should be added that shop stewards are not the only means by which the views of work groups can be represented to management. Unofficial but in practice recognised 'spokesmen' are common in both unionised and non-union work groups, and in the latter case the spokesmen often act like shop stewards

and are accorded by management many of the facilities of stewards (Parker, 1975b).

Shop stewards do not create shopfloor collective action; nor on the other hand do they merely reflect it. Nevertheless, the existence of a representative structure, which can become quite complex in a large organisation, has important consequences for the ways in which workplace interests and demands are manifest.

RECOMMENDED READING

Baldamus, W. (1961), *Efficiency and Effort* (London, Tavistock) An important theoretical analysis of the employment contract, which examines the nature of the 'effort bargain' and the maintenance of stability despite conflicting interests.

Batstone, E. *et al.* (1977), *Shop Stewards in Action* (Oxford, Blackwell) Uses the differences between the social organisation of manual workers' and white-collar workers' shop stewards to develop an analysis of leadership patterns.

Batstone, E. *et al.* (1978), *The Social Organization of Strikes* (Oxford, Black-well) Follows Batstone and colleagues' earlier book with studies of shop steward and worker action in a variety of disputes.

Beynon, H. (1973). *Working for Ford* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books) An impressive account of a large motor-car factory, especially valuable for its insights into and description of the shop steward's role.

Beynon, H. and Wainwright, H. (1979) *The Workers Report on Vickers* (London, Pluto Press) Written for and with the cooperation of the stewards' combine committee, this account clearly illustrates the difficulties and possibilities of such forms of organisation.

Fox, A. (1974), *Beyond Contract: Work, Power and Trust Relations* (London, Faber) Emphasises the importance of trust as an element in employment, and explores the consequences of different forms of trust relationship.

Lupton, T. (1963), *On the Shopfloor* (Oxford, Pergamon Press) A detailed study by participant observation of two workshops; explanation of different reactions to incentive payment systems is shown to depend on a wide range of 'internal' and 'external' factors.

Nichols, T. and Armstrong, P. (1976), *Workers Divided: A Study in Shopfloor Politics* (London, Fontana Books) Based on research in a group of chemical plants and stressing the structural and cultural barriers to collective action at workplace level.

Nichols, T. and Beynon, H. (1977), *Living with Capitalism* (London, Routledge) A further account of the chemical plants which provides a broader context for the understanding of worker and shop steward action.

Sayles, L.R. (1958), *Behaviour of Industrial Work Groups* (New York, Wiley) Attempts to relate work group behaviour to the position of such groups in the production system.

Touraine, A. (1956), *Workers' Attitudes to Technical Change* (Paris, OECD) A valuable if sometimes confusing review and synthesis of research carried out both in Britain and abroad.

Warner, M., ed. (1973), *The Sociology of the Workplace* (London, Allen & Unwin) An interesting and varied collection of recent British work on workplace social relations.

Chapter 10
Management

It has become accepted in recent years that management can make an important contribution to economic prosperity, and there has consequently been a growing interest in management education. Two perspectives of management have been highlighted. The first is a view of management as an economic resource performing a set of technical administrative functions. The second is of a professional corps to which the process of management education offers a basis for special competence as well as a system of selective entry. Less attention, however, has been given to a third perspective, that of management as a system of power and authority within which different personal and group strategies are pursued. This political aspect of management necessarily qualifies both a formal view of managerial functions and the assumption that managers comprise a distinctive corps or class social structure. The present chapter seeks to develop this qualification by examining studies of managers' orientations and actions.

MANAGEMENT IN THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The question of how managers are located within the occupational and stratification systems of modern industrial societies has provided a major point of sociological debate (Nichols, 1969, esp. Chapter XII; Stanworth and Giddens, 1974, esp. Chapters 1, 4, 5 and 6). This issue has been brought into prominence by evidence suggesting that 'management' has grown during this century into an occupation of some significance throughout industrialised societies. It is estimated that in Britain about 1–8 million people occupied managerial jobs in 1971, accounting for 6–2 per cent of total employment (Census 1971, England and Wales).

Not only have the numbers of people in managerial positions grown, but other developments appear to indicate that management has become increasingly differentiated both from business-owners and from other employees. Differentiation from ownership has been expressed by the concept of a 'divorce of ownership from control', in which the effective control of business organisations is seen to have passed from the hands of an increasingly

fragmented and absentee body of shareholders to full-time executives. Quite naturally this proposition has stimulated considerable speculation as to the social identity, motivations and goals of the new managerial controllers (Child, 1969a, Chapter III; Stanworth and Giddens, 1974). The factors which are held to have encouraged this trend—increasing scale, capital intensification and technical complexity—have in general established requirements for a higher level of technical and administrative sophistication among managers. This is also cited as the main reason for the differentiation of management from other levels of employment through the application of increasingly selective entrance requirements. Thus the proportion of senior-level managers with a university education has risen considerably faster in both Britain and the United States over the past few decades than has the proportion of graduates in their populations as a whole. Studies of British managers indicate that men with higher-educational qualifications and social origins are today heavily represented in managerial positions (Clark, 1966; Stanworth and Giddens, 1974, Chapters 5 and 10).

A distinct and relatively homogeneous occupational identity among managers would seem to be manifested in the development of a specialised institutional framework and to be underpinned by an extensive body of ideology. The establishment of management institutes has reflected a view that managers required their own quasi-professional associations apart from already existing employers' organisations. The ideology which developed, partly through the activities of management institutes, laid heavy emphasis on the argument that managers had emerged as a separate occupational group in their own right and theories were elaborated which provided management with its own basis of legitimation. The dominant theme in this ideology presented managers as embodying a happy marriage of professional expertise with a social conscience unfettered by prior loyalties to sectional owning interests (Bendix, 1974; Child, 1969b).

It is not altogether surprising that this combination of developments—functional differentiation from ownership, selectivity of entry, institutional organisation and ideology—should have been widely regarded as signalling the emergence of a new elite or even a new class in modern industrial societies. Indeed, the discussion of management techniques and the exchange of ideological assumptions between spokesmen in different countries suggested that managers were assuming a common social identity, even at an international level. The apparent trend towards a concentration of business control into the hands of a new self-selective managerial elite within larger enterprises, together with the other developments mentioned, lent face-validity to influential theses of the 'managerial revolution' expounded since the 1930s (Berle and Means, 1933; Burnham, 1941). More recently, Galbraith has claimed that the expansion of managerial and technical expertise has led to control in organisations effectively passing down from top managers to groups of experts comprising the

'technostructure'. In Galbraith's (1972) view we are in this way passing beyond even the managerial revolution.

The foregoing line of argument, which Nichols (1969) has aptly labelled 'managerialism', relies however upon certain questionable assumptions. Most importantly, it tends to utilise evidence of a division of functions between managers and owners in support of the proposition that the interests, identities and social reference groups of the two parties have diverged to an important degree. There are good reasons to doubt the extent to which this has been the case, particularly among the higher levels of management where, *pace* Galbraith, the locus of policy-making generally still remains.

There is evidence that senior managers have by and large remained integrated with wider business interests both normatively and in terms of social relationships. The considerable similarity of social background between senior managers, financiers and other elite groups is reinforced economically through interlocking directorships and personal share-ownership (Stanworth and Giddens, 1974). In addition to this common identification, the ability of management to pursue policies at variance with ownership interests is constrained by the increasing reliance of large corporations on external funds to finance expansion (Meeks and Whittington, 1975) and by the growing concentration of their share-ownership into the hands of financial institutions. The age of 'finance capitalism' predicted by Marx has now dawned (Fitch and Oppenheimer, 1970; Zeitlin, 1974; Nyman and Silberston, 1976) and, together with the other factors mentioned, this casts considerable doubt on the notion that top management in industry today constitutes a class differentiated from the broader, albeit somewhat amorphous, business class as a whole.

Managerialist theories also contain the implicit assumption that managers constitute a relatively homogeneous social group. The term 'management' is indeed frequently employed to denote a collection of people who share common interests and a common social identity. This assumption is also open to challenge. A significant divide can, for instance, exist between the senior 'general management' of an organisation and the 'functionaries' who supervise departments within a framework largely laid down for them, and who often have little opportunity to progress much higher in their careers. This divide is clearly apparent between the head-office executives and plant-level managers of a large corporation. The validity of employing a concept such as 'manager' in any other than the technical sense of administrative science is therefore questionable.

The homogeneity of managers is generally greater at the senior level. Even at this level, though there is likely to be a shared assumption about basic economic objectives, there may be disagreement over priorities within the framework of such objectives, and over matters such as the allocation of resources between departments and methods of working. Most research into managerial orientations and behaviour has looked at managers further down the hierarchy, and it

demonstrates how significantly managers diverge among themselves. Not only is this research relevant to the organisational and role level of analysis with which this part of the book is concerned, but it illustrates further the problem of whether management can be distinguished as a single grouping within the social structure.

VARIETY IN MANAGERIAL ORIENTATIONS

From a sociological point of view, it is of little significance to classify managers together simply by virtue of the nature of their tasks which themselves may be common only at a relatively trivial level of generality—the triviality of the truism that management is 'working through people' or of Fayol's 'classic' definition: 'to manage is to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to coordinate and to control' (1949). Rather, it is a manager's location within cultural value systems, his education and professional training, and his position within the network of activities and relationships in an organisation which are sociologically of greater significance, for these factors point to some of the major influences upon his orientation (his general set of attitudes and expectations) towards the organisation and his behaviour within it. Differences in managers' social and cultural locations appear to make for quite considerable differences in personal orientation and behaviour.

Interest has grown recently in the study of cross-cultural differences between managers, or 'comparative management'. (Useful reviews are Nath, 1968; Graham and Roberts, 1972; Lammers and Hickson, 1979). Striking differences have been found between managers in highly industrialised societies such as the United Kingdom and the United States and those in developing countries. For example Lauterbach studied managerial attitudes in five South American countries and he concluded that 'work habits of management…are quite different from those in North America or Western Europe…what is really involved is a different way of looking at life in general and at economic activities in particular' (1961, p. 183).

McClelland (1961) measured the motivation of managers in the United States and in three other progressively less industrialised regions—North Italy, South Italy and Turkey—together with Poland. The sample of American managers expressed the greatest need for achievement and for exercising power, and the least need (Poland apart) for good relations with other people. McClelland suggests that these results, together with differences in attitudes which he found between his samples of managers, are associated with the stage of economic development in the society from which the managers are drawn. In so far as this is a causal factor it is likely to make itself felt through the different social value-systems of the societies concerned. Haire *et al.* (1966), in another comparative study, also found that there were differences between managers regarding the

extent and the manner in which they felt their personal needs were satisfied. They concluded that the explanation lay in socio-cultural factors, especially the place that the manager held in his country's occupational status hierarchy and the influence that business had on the political affairs of each country.

Although Haire, Ghiselli and Porter concluded that managerial orientations in Britain and in the United States could be said to form a single group in contrast to those in other countries, substantial differences in such orientations have been identified, at least impressionistically, even between these two highly industrialised and to a degree culturally similar societies. Dubin (1970) has concluded that, in contrast to American managers, those in Britain place less value on change and innovation, less value on professionalism, are inclined to allocate resources within an organisation according to people's status rather than their needs, are inclined to place high values upon personal trust and to employ personalistic rather than universalistic criteria in evaluating others. Recruitment to British management, Dubin argues, relies on a system of education that makes rather improbable the direct entrance of lower middle-class and working-class men into executive ranks. Once there, promotion is largely on the basis of age rather than of talent, while the personal pursuit of advancement through mobility between companies is frowned upon. In other words, in Britain upward managerial mobility tends to be ascribed while in the United States it tends to be achieved. Dubin is not alone in making this kind of comparison between American and British or European managers (e.g. Nowotny, 1964). He regards the orientations and behaviour of British managers as a manifestation of a British industrial culture which itself reflects wider social norms, but which poses 'a major barrier to the rapid and full flowering of industrial creativity'. Turner (1960) distinguished similar differences in norms between the American and British educational process.

Another aspect of differences in orientations between British and American managers is brought to light by the available studies on how they use their leisure-time summarised by Child and Macmillan (1972). For many American managers leisure-time seems to represent an 'extension' of work in that it is infused by considerations relating to a job which represents a dominant interest in their lives. In contrast, for many British managers, leisure appears to assume more of a 'neutral' relationship to work. Most of British managers' relatively more generous time off from work appears to be spent in 'privatised' activities. These differences may well reflect not only contrasting values given to work and achievement by the managerially-relevant reference groups in the two societies, but also the reduced opportunities for self-fulfilment in British managers' jobs implied by Dubin's observations.

Managerial orientations may reflect in the ways illustrated the values of the communities in which managers are located, but they are also likely to reflect their place within that community in the sense of their specialist occupational

training and membership. Differences in the attitudes and ideologies held by members of different occupations have been frequently noted by sociologists. These are relevant to an understanding of managers in that the 'management' of a particular organisation is itself likely to comprise an amalgam of specialised, sometimes professional, occupational groups. This occupational differentiation within management is growing along with the rising sophistication of relevant techniques, the growing complexity of products and services, and the average size of work organisations. Moore (1954) noted this development some while ago and he concluded that it tended to introduce sources of tension and strain between the various management groups.

Orientations can vary significantly between the different specialised members of management groups. Results from the writer's own research serve to reinforce this point because they concern the attitudes of managers at a senior (departmental head and director) level where one would have expected the greatest degree of consensus in orientations to have developed. Among a sample of 787 such managers in six British industries, personal orientations to matters such as variety in work environment, taking risks and retaining an open mind about the solution to problems, were all significantly different as between managers in charge of ten major functional areas (Ellis and Child, 1973). Research, personnel and marketing managers tended to exhibit the greatest flexibility of mind in regard to these matters, while financial managers and quality-control managers exhibited the least mental flexibility. When it came to expectations of how they and their fellow managers should in general behave, the differences between managers in different functions were also all highly significant statistically, particularly in regard to items concerning the challenging of formal authority and procedure. A similar pattern of results again emerged in that financial and quality-control managers were in this respect the most 'conservative' groups, while marketing, personnel, research and also production managers formed the most 'radical' groups.

These fairly systematic differences in attitudes between functional groups within management may reflect not only the influence of prior occupational socialisation and a continued contact with external occupational reference groups, but also the different roles performed by such groups within the system of operations in their organisations. For the managers who exhibited more rigid and conservative attitudes are placed in a predominantly monitoring and 'controlling' role, while the contrasting groups generally comprised managers who had an important 'initiating' function within the organisation.

The continued attachment of specialists in management to wider occupational reference groups may in fact be facilitated by their location within the operating system of an organisation. In so far as the formal role of specialist managers is to take charge of work to which specialised techniques, professional conventions, 'or scientific modes of analysis are applied, they are obliged to retain close

contact with outside institutions and groups as sources of useful knowledge and points of comparative reference. It has been suggested that the location of specialists on the 'boundary' of an organisation reinforces their commitment to their occupation and its ideology as distinct from commitment to the objectives established by their 'local' management (of Gouldner, 1957). This distinction can, however, be exaggerated. Thus, Watson (1977) found that personnel specialists saw occupational professionalism as a means to contribute more effectively towards managerial objectives. Many specialists in personnel, and also accounting, engineering and even science, aspire to careers which will eventually absorb them fully into management.

There are also indications that a manager's position in the administrative hierarchy and his distance from the main centre of strategic decision-making may influence his orientations towards the official policies laid down for the organisation. Thus foremen, who in this respect may be said to occupy the lowest level of management, have been found to represent their subordinates' point of view against that of senior management, particularly where union organisation was weak (Thurley and Hamblin, 1963). Porter and Lawler (1965) concluded from a review of their own and other studies that the job satisfaction of managers was positively related to occupying a high position in the hierarchy. The substance of this relationship is itself likely to encourage, and may also reflect different orientations towards work and the organisation.

The particular 'character' of the organisation in which a manager works may constitute an influence upon his general outlook which is thereby differentiated in a further respect from that of other managers. As Sofer has commented in reviewing relevant research,

> 'stereotypes often develop about what members of a particular organization are like, influencing expectations of such people and their actual behaviour; organizational colleagues support common ideologies and symbols,… organizational colleagues will share preoccupations about the success and reputation of the organization and about its internal politics since these involve their shared fate'. (1970, p. 141)

Selection processes, induction and training programmes, group pressures, formal procedures and other features may all induce some degree of conformity to an ideology which contrasts with that of other managements.

In short, managerial orientations are diverse. At one level, there is variation between populations of managers in different societies. Within societies, there is variation between different occupational groups in management, and between managers employed in different organisations. A manager's location within an organisation, especially his place in the hierarchy, may also be associated with such variation. These contrasting managerial orientations, when expressed within

an organisational framework of interdependent yet competing relationships, provide an important basis for appreciating modes of managerial behaviour.

MANAGERIAL BEHAVIOUR

The social processes which take place within management remain under-researched compared with those among employees lower in the organisational hierarchy. For a long time most evidence on managerial behaviour was of the rather formalistic type captured by diary studies (e.g. Stewart, 1967). Stewart has more recently (1976) published a study which attempts to categorise managers' jobs in terms of behavioural dimensions such as relationships and patterns of work. Of greater theoretical interest is Mintzberg's (1973) conceptualisation of various interpersonal, information-processing and decision-making 'roles' which a manager may perform, since this relates more closely to the process and politics of managing.

In the absence of much evidence, stereotypes of managerial behaviour are still influential. Dubin once commented that 'in the folklore of managerial literature much is made of the need for total immersion of the individual in his organization' (1962, p. 27). This was reflected by the stereotype of career-oriented middle managers conforming to the norms and expectations of top policy-makers portrayed in Whyte's *Organization Man* (1960) and similar works (e.g. Harrington, 1960). Sociologists have challenged this view, starting from the premiss that behaviour in a role will be a function of both the person's general orientation and the way his role is structured by others with whom he interacts. For this reason diversity in managerial orientations, together with the opportunity for pursuing sectional goals offered by the very complexity of modern large-scale organisation structures, would lead us to expect a substantial amount of non-conformity with the objectives established by top management and of non-involvement with operations that are not central to the manager's own immediate activities and interests.

Burns and Stalker (1961) have pointed out that the pursuit of personal interests and status, with its attendant 'politicking' and struggles for power, form as central a part of behaviour in organisations as does the planning and execution of work itself. Commonly heard catch-phrases about the 'management team' obscure this important point. Observers of business decision-making have generally remarked on the significance of the political element, whereby the interests of individuals and organisational groups, together with their likely reactions to alternative outcomes, are assessed and incorporated into the substance of the final decision. The political process not only accounts for the considerable length of time which managements seem to take in reaching major decisions, but also to an extent for the finding that the great majority of their time is spent in talking (Dubin, 1962, pp. 24–5; Sayles, 1964, Chapter 12)! Studies of

conflict within management serve to place this political process in sharp focus, while their analysis of the sources of such conflict provides useful insight into the basis for managerial action in general.

From a participant study of managerial behaviour in four American companies, Dalton (1959) concluded that the most dominant social and political forces within an organisation are represented by cliques, both aggressive and defensive. Any of these cliques might operate in favour of purely sectional interests within the management as a whole. The political action in which they were involved consisted not only of measures taken in order to protect or expand the clique's sphere of interest, but also counter-measures taken by top management with the intention of maintaining control throughout the management hierarchy. Dalton concluded from his observations that purely formal organisation structures and statements of policy are extremely unreliable guides for determining the actual lines of authority and influence. This conclusion is strengthened by Pahl and Winkler's (1974b) observations of how policy decisions, ostensibly the prerogative of boards of directors, were often worked out elsewhere by a cabal—'a group consisting only of those who do count'.

The thrust of academic study has swung strongly in recent years towards a more detailed examination of decision processes. Pettigrew (1973) in a study of a decision to purchase a computer drew attention to the opportunities for shaping a decision offered by those in a position to monitor information secured from outside the organisation ('the gatekeeper') and to prepare information, evaluating and reports for the formal decision-makers. Abell (1975) and his colleagues have commenced research into the focal point of decision-making, namely the process of bargaining and the mutual exertion of influence in order that performances are embodied in the eventual outcomes.

An important dimension of the political process within management lies along the vertical span of the hierarchy and as such is often bound up with the question of career. The appointment of managers to particular posts, and their career patterns as a whole, usually represent a balancing of technical aspects of personal competence against considerations of internal politics and morale. Thus prospective appointees are likely to have sponsors in senior positions for whom the progress of their proteges is indicative of their own status and influence. In this way, as Sofer points out, careers in large organisations reflect in some degree struggles for power. Apart from power alignments, there are signs that other informal factors may operate in managerial career achievement, including social background, membership of high-status clubs, political membership and other elements in normative and relational class conformity. These signposts and gateways on the career path do permit the individual in some degree to 'manage' his own career. However, it would be erroneous to imply that a majority of

managers succeed in advancing far up the career ladder and in this fact itself lies an important source of conflict (Sofer, 1970).

For instance, in a factory which stressed promotion as the mark of success, Burns (1955) found that older managers lacking further promotion prospects formed themselves into cliques which acted as a protective counter-system against the prevailing norms and values of the organisation. Younger managers, in contrast, identified with these norms which were to their advantage and formed their own exclusive 'cabals' in order to promote further occupational success for themselves. The cliques and cabals were in conflict over organisational rewards and status. In another study, Sykes and Bates (1962) described the failure of departmental sales managers to understand and maintain official policy in a large British company. They ascribed this failure primarily to differences in social-class back-ground, as well as in status within the company, between more senior general managers and their departmental managerial subordinates, factors which led to a failure in communication between the two groups. The rank of departmental sales manager was the normal limit for a man who had joined the company as a clerk, while the general managers were mainly men with a public school or university education, who had entered the company as trainee-managers. This study thus illustrates how an increasingly selective entry into senior management can not only promote antagonism between levels in the hierarchy, but also render that hierarchy reflective of the system of social stratification prevailing in the wider community. Clements (1958), in his study of British managers, also found that antagonism towards higher management could unsettle more junior managers so much that they considered taking jobs elsewhere.

The various functional groups within management may, as we have seen, hold different orientations derived largely from their respective occupational reference groups. Their orientations and modes of conduct may be further differentiated by virtue of their particular alignments to the operating system of an organisation and because of the different environmental conditions to which their activities are linked. This differentiation itself encourages conflict—for instance, between production and marketing managers over delivery dates promised to, and the type of orders accepted from, customers.

Another well-known case concerns the difficulties in co-operation between research managers and their line counterparts, which Burns and Stalker (1961) have analysed in particular detail. They single out a number of factors underlying this type of situation, including the generally contrasting orientations and modes of behaviour of the two groups, inappropriate organisational arrangements leading to 'adaptive segregation' rather than integration between them, and the threat to existing arrangements posed by industrial scientists as agents of change. Hage and Aiken (1970), in their discussion and research on innovation in organisations, conclude that a greater number and diversity of professionals in an

organisation will help to generate a greater rate of change. On the other hand, the greater the rate of change that is achieved, the more bargaining and conflict between specialist groups over the evaluation and implementation of new proposals there is likely to be.

Conflict between managers, then, may derive from various sources: it may reflect fundamental incompatibilities in norms and orientations; it may be a consequence of personal strategies in pursuit of career and status advantage, or it may be the product of little more than an organisation structure which encourages poor communication and establishes requirements which are not appropriate to the tasks in hand. Frequently elements of all these factors are operating at the same time (Pondy, 1969).

Dalton's view is that the social process of management within organisations amounts to 'a shifting set of contained and ongoing counter phases of action' (1959, p. 4). Conflict, of course, represents only one form of such action. Another mode of action which is pro bably even more prevalent, but less researched, is the reciprocal exchange of favours which Strauss (1962) has illustrated in his study of purchasing agents and their adaptation to pressures bearing on their role. Exchange, bargaining and conflict are all manifestations of management as a system of power. The direction, intensity and outcome of power relationships between managers represent a perspective of study which is distinctively sociological and yet has attracted insufficient attention among sociologists. Crozier's study (1964) of French bureaucracy is an important exception, and this pointed to uncertainty as having a critical role in the retention of autonomy by departments which alone were able to cope with periodic and unexpected crises. The findings of Hinings *et al.* (1974) also suggest that the power of departmental managers derives from being able to cope with uncertainty, provided that what is done has some immediate benefit to the rest of the organisation and that alternative ways of doing it are not readily available. The political system bears upon managerial behaviour at all levels and, as Brooke and Remmers (1970) have described, it has attained a particularly complex form within multi-national enterprises where the continued integration of management assumes the dimensions of a major problem.

CONCLUSION

We have stressed the political aspect of management. In so doing, there has been reason to challenge the stereotype of management which is found in many writings and in much public discussion -that of formally defined functions executed in a spirit of service by men who are conscious of belonging to an identifiable professional corps. A certain measure of reality is probably captured by this stereotype. In so far as 'a reciprocally tolerable meshing of needs and interests between individual and organization' is found (Sofer, 1970, p. 349),

then the formal definition of managerial goals and functions will bear a resemblance to actual behaviour. Similarly, senior managers at least may experience a degree of common identity, particularly if they hail from similar social backgrounds and elite business schools. Nevertheless, the clearly political nature of managerial behaviour makes the stereotype quite inadequate by itself.

This chapter has examined politics within management; the following chapter considers conflict between management and external, organised interest groups. The presence of different groups within management, each sharing a separate identity based on common social origins, career, status and occupational position, points to the fact that management is not homogeneous, or clearly identifiable. We have argued that senior managers cannot be clearly differentiated from a broader business class. Winkler (1974) has concluded that within large firms such managers tend to confine themselves to a social world populated by others like them. They are relatively unaware of what goes on below the psychological boundary they construct for themselves a couple of levels down the hierarchy. The extended hierarchy of a large organisation might contain several such boundaries. At the lower end, the performance of managerial functions by shop stewards in, for example, reformulating grievances in terms that admit of a jointly acceptable solution (Partridge, 1977), or in operating controls over manning and recruitment, raises the question of where the boundary between managerial and operative work should really be drawn.

The more that an exclusive definition of management can no longer be sustained on functional grounds, with developments in shopfloor control and forms of participation in decision-making, the less it would appear possible for managers in the future to maintain their traditional differentials. This helps to explain the considerable opposition to notions of participation which is evident among managers, particularly those in the middle and junior strata whose position would be encroached upon first. Management in Britain is on the defensive today. The notion of a skilled rational managerial technocracy, the actions of which compare favourably with supposedly 'irrational' or 'irresponsible' elements in worker behaviour has been severely qualified by evidence of the conflict and politicking that actually goes on within management. The capability of many shopfloor organisers and the recognition that a large pool of untapped ability exists among ordinary workers quite naturally leads to the conclusion that managerial talent is not confined to a relatively small elite. These shifting perspectives could eventually have a major effect upon our industrial and social structure.

RECOMMENDED READING

Abell, P. (1975), *Organizations as Bargaining and Influence Systems* (London, Heinemann) Develops and applies methods for studying decisions as outcomes of influence and bargaining.

Brooke, M.Z. and Remmers, H.L. (1970), *The Strategy of Multinational Enterprise* (London, Longman) The first part discusses the processes of governing and holding together this highly complex form of organisation.

Burns, T. and Stalker, G.M. (1961), *The Management of Innovation* (London, Tavistock) Along with Crozier and Dalton (see below), a pioneering study into the dynamics of behaviour within management.

Crozier, M. (1964), *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon* (London, Tavistock) Study of French bureaucracy, emphasising its cultural derivation and how the power of departments depends on their capacity to handle uncertainties.

Dalton, M. (1959), *Men who Manage* (New York, Wiley) A rich inside story of management in American plants based on ten years' participant observation.

Mintzberg, H. (1973), *The Nature of Managerial Work* (New York, Harper) A review of available research plus an original observational study of five chief executives is used to analyse managers' work.

Pettigrew, A. (1973), *The Politics of Organizational Decision Making* (London, Tavistock) Detailed study of a decision to purchase a computer which demonstrates the influence of those who control flows of information.

Stanworth, P. and Giddens, A. (1974), *Elites and Power in British Society* (Cambridge, CUP) Chapters 4, 5 and 10 provide data on the social characteristics of top businessmen and managers; Chapter 6 analyses the processes of making policy decisions.

Watson, T.J. (1977), *The Personnel Managers* (London, Routledge) A study of personnel managers' work experiences, concepts of professionalism, and of the role they play in the management of employing organisations.

Chapter 11
Organised Interest Groups

It is intended in this chapter to deal with part of the area of study called 'industrial relations', to complete a review of the sociology of industry on the organisation-role level. Industrial relations, however, is an extensive field to which many others than sociologists have made contributions from different perspectives—economists, lawyers, psychologists, political scientists, and so on. There is considerable common ground between what these people study and what the sociologist studies, but the approaches are different. The industrial relations scholar has a more limited field than the sociologist but takes an interdisciplinary approach to that field, i.e. he is part economist, part political scientist, and so on). The industrial sociologist has a wider field—which includes industrial relations—but he does not take an interdisciplinary approach and concentrates instead on using the theories and methods of sociology.

Even at a theoretical level it is difficult to remain dispassionate about industrial relations, because conflicting interest groups and policies are involved. Experts sympathetic to the problems of either management or trade unions understandably write from different perspectives, and their conclusions and proposals have to be judged accordingly. Thus Roberts (1968b, p. 24) questions the exercise of the right to strike and deplores the fact that 'agreements are…no longer looked upon as really binding upon the parties'. Fox (1971, p. 151), however, takes a different view: 'Many instances of employees "dishonouring" agreements…can be explained by their never having "honoured" them in the first place, as a result of leaders failing to understand, or choosing to ignore, the process of winning consent.'

Such specific differences of opinion relate to alternative broader conceptions of industrial relations: a 'systems' view which sees the firm as an organic unity and stresses the underlying common interests of all parties to industrial relations, or an 'action' view which sees the firm as a plural society and industrial relations as expressing the divergent interests of the parties involved. Allen (1971, p. 4) looks at the two basically opposed approaches to the study of indus trial relations in a slightly different way. He distinguishes the *static* approach, which assumes a consensus in societies which can only be temporarily broken, from the *dynamic*

approach (his own) which assumes that social behaviour is both changing and environmentally determined.

TRADE UNIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Types of interest group

In the context of industrial relations, interest groups are a special kind of secondary group existing in, or associated with, work organisations with authority structures. In addition to a structure and a form of organisation, these groups have a programme or a set of goals and a membership which includes among its activities the attempt to further its interests when these conflict with those of other groups. On the side of employees there are trade unions and professional associations, and on the side of employers there are those employers' associations which have industrial relations functions. Although the latter are sometimes regarded as 'the bosses' unions', the parallel is only partial, since the 'employer' is usually an organisation that is strong enough to deal directly with the unions, locally if not nationally. Associations of employees, mostly non-manual and sometimes called staff associations, which neither bargain with employers nor represent professional interests are not included here among interest groups.

A majority of employees are still classified as manual workers, but the white-collar labour force now accounts for about 40 per cent of the total, and this percentage is growing (Lumley, 1973, p. 16). White-collar and partially white-collar unions make up about 32 per cent of total union membership; white-collar membership of unions is increasing, while blue-collar membership remains fairly static. Professional associations account for a much smaller proportion of the employed population than do trade unions. There are good reasons for analysing the structure, functions and problems facing trade unions and professional associations separately, although they also have some common features. The chief function of trade unions is to bargain with employers over pay and conditions of work on behalf of their members. The main problems facing trade unions are the struggle for recognition by employers, the attempts to exert political influence on economic policies at national level in so far as these affect the interests of members, and various internal problems of organisation and the need for more funds to extend activities.

Professional associations are composed of those whose employment has gained the recognised status of a profession, whether of the old-established type such as the law, medicine and the church, or of the newer type, including those highly-trained and qualified personnel without the traditional professional-client

relationship (sometimes called 'quasi-professionals'). The functions of professional associations are varied: they bestow qualifications as an indication of competence or a licence to practise, they act as study associations, they regulate the professional conduct of their members, and they attempt to protect the interests and raise the status of their members. The main problems facing professional associations are preserving the relationship between the profession and the community, social control of members, adjusting to changes in the traditional professional-client relationship, and resolving (or at least containing) conflict between sections within the association.

In the light of these differences it has been said that the functions of professional associations and trade unions are mostly kept distinct, with neither showing signs of encroaching on the other (Prandy, 1965b). This is true to the extent that many functions of professional associations are not shared by trade unions, but an individual is not restricted to being *either* a member of a trade union *or* of a professional association. Professional employees are increasingly finding the need to belong to bodies which will negotiate with their employers over pay and conditions, in addition to whatever professional association they may belong to.

Trade union structure and participation

A number of studies have sought to make a sociological analysis of various aspects of trade unionism. Some of the main problems that have received attention are the extent to which unions are instruments of social change, the classification of types of union, the factors influencing member participation, and the associated question of maintaining democracy in the functioning of unions.

Banks (1974, p. 53) has examined determinist and voluntaristic theories of unions as instruments of social change. The determinist conception is that trade union activities are no more than a response to underlying economic, political and social events which take place independently of trade unionists' efforts. The voluntaristic conception is that union militancy is a causal factor in the economic improvement of the working class. Banks believes that the task of the sociologist 'is to think of social movements in a manner which will allow for the recurrence of unanticipated, unintended and unwanted processes of social change alongside deliberate and successful attempts to bring about desired modifications of practice'.

The traditional classification of trade unions is based on a combination of type of skill and basis of organisation into three groups:

(1) *Craft* unions are the oldest type and are composed of workers performing the same or very similar industrial operations.

(2) *Industrial* unions cater for all workers, skilled and unskilled, within an industry, although the skilled workers tend to dominate this kind of union because they are more organised.
(3) *General* unions have members in many industries and are often the result of amalgamations and federations of smaller unions. These types are not always clear-cut; thus the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers is an industrial union for engineering, but a craft union for engineers and foundryworkers in whatever industry they are employed.

Recognising that the traditional threefold classification does not suffice to distinguish the main types of British trade unions, Clegg and his colleagues (1961) suggested five groupings:

(1) *General* unions are defined roughly according to the traditional classification.
(2) In preference to the old 'industrial union', which suggests the inclusion of all workers in a given industry and no one else, *single-industry* unions describe those that are confined to, or have their predominant interest in, a single industry.
(3) A rigid application of the criterion of apprenticeship would unduly narrow the definition of 'craft' unions, and so the term *skilled* unions is preferred and includes those workers who acquire skill by promotion on the job.
(4) Craft unions which have changed the basis of their membership to include semi-skilled and unskilled workers constitute a fourth category of *ex-craft* unions.
(5) Finally, *white-collar* unions cater for clerical, supervisory, administrative and technical workers.

The question of democracy in trade union organisation and practices has received considerable attention and is bound up with the problem of apathy of many members towards the running of their unions' affairs. The degree of apathy varies among unions and low voting figures in elections for officers are often cited as evidence. This apathy is partly explained by the ambiguity which surrounds the goals of unions. In so far as unions are democratic, their goals are shaped by their members in a manner which may change over time and vary from union to union (Hyman and Fryer, 1975, p. 158).

Two main definitions of democracy have been used in the analysis of union politics: leadership responsiveness to membership opinion, and the institutionalisation of opposition (Lipset *et al.,* 1956; Edelstein and Warner, 1975). Martin (1968) rejects both, and defines democracy in this context as the survival of faction. He explains the survival of faction in terms of the pressures which prevent union executives from destroying it. These include some

fairly obvious factors such as a democratic political culture and a high level of membership participation, but also some less obvious correlates such as a low level of ownership concentration coupled with disagreement between predominantly friendly employers, and decentralised collective bargaining.

Edelstein and Warner (1970) compared the pattern of opposition in British and American unions by means of a survey of the extent of opposition for top posts. They concluded that the level of formal democracy, particularly in terms of the closeness of election results, is higher for British unions. On the other hand, American unions feature open, well-organised factions and a somewhat greater frequency of defeat of incumbents. The more sustained level of opposition in Britain seems to be largely due to the more limited powers of the top office, the various features surrounding the succession, and the method of electing the executive committee.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Approaches to the subject

The term 'industrial relations' is used in two ways: in the more inclusive sense it refers to all the relationships between managers and employees within industry and in the community; in a more restricted sense it refers only to collective relations between unions and employers. But others are involved in industrial relations besides unions and employers; thus Barbash (1964) defines it as 'the area of study and practice concerned with the employment function in modern public and private enterprise; this function involves workers, unions, managers, government and the various "publics"'. Flanders (1965, p. 10) maintains that the industrial relations system is one of rules which appear in different guises: in legislation and statutory orders, in trade union regulations, collective agreements and arbitration awards, social conventions, managerial decisions, and accepted 'custom and practice'.

Margerison (1969) takes issue with Flanders and suggests that industrial relations is a complex field of study which requires understanding at the behavioural, as well as institutional level. He points out that the emphasis tends to be put more on the consequences of industrial dispute than on its causes, and prefers a behavioural model for the analysis of the emergence of conflict in the plant social system. The key variables in this model are *objectives* (of the organisation itself for survival, and of management and workers for control and material reward), *situation* (organisation social system, technology, work task and job content), *interaction* (based on contracts of employment, organisation and group structures, and role and authority relations), and *conflict* (to be analysed below).

In a critical review of the field, Blain and Gennard (1970) suggest that there are three competing industrial relations theories: the 'systems model', the 'Oxford approach', and an industrial sociology view. The systems model is attributed primarily to Dunlop (1958) who, influenced by Parsons and Smelser, argued that an industrial relations system could be regarded as a sub-system of industrial society analogous with the economic sub-system (see Chapter 2), The Oxford approach, according to Blain and Gennard, takes industrial relations to be the study of the institutions of job regulation, which seems an unduly narrow position to attribute to, for example, many of the writers of the Donovan Commission research papers (extensively reviewed by Turner, 1968). The industrial sociology approach is said to reject the special emphasis given to rule determination by the other approaches and to favour the development of sociological models of conflict. Blain and Gennard, however, prefer the systems model, though they want it to take into account the process by which the rules of the system are determined. A similar point is made by Wood *et al.* (1975), who thinks that the industrial relations system should be viewed as a rule-making 'action' system and not as a system of rules *per se*.

On the other hand, Hyman (1975, p. 11) believes that to accept the definition of industrial relations as job regulation is to share the traditional concern of conservative sociologists with the 'problem of order'. He maintains that the notion of an industrial relations system is of analytical value only if it incorporates the existence of contradictory processes and forces, and hence treats instability and stability as of equal significance as 'system outcomes'.

When first put forward by Dunlop, the systems perspective had the merit of drawing scholars away from descriptive work to an attempt to place empirical data within some theoretical framework. But, on the whole, the perspective has tended to bedevil and obscure work at both a theoretical and practical level (Fatchett and Whittingham, 1976). Models which place greater emphasis on action and structure, and which take greater account of the potential significance of conflict, would now appear to offer more promise.

Productivity bargaining

An important development in the system of collective negotiations between management and unions in the 1960s was the growth of productivity bargaining. At its simplest, this is an aspect of wagework bargaining in which workers or their representatives accept changes in methods of working that contribute to higher productivity, in return for increases in earnings (Daniel, 1970). But there are implications which have made this less simple in practice. It requires new ways of thinking and makes new demands on managers and supervisors; it is a challenge to some long-established and cherished trade union principles (including the raising of funda mental ideological issues about what should be

the relations between employers and unions); and it represents a change in the socioeconomic status of groups of employees that may disturb the relations between roles and rewards.

The early productivity agreements, of which the one at Esso Fawley is the classic case (Flanders, 1964) aimed at reducing or eradicating overtime, reducing levels of manning, and increasing flexibility between operatives and craftsmen and among craftsmen. These agreements were largely confined to capital-intensive process industries such as oil and chemicals. Successful productivity agreements were later negotiated in labour-intensive service industries like British Rail and the Post Office, and some of these have included attempts to achieve additional aims such as improved industrial relations and restructuring of jobs to give workers more involvement and satisfaction.

However, in recent years the popularity of productivity bargaining as an isolated measure has tended to decline. It was pioneered by the more efficient and progressive firms and had more to do with the scope for changing work practices than with productivity as such (Towers *et al.,* 1972, p. 36). The rigorous application of the prices and incomes policy, especially from 1965 to 1969, encouraged the negotiation of productivity agreements. But since then there have been growing fears among trade unionists of rising unemployment in the wake of productivity agreements. Also employers and the government have become sceptical about the real improvement in productivity resulting from some 'productivity agreements'.

Industrial conflict

We are concerned here with the processes of development and resolution of strikes and other forms of industrial action (such as threats to strike, working to rule, go-slows and overtime bans), and the circumstances in which these characteristically take place. We also need to note the opposing approaches to industrial conflict behaviour which see it either as an exceptional disturbance to a normally 'peaceful' system or as endemic to the kind of economy and society in which we live.

An excellent, if somewhat dated, analysis of industrial relations in coalmining is given by Scott and his colleagues (1963) in which strikes are treated in a more general context of industrial conflict. Their findings contradict the commonly-held assumption that conflict in industry is necessarily harmful or always associated with inefficiency. They analyse conflict into two types and two ways in which it is expressed:

(1) *Basic* conflict exists when a group feels that its share in rewards is unjust from a long-term point of view.

(2) *Procedural* conflict arises from disagreements about short-term variations in rewards and conditions of work.

Also, conflict may be expressed in either an organised or unorganised way, the former being a group reaction to the vagaries of the industrial situation, and the latter being a more personal reaction to its frustrations. The higher-status groups more often engage in organised conflict, which requires a certain sense of group solidarity if it is to be carried through successfully.

Margerison (1969) makes a rather different analysis of types of conflict, which lends itself remarkably well to the threefold division of this book. As with our divisions, he stresses that his types are not mutually exclusive:

(1) *Distributive* conflict relates to disputes that arise in the making or operation of the economic contract or wage-work bargain. This type of conflict may emerge from the market situation outside the firm.
(2) *Structural* conflict relates to the problems that emerge from the interactions within the formal structure of the organisation. It is usually the result of failure to structure the organisation properly—or failure to adapt its structure in times of change —to deal with role and authority problems.
(3) Thirdly, *human relations* conflict is at the role-person level -exemplified by a clash of personalities, or people with differing views disrupting social relations (not a trivial occurrence, since in the last resort all conflict is manifested at this level).

These three types of conflict are typically resolved in different ways; distributive conflict by collective bargaining, structural by management agreeing to restructure the organisation, and human relations by what are traditionally called leadership and 'manmanagement'.

There has been controversy concerning Britain's relative proneness to strikes, though the issue seems to have died down in recent years with the reduction in the number of working days lost through strikes—an average of 10m. a year in 1976–9 compared with 16m. in 1970–2 (Central Statistical Office, 1980b). Turner (1969) has argued that the assumptions as to the frequency, character and costs of strikes in Britain, made in Labour and Conservative statements and in the Donovan Report, are highly dubious, because differences in definition and reporting make international strike statistics unreliable. McCarthy (1970) disagreed, adding that Britain's strike problem takes two forms:

(1) A steady upward creep of small-scale unconstitutionalism which sometimes results in the creation of a strike-prone group in particular firms or plants.

(2) The fact that sometimes unconstitutionalism results in the odd strike which causes a disproportionate amount of damage to the national economy and results in large numbers of workers who are not involved being laid off.'

There is more room to disagree with the terminology than with the substance of those remarks.

Some of the factors making for high strike proneness are: a single industry community, little occupational differentiation, geographical or social isolation of the group from the wider society, and high group cohesion (Eldridge, 1968). Those are some of the predisposing environmental factors; the actual *causes* of strikes are to be sought in the functions they serve to those who take part. According to Hyman (1972, p. 131), these are: a means of withdrawal from the work situation; a display of aggression; and a calculative attempt to obtain alterations in the work situation or the employment relationship.

To obtain a fuller picture of the causes of specific disputes one needs to take into account industrial differences, if not more local conditions. Thus Clack (1967) found that it was not (as is sometimes claimed) interunion relations that caused strikes in the car industry, but either the instability of employment or earnings or the wage structure and wage system. Also many workers felt that if satisfactory settlement of an issue could not be obtained at departmental level, there was a possibility that the issue might become distorted or merged with other issues at the higher levels of procedure. This helps to explain why 'unconstitutionalism' has increasingly been resorted to, and it points to the need for better and more acceptable procedures.

Perhaps the best fairly recent case-history of a strike is that written by Lane and Roberts (1971) about the Pilkington St Helens glassworks dispute. Started through an error in wage-calculation in one department leading to a spontaneous eruption from the shop-floor, it brought out about 8,500 men for seven weeks in support of a big wage claim. The remoteness of the General and Municipal Workers' Union leaders from the shopfloor undoubtedly played a part, but the exhilarated feeling of rebelling against the routine of factory life cannot be discounted: The way some of the men were talking it was as though they had done something big for the first time in their lives.'

RECOMMENDED READING

Allen, V.L. (1971), *The Sociology of Industrial Relations* (London, Longman) Takes a dynamic approach and advocates that the sociology of industrial relations should be treated as a discipline.

Bain, G.S. (1970), *The Growth of White-Collar Unionism* (Oxford, Clarendon Press) Seeks to explain the major factors which determine the growth of white-collar unionism, with detailed analysis of the pattern in 1964.

Banks, J.A. (1974), *Trade Unionism* (London, Collier-Macmillan) Analyses trade unions in several countries as instruments of collective bargaining, social change and democratic participation.

Clegg, H.A. (1976), *The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain* (Oxford, Blackwell) A textbook covering work groups, trade union structure and government, bargaining, strikes, the role of the state and the reform of industrial relations.

Cooper, B.M. and Bartlett. A.F. (1976), *Industrial Relations: a Study in Conflict* (London, Heinemann) Analyses the dynamics of industrial relations conflict situations and evaluates strategies to resolve them

Eldridge, J.E.T. (1968), *Industrial Disputes: Essays in the Sociology of Industrial Relations* (London, Routledge) Offers a sociological explanation of strikes, demarcation and other disputes, with case-studies of particular industries.

Fox, A. (1974), *Beyond Contract: Work, Power and Trust Relations* (London, Faber) Explores the principles by which men organise, regulate and reward themselves for the production and distribution of goods and services.

Hyman, R. and Fryer, R.H. (1975), 'Trade Unions: Sociology and Political Economy', in J.B.McKinlay, ed. *Processing People* (London, Holt, Rinehart) A thorough review of union structure, membership, goals, policy and democracy, organisation theory and industrial relations.

Roberts, B.C., ed. (1968), *Industrial Relations: Contemporary Problems and Perspectives* (London, Methuen) A collection of papers on trade unions, collective bargaining, conditions of work, legal perspectives, etc.

Towers, B. *et al.,* eds (1972), *Bargaining for Change* (London, George Allen &. Unwin) An analysis of factors contributing to the rise and decline of productivity bargaining.

PART THREE

ASPECTS OF OCCUPATIONS

Chapter 12
Occupations, Changes and their Consequences

In this third part of the book we turn to an area which is sometimes described as the sociology of work and occupations. The essential concern is with the social roles which individuals play in the industrial structure or in specific types of work organisation, and the implications that these roles have for them as persons. In this chapter we deal with some salient features of the labour force, the mobility of labour and the problem of redundancy, correlates of occupational membership, the process by which some occupations come to be recognised as professions, and the comparatively new question of seeking improvements in the quality of working life.

THE LABOUR FORCE

The labour force consists of three categories of people: those in paid employment (full or part-time), those who are registered as available for work, and those who are available for work but not registered as such. American labour-force statistics cover all three of these categories, but British statistics cover only the first two groups.

In Great Britain the labour force now consists of about 25 million persons out of a total population of about 54 million. The proportion of the labour force in the total population is important because the balance is made up of dependants who must be economically supported by the working population. Three factors are likely to result in a continuation of the falling proportion of working to dependant population: (1) raising the school-leaving age to 16 in 1972, (2) a lower average age of retirement and (3) a longer expectation of life in retirement.

One of the problems caused by an ageing population is the extent to which the community as a whole is willing to devote a larger proportion of its wealth to the growing group of ‘non-producers’. One alternative is to provide employment, perhaps different from that done in the main part of working life, for those who have reached retiring age but are willing, and in some cases even eager, to continue working. Other consequences of an ageing labour force include its

Table 3

	1961	*1971*
Employers and managers	7·7	9·0
Professional employees	2·2	2·9
Non-manual workers	25·2	28·8
Manual workers	46·3	41·6
Agricultural workers	1·8	1·2
Other groups	16·8	16·5
	100·0	100·0

effect on incentives (the elderly are more concerned with security) and the possibilities of advancement for younger people.

Considerable changes have taken place during the last few decades in both the industrial and occupational distribution of the labour force. The industries which have employed increasing numbers of workers in recent years include miscellaneous services, and national and local government service. Those with decreasing numbers of employees include agriculture and fishing, mining and construction. There has been an increasing proportion of employers and managers, professional employees and non-manual workers. Even in so short a period as one decade, the changes are substantial, as can be seen from Table 3.

MOBILITY

Occupational or labour mobility refers generally to the movement of workers. This movement can be of six types: (1) in or out of the labour force, (2) changes in the content of the job, (3) changes in the employer, (4) changes in the occupation or skills used, (5) changes in the industry or ends to which skills are put, and (6) changes in the geographical place of work (Hauser, 1954, p. 11). Quite often one kind of change involves another. Occupational mobility is also sometimes used to describe a comparison of father's and son's occupation (intergenerational mobility) and in this sense it is an important factor in social mobility.

Official data are available on labour mobility in Britain, since the subject is important to employment, recruitment and retraining policies. The latest available figures at the time of writing suggest that there are approximately 9 million instances of people leaving their employer each year, of which roughly half are people moving directly from one employer to another. About one-quarter of the employer-changers do so more than once a year. The incidence of employer change is higher among females, younger workers and those in the unskilled and labouring categories *(Department of Employment Gazette, 1975).*

When occupational mobility is used in the sense of father-to-son changes, the father's occupation is usually cross-classified by the son's. For example, if 60,

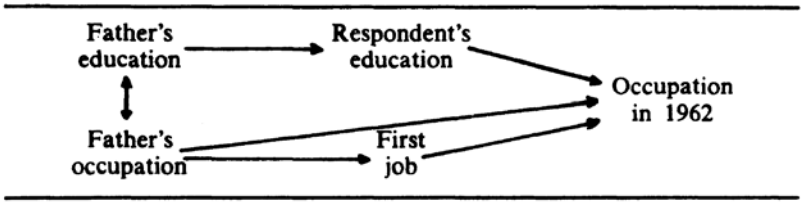

Figure 1

per cent of the sons of professional fathers are professionals (40 per cent mobile), while 20 per cent of the sons of clerks are clerks (80 per cent mobile), the latter are said to be twice as mobile as the former (Rogoff, 1953, p. 29). But this measure does not take into account the number of positions available in each occupational class. If, for example, there are three times more unskilled workers than professional workers then we should expect three times more mobility into unskilled work than into professional work. Total mobility is the result of structural or availability factors plus personal or group factors. We must therefore ask whether movement within the occupational structure is more restricted for some groups than for others, since it is a question of share of opportunities.

Whether movements are measured in raw numbers, percentages or departures from standardised expectations, upward mobility exceeds that of downward mobility. This is partly because some of the occupational groups near the top of the status hierarchy (professional and white-collar) have expanded rapidly, whereas some of those near the bottom (agricultural and unskilled workers) have contracted. A second factor is that of differential fertility—the tendency of the wealthier to have fewer children. Because families of higher occupational status have generally had less than their proportionate share of children, room is left for others to rise into that status.

An important inquiry concerning occupational mobility was carried out in America by Blau and Duncan (1967). Using census and original survey data, they developed a path model of intergenerational mobility, the basic version of which is shown in Figure 1. The model depicts the various influences on the status of a respondent's first job and on his occupation in 1962. The respondent's own educational attainment is most strongly correlated with the status of his first job, followed by father's occupation and (indirectly) by father's education. Also, occupational status in 1962 was influenced by respondent's education—more strongly than by the status of his first job.

We may briefly consider some further factors which influence intragenerational occupational mobility. The state of the labour market plays a big part. Voluntary movement is slight when job opportunities are few, and when

they are more plentiful differentials in earnings and fringe-benefits become more important in explaining mobility. Wilensky (1960) has noted the effect of type of employing organisation. Those in organisations with 'tall' hierarchies (affording careers with many stages) and with a high ratio of managers to managed are more likely to experience mobility than those in organisations with a long, prescribed training-period. Finally, Broom and Smith (1963) have coined the term 'bridging occupation' to describe an occupation which provides, through work experience, the conditions and opportunities for movement from one occupation to another.

REDUNDANCY

Redundancy—officially defined as occurring when the 'reason for dismissal is that the employer's needs for employees to do work of a particular kind have diminished or ceased'—has been increasing in recent years. The end of the post-war sellers' market, inflation, and the uncertain outlook for British industry as a whole have combined to make increasing numbers of employers go out of business or reduce costs by making part of their labour force redundant. In 1965 the government introduced the Redundancy Payments Act, which now provides for a statutory payment (with a minimum qualifying period of two years) of up to £3,600 to employees made redundant. The sociological significance of this Act is that it recognises that employees in effect accumulate 'property' rights in a job and deserve to be compensated if they lose it through no fault of their own. By 1971 the annual rate at which workers were made redundant with a statutory payment had reached 370,000, falling in 1973 to less than half that figure, but rising again by 1979 to 250,000, when the average payment was £900.

An official survey carried out in 1969 showed that people who lost their jobs through redundancy generally fared worse than those who changed jobs for other reasons (Parker *et al.,* 1971). Five out of six redundant workers were able to get other jobs within a year of redundancy, but less than half of those aged 60–64 were able to do so. People who did find post-redundancy employment tended to lose rather than gain in the skill level of their job, the income from it, pension rights, fringe-benefits and job satisfaction.

Apart from the large-scale official survey, there have been several smaller case-studies which have gone beyond a purely descriptive account and have attempted a sociological analysis of redundancy situations. Thus Martin and Fryer (1973) studied redundancy in one large manufacturing plant, but did so as an exercise in the sociology of work. They analysed the redundancy situation from a social-action perspective, that is, in terms of the redundant workers' definitions of the situation and the way in which such definitions were related to the structure of the community and the plant in which they took place. In this particular case, according to Martin and Fryer, the workers interpreted the world

'traditionally', that is, the world was accepted as it is and aspirations were limited. In other cases reactions to redundancy have been more revolutionary, exemplified by 'work-ins' and 'sit-ins' (Brannen *et* al., 1976, p. 15).

OCCUPATIONAL ROLES

The scope and pervasiveness of occupational roles are important aspects of the sociology of occupations. *Role* denotes the recognised part played by an individual in a social organisation. The *scope* of an occupational role refers to the extent of the part that the incumbent plays in the work organisation, while *pervasiveness* indicates its degree of penetration into other life-roles. The higher the status of an occupation, the more numerous and specific its role elements tend to be (Weinstock, 1963). Thus only a few requirements for the position of floor-sweeper are imposed, since this occupation involves only some limited, well-defined central elements and virtually no peripheral elements; whereas the position of an executive in a large company requires many more qualities than those of formal competence.

The pervasiveness of an occupational role bears no direct relation to its status. Some highly pervasive occupations, such as that of village policeman, carry relatively low status (though often high *prestige*) while less pervasive occupations, such as that of industrialist, are accorded high status. Banton (1965, p. 40) spells out the difference between more and less pervasive occupational roles, though his example of blacksmith might be replaced by almost any one who has a 'nine-to-five' job over which there is relatively lax social control: 'blacksmith is a role which someone assumes for part of the day only; when he has finished work the incumbent is not expected to behave in any way different from people who are not blacksmiths.' This role is contrasted with that of the policeman, who has obligations he is supposed never to lay aside. Being a policeman usually comes to affect a man's whole outlook on life.

Some occupational roles, because of the element of service to others that they involve, tend to pervade the rest of life. Social workers in general, and residential social workers in particular, may find it neither easy nor appropriate to stop being of service to others in their off-duty hours (Parker, 1972). On the other hand, the navvies studied by Sykes (1969a, b) showed a distinct reluctance to identify with their occupational role; none of them regarded themselves as permanent civil-engineering workers but talked constantly of giving it up.

CORRELATES OF OCCUPATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

For much evidence of correlates of occupational membership we have to rely on social-class data rather than specifically occupational data. Even research on the latter is very limited in Britain, though findings from other countries suggest that

occupational membership has a pervasive effect on the length and quality of individual lives. Thus Pavalko (1971, p. 198) quotes American data showing that for all age groups professional employees had lower death-rates than labourers, for example, in the age group 45–54 the death-rate was 9–4 for professionals and 14.5 for labourers. Infant death-rates in Britain vary considerably according to the social class of the father: in 1958 the mortality ratio for infants of social class 5 fathers (unskilled) was nearly twice as high as for those of class 1 fathers (professional) (Butler and Banham, 1963, p. 20).

Suicide-rates are generally higher for white-collar and professional groups than for manual workers, but there are significant differences within these broad occupational groups that reflect particular types of work experience. Lonely occupations, such as domestic service and lodging-house keeping, have high suicide-rates, while occupations which bring men into close contact with each other, such as miners and the clergy, have low suicide-rates. Concerning mental health generally, American evidence shows that neurosis is concentrated in higher classes and psychosis in lower classes, and that there are differences in diagnosis and methods of treatment between members of different classes with the same disorder (Hollingshead and Redlich, 1958).

One of the more complex correlates of occupational membership is that of social conformity. High-status occupations include those giving personal freedom and a high degree of immunity from moral sanctions. But occupations associated with 'sacred elements' or charged with social responsibility require their practitioners to function as models or examples. These two points mean that the strictest control over non-work behaviour tends to be found in occupations with important role-setting obligations, identification with sacred symbols, and relatively low status. Those occupations with least control over non-work behaviour tend to have high status and no involvement with sacred elements. Teaching is an example of relatively strict control over non-work behaviour, and advertising of relatively little control.

THE PROFESSIONALISATION PROCESS

The sociological study of professions and the professionalisation process has attracted increasing interest in recent years. As Esland *et al.* (1975, p. 25) point out, it is normal in sociology, as elsewhere, to make a distinction between ordinary occupations and professions. In the earlier and some of the later literature, the main concern has been with delineating the characteristics of professions and with analysing the 'alienation' and dissatisfaction of professionals employed in bureaucracies. More fundamental questions of how the existence and nature of professions is related to the structure of society, or of the societal or political consequences of professional organisation have, until recently, tended to be ignored.

There is disagreement about whether calling some occupations 'professions' helps or hinders sociological analysis. Critics of the approach which centres discussion around the question of whether a particular occupational group *is or is not* a profession have suggested that a more appropriate question is whether the group is *more or less* a profession. This method of treating profession as a variable rather than an ideal-type would seem to have some promise if there were agreement on what criteria to use in assessing the 'more or less'. But, as Pettigrew (1975, p. 258) shows, there is anything but agreement on the criteria of professionalism.

The key to understanding the professionalisation process is the way in which professional membership is used by individuals and groups as a means of advancing their interests. This particularly applies to membership of professional associations. The individual member can and does use membership of, and qualifications obtained from, a professional body as a bargaining instrument in relations with employers (Timperley and Osbaldeston, 1975). As Johnson (1972, p. 45) puts it, a profession is not an occupation but a means of controlling an occupation. Furthermore, the collective power used by members of professional associations has brought about significant changes in the class structures of industrialised societies.

Elliott (1972, p. 147) has looked more closely at the ways in which professions exert their power. Their main competitors in their attempts to define their own ends and means are profit-making organisations and the state. These have taken over from the individual client as the main employers of professionals. Economic authority rests on judgements of what can be manufactured and supplied profitably, within the existing framework of economic institutions. Political authority rests on judgements of what is practical and desirable, given the wishes and interests expressed through the political system. Political authority, on the other hand, appears to be more absolute. The profession claims unique responsibility for some aspect of the public good. It also claims to know how that good should be achieved.

BETTER WORKING LIVES

In recent years there has been an increasing and general concern that work should be 'humanised' and that the quality of working life should be improved. Social scientists have long emphasised the possibility of clashes between modern industrial organisation and the needs of the human personality. The 'machine approach' to human work, exemplified in the programme of scientific management, has also been under recurrent criticism for its alleged dehumanising effect on the worker. Trade unions, enlightened employers, governments and international organisations have all played a part in advocating —and in some cases implementing -measures designed to humanise work.

However, new calls for an improvement in the quality of working life are being made. Beyond the old emphasis on work as a means to the end of the 'good life', it is being insisted that work itself must contribute through the quality of the working environment to the 'good life' (O.E.C.D., 1976, p. 8). This raises the question of what has led to this campaign and exactly what it is that is being sought.

In the words of Kahn (1974, p. 218), the 'humanization of work' is a phrase admittedly more inspiring than precise. It implies some criticism of the present, some set of values on which that criticism is based, and some programme by means of which the goal of humanisation can be attained. Kahn defines the humanisation of work briefly as the process of making work more appropriate, more fitting for an adult human being to perform. He goes on to explain this in terms of work which is not damaging or boring, which is interesting, utilises skills and abilities, and enhances (or at least leaves unimpaired) ability to perform non-work roles.

Another and much wider view of the humanisation of work is put forward by Delamotte and Walker (n.d., p. 4). They see several strands of thought as contributing to the process: (1) the need to protect workers from hazards to health and safety, (2) the concern that workers should have, through the wage-work bargain, an adequate and fair standard of living, (3) the protection of workers against hazards of illness and unemployment, (4) protection against the exercise of arbitrary authority by the employer, (5) the need for meaningful and satisfying work and (6) the need for workers' participation in decisions that affect their working lives. If Kahn's conception is too narrow because too restricted to the content of the work, that of Delamotte and Walker is so wide that it covers almost every effort to improve the lot of workers.

Within the labour movement and elsewhere, attitudes towards the campaign for humanising work have included downright opposition. One argument put forward is that workers are more able to put up with monotonous, fragmentary and repetitive jobs than intellectuals imagine. The answer to this is that such workers' definition of the situation includes the belief that they can do nothing about it. Significantly, in most experiments concerning the reshaping of jobs, workers who participated would not want to return to the old system. Another argument is that workers prefer a life that is not too demanding because their true interests are outside their occupational life. This implies a sort of pre-established harmony between types of workers and types of jobs. To the extent that it also implies contentment with routine and boring jobs, it is refuted by the high turnover and absenteeism of young people in industrial employment.

RECOMMENDED READING

Dunkerley, D. (1975), *Occupations and Society* (London, Routledge) A review of occupational choice, mobility, careers, ideology, the professions and non-work effects of occupations.

Elliott, P. (1972), *The Sociology of the Professions* (London, Macmillan) Relates the growth of professions to a more general analysis of change in the social structure.

Hall, R.H. (1975), *Occupations and the Social Structure,* 2nd edn (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall) A review of the context of occupations, their types and relations with the social structure.

Martin, R. and Fryer, F.M. (1973), *Redundancy and Paternalist Capitalism* (London, George Allen & Unwin) A study of redundancy in one large manufacturing plant, treating it as a sociological rather than an economic problem.

Pavalko, R. (1971), *Sociology of Occupations and Professions* (Ithaca, N.Y., Peacock) A competent overview of the occupation-profession continuum, occupational choice, socialisation and mobility.

Wilson, N.A.B. (1973), *On the Quality of Working Life* (London, HMSO) A short report describing work experiences, summarising social science viewpoints, and making recommendations.

Chapter 13
Work Involvement and its Alternatives

Various options with regard to the role of work in life are open to those men and women who are obliged, or choose, to become employed although, because of the opacity of social processes, they may not be fully aware of these options. They may, in varying degrees, become involved in their work itself, or in some extrinsic aspect of it such as the sociability of the work group. Or they may decide to invest as little of themselves as possible in their work, thereby becoming 'alienated' from it. One response to perceived alienating conditions is to seek greater participation in the decision-making processes in work organisations. Finally, the employee may seek to turn negative alienation from work into positive involvement with non-work life.

WORK INVOLVEMENT AND ALIENATION

We commonly speak of someone as 'involved' in his work if he makes a considerable emotional investment in it—if it 'means a lot to him'. But involvement in that sense is only quantitative, and says nothing about possible different *types*. Involvement may be seen to have three aspects: the meaning that work has to the individual, the source of attachment which he has to work, and the feeling of identification with or alienation from work. We shall consider each of these aspects in turn.

A number of studies have sought to define various meanings of work typically held by people in different occupations or work situations. Weiss and Kahn (1960) found that over three-fourths of their respondents defined work either as activity which was necessary though not enjoyed, or as activity which was scheduled or paid for. The first definition was associated with occupations that permit some autonomy (such as professionals and salespeople), and the second with occupations affording neither autonomy nor social standing (such as factory-workers and labourers).

Friedmann and Havighurst (1954) compared the meaning of work to five occupational groups. The workers of lower skill and socioeconomic status were more likely to see their work as having no other meaning than that of earning

money. Coalminers had a more personal sense than steelworkers of being pitted against their environment, and expressed feelings of accomplishment and pride at having conquered it. Skilled craftsmen showed a very high degree of emphasis on work as a source of self-respect and the respect of others. Salespeople attached many extra-economic meanings to their work, and even routine and association with others became meaningful life-experiences for them. Finally, the physicians were found to stress most the public service aspects of their jobs.

The method used by Morse and Weiss (1955) to study the meaning of work was to ask questions on the hypothesis that the economic necessity for their informants to work was removed. They concluded that to those in middle-class occupations work means having something interesting to do, having a chance to accomplish things, and to contribute. By contrast, those in workingclass occupations view work as synonymous with activity. These differences in work meanings correspond to differences in the content of the jobs. The content of professional, managerial and sales jobs concerns symbols and the handling of 'cases', and so a life without such work would be less purposeful, stimulating and challenging. Working-class occupations emphasise working with tools and machines, and the individual is oriented to the effort rather than to the end—life without work would mean life without anything to do.

There are many ways in which an employee can become attached to his work. A good summary of these sources of attachment to work is given by Dubin *et al.* (1976, p. 290):

(1) Systems of the work environment
    - Self
    - Work group
    - Company
    - Union
    - Craft-profession
    - Industry

(2) Workplace objects and human conditions
    - Technology
    - Product
    - Routine
    - Autonomy
    - Personal space/things

(3) Pay-offs
    - Money
    - Perquisites
    - Power
    - Authority
    - Status
    - Career

Earlier, Dubin had postulated the concept of central life-interest, which he defined operationally as an expressed preference for a given locale or situation in carrying out an activity. He predicted that organisational and technological features of work would represent important sources of work attachment to most industrial employees, but that they would not be attached to work by virtue of primary social relationships with fellow-workers on the job. Both predictions were borne out by at least two-thirds of 14 subsequent studies of sources of central life-interest over a period of nearly 20 years.

Dubin and his colleagues (1976, p. 313) have recently analysed the work-attachment items ranked relatively high by workers with and without a central life-interest in work. They found that workers with a central life-interest in work tended to be attached to items which are positive and outgoing, such as the skill required to do the job, the value of the product or inventing new ways to do the job. The workers with a central life-interest in non-job areas, on the other hand, were attached to their work by being concerned with limiting their self-investment and seeking routinised work with maximum pay-offs. Of this last group, the authors comment that 'their interests lie outside of work, and yet they have important work attachments which clearly defie the possibility of the workers being alienated'. This view needs to be set against other studies of alienation which have come to different conclusions.

The theme of alienation has been a significant part of the Marxist critique of capitalism. Marx referred to alienation as a separation, a detachment of the worker from his work, the products of his labour, his colleagues and himself. Alienation describes both the separation of the worker from the value of his product and the process (inherent in capitalism, with its emphasis on the market and profit) whereby the labour power of the employee becomes a commodity for sale (Esland, 1975, p. 16).

In a more restricted sense, alienation has been widely used to describe the disengagement of self from the occupational role. Frustrated by the lack of meaning in the tasks allotted to him and by his impersonal role in the work organisation, the alienated worker is said to turn to non-work life for values and identity: 'I only work here, but if you want to know me as I really am, come to my home and meet my family' (Berger, 1964, p. 217). Alienation can also take subtler forms among professionals and executives, for whom it may be fashionable to be cynical about one's work but quite 'satisfied' with one's job. Experience of alienation is not confined to a few special occupations, though it tends to be associated with certain types of work situation. In large-scale bureaucracies it is apparent in the administration of men as if they were things (Fromm, 1959). In an automated factory or office it takes the form of increasing the number of people who deal with the world through abstractions.

An important contribution to understanding the nature and correlates of alienation from work has been made by Blauner (1964). In making a comparative analysis of four types of work situation he suggests that alienation is a function of the type of industry in which people work. He analysed the dimensions of alienation as *powerlessness* (inability to control the work process), *meaninglessness* (inability to develop a sense of purpose connecting the job to the overall productive process), *isolation* (inability to belong to integrated industrial communities), and *self-estrangement* (failure to become involved in the activity of work as a mode of self-expression). Blauner compared four types of industry: the general picture was a lack of alienation in craft printing, an increase in machine textiles, a further increase in the assembly-line automobile industry, but a return to something like the printing level in the automated chemical industry. But note should be taken of the criticism of Eldridge (1971) that Blauner's analysis rests too much on type of industry as the determining factor in level of alienation.

On the basis of his own research in a Swedish community, Seeman (1967) has questioned the validity of some of the wider claims made concerning alienation. He found little evidence that alienated work, in the sense of work that is unrewarding in its own right, has the generalised consequences often imputed to it. The alienated worker is not more hostile to ethnic minorities, less knowledgeable and engaged in political matters, less sanguine about or interested in the possibility of exercising control over socio-political events, more status-minded or more anomic. Seeman stresses that cross-cultural validation of these findings is essential, since Swedish society is different in many respects from other industrial societies. He also calls for more study of the social-psychological subtleties of the work process and of what it really means to talk about intrinsically rewarding activities, at work or elsewhere—a call that is partly answered by the excellent case-studies of work reported by Fraser (1968).

PARTICIPATION AND INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

One important way in which workers can become involved in the organisation and conditions of their work is through participating in decision-making. There have been during this century several periods in which there has been an upsurge of interest in, and indeed agitation for, changes in industry which would allow employees to have more control over the conditions of their working lives (Brannen *et al.,* 1976, p. 9). The most recent of these periods has been from the mid-sixties onwards.

The explanation for the increasing interest in workers' participation must be sought both within industry and within the wider society of which it is part. In Britain the 1950s and 1960s were periods of relatively high productivity and high wages. This, coupled with 'welfare state' legislation, led to the development of a

set of rights and expectations concerning social and economic aspects of our society. Given economic prosperity and a new affluence for the mass of people, trade union aspirations were centred on getting the best deal possible for the working class. It was only when the downturn came in the economy, and when jobs and living standards were increasingly threatened, that interest turned from getting the best deal possible from the existing bargaining machinery to changing the machinery itself.

Within industry certain changes had been taking place which reinforced these wider developments. Rapid technological development in the 1960s led to an accelerating rate of obsolescence and high capital costs. Employers and managers were motivated to offset the high costs of new capital equipment by using it as fully as possible, which in turn required fuller use and more flexible deployment of labour. One of the ways in which greater co-operation from workers and their representatives could be obtained was by committing and involving them in the goals of the enterprise. Consequently, various participative experiments were introduced by managements sensitive to the imperatives of technology and the directions of change within the new capitalism.

The concept of workers' participation in industry can take various forms. In its mildest form, it is little more than joint consultation, in which workers' representatives are 'consulted' before management announces its decisions. In its most revolutionary form, it constitutes a demand for 'workers' control', that is, the taking over by workers of managerial functions. In between, there are the situations which, in the words of Balfour (1973, p. 1), take the form of 'meaningful forms of participation in industry through which workers are consulted about, and in turn can influence, the factors which shape their working lives'.

Efforts to secure increased workers' participation in management may be seen from a number of perspectives. The following are adapted from Walker (n.d., pp. 4–7):

(1) *Defence and promotion of workers' interests.* This involves either the taking over of managerial functions in the interests of workers, or workers' intervention to alter managerial decisions which are perceived as detrimental to workers' interests.
(2) *Democracy within the enterprise.* Closely related to the first perspective, this aims at the distribution of power within the enterprise more equally, and at the handling of conflicts of interest by democratic procedures.
(3) *Reduction of alienation and promotion of personal fulfilment.* The emphasis here is on improving the quality of workers' life on the job by helping to humanise it; it is also claimed that by workers taking part in managerial functions their work may be given more meaning.

(4) *Effective utilisation of the human resources of the enterprise.* Essentially a management perspective, this views workers' participation as a contribution to practical efficiency, for example, workers may work harder if they share in decisions that affect them.
(5) *Encouragement of co-operative attitudes and reduction of industrial conflict.* Workers' participation may be proposed as a remedy for defective teamwork and industrial conflict.
(6) *The social responsibilities of the enterprise.* The attempt here is to reconcile the form of control of the enterprise with its social responsibilities, for example, the enterprise may be restructured so as to give representatives of various interests, including those of workers, more say in its operation.

Critical perspectives on workers' participation include the following:

(1) *A brake on efficiency.* Decisions taken by participative processes are said to be less satisfactory than those taken otherwise; participation takes time and effort that could be devoted to other productive activities.
(2) *An illegitimate intrusion upon managerial prerogatives.* Management is held to be responsible to the owners of the enterprise, and cannot legitimately share its authority without abdicating its responsibility.
(3) *An attempt falsely to represent participation as radical change.* It is alleged that workers' participation schemes are merely the latest attempt by employers to control or manipulate their workers by pretending to let them have a say without any real alteration in the power structure.

One new form taken by the evolution of industrial democracy in recent years has been the 'work-in'. Perhaps the best-known instance is that of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (Jenkins, 1974, p. 186). After being refused a state subsidy to offset heavy losses, the firm announced that it was shutting down, thus depriving 6,000 workers of their jobs, The workers spontaneously and massively declared a work-in on the premises, took over control of all the functions, including the payroll, and continued to operate as usual. Eventually, with government co-operation and fresh funds from outside, the yard was saved. But while the revolt lasted, it did show that there was a deep desire of workers to gain more control over decisions which affect their working lives.

In 1975 the Bullock Committee on industrial democracy was set up by the Secretary of State for Trade. Its terms of reference included 'accepting the need for a radical extension of industrial democracy in the control of companies by means of representation on boards of directors…to consider how such an extension can best be achieved' (Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Industrial Democracy, 1977). The majority report recommended that in enterprises employing 2,000 or more people there should be a unitary board

comprising management, employee and neutral representatives. The minority report advocated a two-tier system: workerdirectors should sit only on supervisory boards, not on main boards. Publication of the report raises a number of issues, including how far its proposals, if put into effect, would increase workers' direct participation and control in the immediate work situation, which may be seen as basic to any truly representative system.

THE 'LEISURE' ALTERNATIVE

One possible alternative to being involved in work is to choose to become involved in some aspect of non-work life, such as family life or leisure. Having dealt with the relationship between work and family life in an earlier chapter, we shall concentrate here on the work-leisure relationship. It may be held that most people have a more or less fixed amount of 'involvement potential' which they can choose to invest in either work or leisure. But research suggests that this is by no means the normal case. Rather, it seems that there are alternative types of work-leisure relationship, and that some people choose (or otherwise find themselves in) occupations which encourage involvement both in work and non-work life, while others fail to become involved in either work or leisure and tend to play passive roles in both spheres.

Studies of the effect of work on the leisure of various types of employees can help us to evaluate the possibility of substituting leisure for work as a source of involvement. Friedmann (1960) quotes a study of the leisure occupations of employees at the Postal Cheque Centre in Paris, whose jobs are completely routine. On leaving the office these clerks are either much more active or with draw into themselves in a sort of apathy. But a different pattern of work and leisure is shown by those non-manual employees whose work demands more involvement and responsibility. From their survey, Heckscher and DeGrazia (1959) report that the way of life of the American business executive permits no clear-cut distinction between work and leisure. To counteract the encroachment of work on leisure time, the executive's work is penetrated by qualities that we would normally associate with leisure.

Another pointer to leisure as an alternative source of involvement to work is the choice that people make between having more income or more leisure (Parker, 1976, p. 67). Given the separation between work and leisure which requires one to work 'for a living', the question arises of how much one should work so as to have both time and money for leisure. Some economists argue that, after people receive a comfortable margin over what they consider to be necessary, they will not seek additional work. This is no doubt true of most simpler, non-industrial societies, but the evidence is that among the economically advanced nations of the world more people prefer additional work or a second job to more leisure. In 1969 two out of five 'moonlighters' in the United States

claimed a need for additional income for *regular* household expenses (Moore and Hedges, 1971). There may come a time when most people will choose more leisure instead of more income, but that time is not imminent.

Can leisure involvement adequately compensate for lack of work involvement? The evidence of social scientists does not, in general, support the compensation hypothesis. In consequence of his study of alienation in various forms of work, Blauner concluded that the problem with the leisure solution is that it underestimates the fact that work remains the single most important activity for most people in terms of time and energy. The leisure solution ignores the subtle ways in which the quality of one's work-life affects the quality of one's leisure.

Argyris, too, is critical of the idea that leisure can be used as compensation for work and that there is a kind of trade-off between the two spheres (1973). The model of man used in personality and organisation theory would require that the compensation theory be rejected. The logic is as follows. If individuals tend to experience dependence, submission, frustration, conflict and short time-perspective at work, and if they adapt to these conditions by psychological withdrawal, apathy, indifference, and a decrease in the sense of importance of their worth as human beings, these adaptive activities become more important in the person's life and they will guide his leisure behaviour outside the workplace. Individuals will seek leisure activities that are consonant with the adaptive activities.

Finally, Crozier (1971, p. 189) concluded from his study of the world of the office-worker that 'generally there does not seem to be as much competition as one might have thought between different types of leisure-time activities; great activity in one area often seems to be accompanied by great activity in other areas'. He remarks of the leisure and work relationship that it is 'only rarely in the order of compensation'. It seems that there is more to be said for the 'spillover' hypothesis and that involvement, like life itself, is of a piece.

RECOMMENDED READING

Crozier, M. (1971), *The World of the Office Worker* (Chicago, Chicago University Press) A comparative survey of attitudes of employees and supervisors in six Parisian insurance companies.

Dickson, P. (1977), *Work Revolution* (London, Allen & Unwin) Brings together detailed descriptions of several experiments in new forms of work organisation and management.

Dubin, R. *et al.* (1976), Attachment to Work in *A Handbook of Work, Organisation and Society* (New York, Rand McNally) A comprehensive review of the features of their work to which workers become attached.

Haworth, J.T. and Smith, M.A. (1975), *Work and Leisure* (London, Lepus Books) A collection of papers, originally presented to a conference, covering many aspects of the work-leisure relationship.

Jenkins, C. and Sherman, B. (1979), *The Collapse of Work* (London, Eyre Methuen) Examines the social and economic consequences of technological developments, especially unemployment.

Jenkins, D. (1974), *Job Power* (London, Heinemann) An assessment of industrial democracy based on a review of experiments in various countries.

Levinson, C., ed. (1974), *Industry's Democratic Revolution* (London, George Allen & Unwin) A collection of papers on industrial democracy by authors in eleven countries, with an extensive overview by the editor.

Chapter 14
The Subjective Experience of Work

Part of industrial sociology is to discover the ways in which people in industry define their life-positions and learn sets of symbolisms, and to explain the organisational consequences of the views which people hold of themselves (Turner, 1971, p. vii). One aspect of the subjective experience of work—involvement and its alternatives was dealt with in Chapter 13. There are a number of other relevant concepts, and our first task is to try to define them in relation to each other and to see to what extent different terms are used in the same or very similar senses. There are two broad groups of concepts: those relating to the evaluation of work as a social activity or institution, and those relating to the subjective experience of particular work roles.

The first group consists of two concepts, ideology and value. A work *ideology* is held by the members of a society generally or by a particular social group and refers to a clustering of lower-order concepts such as values, attitudes, beliefs and opinions. It applies to those concepts and rules that function to maintain or challenge some part of the social order and that also serve to allay fears and create hopes. Sometimes the terms 'ethos' and 'image of society' are used to denote something very similar to ideology. Work *values* are more specific 'conceptions of the desirable' by which a particular society or group judges features of work to be good or bad. The differences between these two concepts should become clear as we examine research dealing with them in the sections below.

The group of concepts referring to the subjective experience of work roles includes, from the more general to the less: attitudes, motivation and satisfaction. There is a link between attitudes and" values in that a work *attitude* describes the general approach that a person has to his work as a result of accepting or rejecting certain values of his society or group. *Motivation* usually refers to a specific job or narrow range of jobs rather than to work in general, and constitutes the factors that pull people towards achieving certain goals through the work. Finally, *satisfaction,* which is also normally job-specific, is a function of the discrepancy between what a worker expects, or thinks he should get, and what he actually experiences in the work situation.

WORK IDEOLOGY

It has been suggested that the post-war period has seen an 'end of ideology'—a drying-up of radicalism, and a turning of concern towards culture and status rather than politics (Bell, 1961). Though by no means free from ambiguity, ideology in one sense denotes a coherent and long-term system of beliefs by which to guide our short-term actions and considerations. Thus to claim an end of ideology may be to claim either that we have arrived at a consensus about social goals or that we have lost interest in them. There is, however, another view. According to Fox (1971, pp. 124–32), ideology is a resource in the struggle for power, since it shapes the ways in which men perceive, think, feel and act. In the world of work this is to say that there are *competing* ideologies, even though one of these may be dominant in a given context. Specifically, we may examine the extent to which management and labour have developed different or complementary ideologies related to work.

Bendix (1974) has shown that a 'managerial ideology' has developed that serves to justify the power of management in terms of basic cultural values; further, this ideology characterises not just the business community, but virtually the total American society. The same may be said of British society. Management apologists seek to propagate an ideology that justifies management behaviour, legitimises its rule, and evokes loyalty and commitment on the part of lower as well as higher participants. As Fox remarks, this ideology consists of assorted notions to suit varying exigencies, sometimes quite incompatible with each other. Thus what are described as 'incentives' for managers become 'bribes' when they have to be offered to wage-earners. But in general managerial ideology stresses a unitary conception of the organisation. It is at once a method by which managers reassure themselves that a basic harmony exists that is opposed only by a misguided or malicious minority; an instrument to persuade their employees and the public at large that there is such a harmony; and a technique of seeking legitimation of their authority.

Trade unions and other employee associations also have their ideologies, though these tend to be more variable than those of management. At one extreme, some white-collar staff associations have an ideology virtually indistinguishable from that of management, stressing the validity and desirability of collaboration. At the other extreme, some unions pursue militant policies based on an ideology of opposition and challenge to management, appealing to the solidarity of all workers and ultimately the brotherhood of man. Even in these cases, however, there is at the level of the union as an organisation an ideological commitment to acceptance of the existing basic system of control.

Ideologies are mainly apparent at the level of large collectivities or whole societies, but may also be a feature of workers in a particular occupation. Long-established crafts, such as the compositors studied by Cannon (1967), tend to

develop their own radical ideologies as part of a sense of occupational community. Silverman (1968) has suggested that there is a relationship between the ideologies of groups of clerical workers and the type of organisation for which they work. In particular, he found that clerks in contact with manual workers were more likely to emphasise the social distance between white-collar and manual workers than were those not in contact. He explained this by the greater status-consciousness of the group in contact, brought about by a face-to-face view of diminishing differentials that conflicted with their aspiration to management positions.

WORK VALUES

Much of the research on work values has been concerned with the ways in which they are internalised during the process of occupational choice and training. One of the earliest but most comprehensive and theoretically enlightened studies is that of Rosenberg and his associates (1957). They gathered data on a nationwide basis of American students' preferences, expectations and aspirations in the work sphere. In general, students fell into three groups: those who ask what rewards they will get from their work; those who ask whether it will be a challenging, creative experience; and those who ask whether they will enjoy working with the people. Students planning to enter different occupations exhibited these values in varying proportions; for example, 'people-oriented' values were most strongly expressed by students planning to enter social work, medicine, social science and personnel work. Thus the relationship between occupational values and the nature of the work suggests that what the student wants from his work delimits and channels the range of occupations in which he might become interested. Several other investigators have examined the relationship between values and prospective careers, including the development of identification with an occupation (for example, Cotgrove and Box, 1970).

Moving to the level of the occupational world itself, Lyman (1955) compared the two broad groups of white-collar and blue-collar workers for differences in values attached to work. She concluded that the former emphasised the nature of the work itself and freedom, and the latter the physically easy nature of the work, the economic rewards, conditions of work and cleanliness. These differences were not a function of differences in job satisfaction, for when satisfaction was held constant a pattern of different reasons for liking or disliking jobs was found. However, she noted the difficulty that the results might be open to other interpretations than value-differences, for example, differences in what is taken for granted.

An example of different value-orientations of two groups of employees doing roughly the same kind of tasks is given by Boggs (1963). Laboratory-workers were divided into professionals and technicians, largely on the basis of education

and prestige. It was found that the professionals were far more likely to say that the kind of work they did was the most important thing about a life's work, while the technicians more often said that security or pay was the most important thing. One explanation of this difference in values is that the professionals expected to participate more fully in all phases of their work and were more often rewarded socially for doing so.

WORK ATTITUDES

Work attitudes describe the general approach that people take to their work as a result of having certain values. In this context the term 'orientation' means much the same as attitude, that is, a readiness to respond to aspects of work in terms of the values held. There have been many studies of the attitudes of people in various occupations and work situations. The findings of such studies may be grouped according to a small number of significant variables. The manual/non-manual categories, levels of skill, and age groups are obvious examples, though work situation variables such as degree of autonomy and social interaction are also important. To illustrate briefly some consequences of these variables for work attitudes we may select four groups of occupations which together account for a large proportion of the labour force: professionals, clerks, skilled craftsmen, and semi-skilled factory workers.

Caplow (1964) notes a number of features of professional work that combine to produce typical attitudes. These features are: the distinction drawn between co-professionals and laymen, the concentration of interest which marks the professional career, the long period of training, and informal association outside working hours. The professional attitude to work is often contrasted with the bureaucratic attitude. The former is characteristic of the 'cosmopolitan', who tends to have a relatively low loyalty to his employing organisation, a high commitment to his role skills and an 'outgroup' reference, while the bureaucrat typically shows high loyalty to his employing organisation, low commitment to role skills and an 'ingroup' reference (Gouldner, 1957).

The work attitudes of clerks reflect their varied work situations and social-class affiliations. As Lockwood (1958) has shown, the older, more paternalistic work relations and environment of the clerk precluded any sense of identification with other types of worker, and led to individualistic aspirations to advancement akin to those of professionals. But as office units have become larger and working relationships and techniques more impersonal and standardised—in short, more like those of the factory—group feeling, collective action and a 'trade union' attitude to earnings and working conditions have developed among clerks.

As a representative of skilled craft occupations we may take the printer. Studies both in Britain and America have described the nature of the

'occupational community' in which printers tend to live. Lipset and his colleagues (1956) show that intrinsic interest in the craft tends to promote a high degree of participation in the work organisation and particularly in union activities. The members of occupational communities see themselves in terms of their occupational role and their reference group is composed of other members of the occupational community. Salaman (1971a) suggests that these attitudes are related to involvement in the work tasks, marginal status and the inclusiveness of the work or organisational situation.

The fourth group whose attitudes we may consider are semiskilled factory-workers. Car assembly-workers have been the subject of several studies in America. A much discussed inquiry in Britain by Goldthorpe and his colleagues (1968a) broadly confirms the American findings that the car-worker is typically alienated from his work, attached to his job only as a means of earning comparatively high wages, and is in some senses a prototype of the 'new working class'. But they go on to develop a theoretical explanation of the orientation to work of these employees. They criticise both the 'human relations' school and the 'technological implications' approach: the former for supposing that men seek from their work not only money but also approval, recognition, and so on; and the latter for claiming that assembly-line technology generates more conflict between workers and their supervisors or managers than other technologies. Instead, they point to the significance of the wants and expectations that men bring to their work, and suggest that this prior 'orientation' shapes the attitudinal and behavioural patterns of their working lives as a whole. In the cases they studied the orientation to work was clearly instrumental and hence, they argued, the absence of such features of employment as solidary work groups or employee-centred supervision was unlikely to produce any marked degree of frustration or discontent.

Goldthorpe and his colleagues maintain a *sociological* view of orientation to work, that is, they see it as socially generated and sustained. But there is also a *psychological* view (Darley and Hagenah, 1968) which claims that the individual's occupational interests are well determined before job experience and that people of certain personality, perceptual habits, and value-types characteristically seek out occupations that permit the free play of these behaviours. On the other hand, Kohn and Schooler (1969) draw conclusions from their survey that are closer to Daniel's (1969) criticism of orientation. They see occupational experiences as permeating men's views, not only of work and of their role in work, but also of the world and of self. They distinguish between conditions of work that facilitate intrinsic interest in the job and those that limit men's views of the job primarily to the extrinsic benefits it provides.

While not wishing to underestimate the role either of psychological differences or of social factors in prior orientations to work, we may adduce one further piece of evidence in support of the independent effect of work situation

variables on attitudes. Lieberman (1956) noted the effect of role changes on attitudes. Workers who were made foremen became more favourable to management (though if demoted they reverted to worker attitudes), while those who were made shop stewards became more favourable to the union.

THE MOTIVATION TO WORK

There is a link between this section and the next on work satisfaction, in that the factors which motivate a person to work may be regarded as prospective 'satisfiers'. A good deal of research has been carried out by industrial psychologists on motives and incentives, mainly in the service of management. As Fein (1976) puts it,

> 'managers all over the world have long sought the secret of how to release the motivation genie. The payoff from increased productivity of human work would be enormous. But judging from practices in industry…the genie remains locked in his magic urn.'

Rush's (1969) study of managers' views of behavioural science showed that the theories of McGregor and Herzberg had been the most influential. McGregor (1960) is best known for his Theory X and Theory Y concepts, which are really underlying beliefs about the nature of man that influence managers to adopt either the conventional X strategy of controlling workers by the carrot and stick technique or the Y strategy based on self-direction. McGregor's main thesis is that workers have a need to find fulfilment at their work. If they do not, they will feel deprived, resulting in a work force negatively inclined to management's goals. However, Korman (1970) points out that the McGregor theory has only been tested once as a theory of performance in an industrial context, and that test provided little or no support.

Herzberg's theory parallels that of McGregor in many ways, also stemming from concepts of needs and self-actualisation. Herzberg *et al.* (1959) put forward a two-factor theory of motivation-hygiene, which postulates that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposite ends of a continuum. He believes that motivation is encouraged by satisfaction (job-content factors such as achievement and recognition) and that dissatisfaction is usually with 'hygiene' (job-context factors such as company policy and supervision). The Herzberg theory has been very thoroughly and critically evaluated by Wall and Stephenson (1970). Although their own research findings show the evidence for the two-factor theory to be largely a function of the 'need for social approval', they vindicate the policy of job enrichment as likely to promote satisfaction *and* allay dissatisfaction.

WORK SATISFACTION

There have been several hundred studies of job or work satisfaction, and it is not possible to do more here than to review some of their main conclusions and to draw attention to some of their limitations. (The following summary is based on Parker, 1964; for a more recent review see Davis, 1971.)

Data on satisfaction have been obtained in a number of different ways. The most usual is simply to inquire of the informant whether and in what way he finds his job satisfying. Sometimes the question 'in what way?' is asked in an open form, and sometimes the informant is presented with a list of factors from which to choose or to rank in order. Another method is to ask what makes a job good or bad. A more sophisticated approach is first to posit certain needs in relation to work and then to ask about the degree to which these are actually satisfied.

Many occupations have been the subject of work satisfaction studies, though factory and office work have predominated. Among skilled factory workers and craftsmen intrinsic satisfaction with the work itself is frequently found, especially when the job involves completion of a whole project. Assembly-line workers attach more importance to being able to control to some extent the pace and methods of their work. Variety of operations is a source of satisfaction to both factory- and office-workers, and among the latter the friendliness of the working group is often mentioned (particularly by females). In comparing proportions of satisfied workers in different occupations there seem to be separate scales for manual and non-manual jobs, with more satisfaction found at the higher levels of skill in each group. Professional workers are most satisfied, and semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers least satisfied.

Of 'special situation' factors that influence satisfaction, social interaction seems to be most important. Autonomy in the work situation—freedom to make decisions and take responsibilities—is positively related to satisfaction. If three individuals are engaged on the same work with mates doing a better, worse, or the same job, the first is likely to show least job enjoyment. Permissive supervision and leadership, and being consulted in advance about changes in work processes, are conducive to satisfaction. In general, jobs which involve dealing with people provide more satisfaction than those which do not.

Satisfaction is correlated with certain personal attributes. Women are generally more satisfied with their work than men, even when their jobs are lower in authority position, status and income. Satisfaction generally increases with age, although there is a tendency for the young to find this in intrinsic aspects of the work and the old to find it in the social and technical environment. Higher social class and status are related to satisfaction but, among those doing the same kind of work, better education is associated with lower satisfaction. Insecurity in a job, even when accompanied by good objective conditions, adversely affects satisfaction. The data on the relation of satisfaction to productivity are

ambiguous: some studies have found a positive relationship, some a negative one, and some no relationship.

In evaluating the conclusions of the various work satisfaction studies certain methodological and other criticisms need to be taken into account. Figures of general satisfaction with a job tell us very little, since we do not know what the questions mean to the people who answer them. The frame of reference of questions is often very limited, so that expressions of satisfaction are very narrow and made without consciousness of possible alternatives. Also, we must differentiate between what people consciously think about their satisfaction and what they may feel unconsciously. The tendency to repress dissatisfaction is strongly supported by the widespread feeling that not to be satisfied is an admission of failure.

RECOMMENDED READING

Bendix, R. (1974), *Work and Authority in Industry,* 2nd edn (Berkeley University of California) On ideologies of management in the course of industrialisation, with emphasis on long-range trends.

Beynon, H. and Blackburn, R.M. (1972), *Perceptions of Work* (Cambridge, CUP) A study of the ways in which workers relate and adapt to their work situation.

Herzberg, F., Mausner, B. and Snyderham, B. (1959), *The Motivation to Work* (New York, Wiley) The original exposition of the two-factor theory of motivation (satisfiers and 'hygiene' factors).

Kornhauser, A. (1965), *Mental Health of the Industrial Worker* (New York, Wiley) Assesses the psychological condition of workers at higher and lower skill levels in modern mass-production industry.

Sheppard, H.L. and Herrick, N.Q. (1972), *Where Have all the Robots Gone?* (London, Collier-Macmillan) Explores the discrepancy between workers' expectations and real achievements, as perceived by workers themselves.

Turner, B.A. (1971), *Exploring the Industrial Subculture* (London, Macmillan) Approaches the study of industry as an unfamiliar sub-culture of meanings, communications, norms and codes.

Chapter 15
Questions of Procedure and Identity

This book has reviewed the major issues, modes of analysis and empirical findings of a field of inquiry that has come to be known as 'industrial sociology'. The content of industrial sociology continues to excite widespread interest, concerning as it does the individual in the world of work, the creation and manipulation of enormous resources through organised effort, and the very institutional fabric of a modern industrialised society itself. The focus upon respectively the individual, the organisation and the social system, is reflected in our threefold ordering of the previous chapters. Their content has demonstrated the wide sweep of industrial sociology as well as its obvious practical relevance in a society heavily dependent upon complex organisation.

Industrial sociology today is characterised by an extensive subject-matter and by a close interdependence between sociological considerations and those raised by a range of other disciplines such as economics, psychology and production engineering. Interest in the field is prompted by a mixture of motivations including the academic, the idealistic and the commercial. It is not surprising, then, that there are considerable and continuing difficulties in reaching agreement on an appropriate definition, direction and method of development for industrial sociology. Broadly speaking, difficulties arise at two levels. The first involves questions of procedure which industrial sociology shares in large measure with other areas of sociology, and with the social sciences in general. The second level involves questions of identity peculiar to industrial sociology in that they concern the definition of its boundaries and the very basis upon which it survives as a discrete area of study. An appreciation of these disputed issues should assist the student to decide upon his own orientation towards the subject.

QUESTIONS OF PROCEDURE

In the past the argument over the idea of a value-free sociology has extended to the question of whether sociologists should undertake research which was addressed to questions that another party defined as practical. Considerable concern was expressed at the large number of governmentally and industrially

sponsored projects being undertaken in the United States, which forced the researcher's frame of reference into ideological moulds acceptable to the sponsor. Today, the inevitability of adopting a value-standpoint is fairly generally appreciated, as is the need for the sociologist to justify his keep to the world outside the 'profession'. So the debate over values is now directed much more towards the type of values which a sociologist should accept in agreeing to define a problem as practical.

One long-standing basis of disagreement in industrial sociology is associated with a clash of values between two groups who are both concerned to assist in the solution of what each would regard as pressing problems in the modern industrial world. Each group is in this sense oriented towards serving the needs of a particular client. In the first case the client is the manager and administrator, whose needs are seen to include the improvement of organisational performance, the maintenance of an ordered structure of relationships, and the successful implementation of technological and organisational change. Much of so-called 'behavioural science in industry' involves sociologists who are employed to advise and research on the attainment of objectives such as these.

While this type of sociologist would take an interest in, say, employee motivation largely from the viewpoint of its bearing on work performance, the other school takes as its point of reference -as its adopted client—the employee himself. Thus there are industrial sociologists who regard the problem of alienation as their main point of departure. They are concerned with studying possibilities for greater self-fulfilment at work rather than those for higher employee performance as defined by management. They are interested in alternative forms of relationship which might honour democratic principles and offer release from aggressive controls, rather than in merely improving for management the operation of existing structures. They regard industrial change as directed towards objectives such as these rather than as a problem of persuading men at work to accept the unpalatable consequences of new managerial policies. While there may be some practical possibilities for reconciling the requirements of these conflicting value-systems in the design and operation of organisations, the problem of value-conflicts will continue to concern every sociologist whose work has any influence on the conditions within which other people's lives are pursued.

The pursuit of research aimed both at increasing theoretically-relevant knowledge and at the mitigation of practical problems passes under the general heading of action research. More precisely, action research involves the diagnosis of phenomena which are viewed as problematic by one or more groups in an organisation or community, and the subsequent planning with them of changes in selected 'strategic' variables. In addition to the hope of effecting some 'improvements', the stimulation of change may increase understanding of how complex social systems function through exposing the effects of the selected

change variables. These objectives have not so far proved easy to attain in practice: projects are often halted prematurely for extraneous reasons, researchers find it difficult to see the wood for the trees, and many projects have been started with quite inadequate initial investigation (for further discussion see Clark, 1972). Action research should not be confused with the 'social action frame of reference' referred to previously in this book, though the action-researcher cannot proceed effectively unless he is keenly aware of the frames of reference held by those in the organisation he is researching.

Industrial sociologists continue to disagree over strategies of research. First, there are those who argue that the major dimensions of the subject can only be ascertained through an extensive comparison across a large number of different cases, employing the sophisticated techniques of measurement and statistical analysis now available. They would argue that the nature of basic parameters such as orientation to work, technology or organisational structure, can only be identified through this approach and that this is equally the case with the further step of establishing the nature of relationships between such parameters.

In contrast, there are industrial sociologists, many of them from the 'action-research' school, who would insist upon the value of approaching each research situation as a unique constellation of variables. They argue that sociological analysis is refined most effectively through matching the insight obtained from available concepts against the social processes obtaining within a unique situation and against the meanings of that situation to the participants. Important aspects of these processes and meanings may defy quantification. This type of industrial sociologist would stress the limitations attending broad comparative research in that it is forced to rely upon constructs such as 'attitude', 'role' or 'structure', which oversimplify the complexities of empirical data and may impose upon human action a misplaced concreteness and uniformity within the constraints of overgeneral categories. He would argue instead, with Glaser and Strauss (1968), for a sensitised awareness towards empirical situations, which themselves should provide the main challenge to a sociologist's capacity to offer adequate concepts and schemes of explanation. He would also find support from Argyris's (1972) review of the ways in which methods of 'rigorous', primarily quantitative, research can provide distorted results through various types of defensive reaction on the part of respondents.

We have mentioned two sources of contention among industrial sociologists—values and research strategy—which are sufficiently significant in their effect to prevent discourse between the various schools of thought from rising much above the level of nodding acquaintance. However, neither of these questions are ones which lead to differentiation and dissension uniquely among industrial sociologists; they are questions which indeed confront most branches of social science today. Furthermore, while such issues do pose important choices for the future direction of the subject, they do not call into doubt the underlying concept

of industrial sociology itself by challenging the boundaries that have been drawn around it and upon which its *identity* as a discrete area of inquiry depends. These boundaries have, in fact, been challenged in a way that questions the utility of a study of industry as a separate area of sociological inquiry; they have equally been challenged in a way that disputes the utility of restricting one's study of industrial behaviour, particularly within organisations, to a purely sociological frame of analysis. These criticisms of the contemporary definition of industrial sociology deserve serious consideration from anyone who is specialising in the area, because they serve to remind him of the limitations which he as a specialist is in danger of imposing upon the interpretation of his subject-matter.

QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY

The first criticism against the contemporary definitions of industrial sociology, discussed in Chapter 1, is that these represent an academic demarcation between industrial and non-industrial sociology which has led to a division of interest that is empirically artificial. It may be that in a formal sense the structures and technologies of industry are discrete from those of other social institutions, but these of themselves are not of sociological significance. Rather, it is the purposes which led to the establishment of such structures, the ends to which they are adapted, the meaning they have for those who participate in them and the consequences they have both for those participants and for other groups affected by their operations, which are the sociologically interesting features. In other words, structures and technologies assume sociological significance in terms of the economic exploitation of labour resources which they are designed to facilitate, and in terms of the consequences they have for people subject to the controls they impose. We therefore have to look beyond the structure and technologies of industry to the economic relationships involved in employment, and which are fundamental to the constitution of society as a whole.

To pursue this argument is to go a good deal further than merely saying that general insights from sociology need to be applied to industry as a particular area of study, if all this means is that use is made of general sociological concepts and modes of analysis. For what is required is a sociology of industrial society rather than a specialised brand of sociology that is carried out within, and confined to, industry. It is essential that the findings of research into the industrial sphere be interpreted in relation to the nature of society and economy as a whole, be this capitalist or socialist (of Buraway, 1979). In this view, a sociologist may perhaps conveniently be called an 'industrial sociologist' to denote the empirical area in which his inquiries will be concentrated. However, his analytical frame of reference would not be confined to the sphere of industry or work, while the direction of his inquiries would move towards the elucidation of issues which contribute to the central themes of sociology itself. Examples of such issues

would be the extent to which contemporary forms of organisation are dictated by competitive market pressures rather than by cultural and social preferences, the conditions inhibiting the democratisation of work, and the sources and social consequences of labour market segmentation.

The other major challenge to the contemporary definition of industrial sociology has been well expressed in an important paper by Landsberger (1967). Referring primarily to the American context, he concludes that since the mid-1950s there has been

> 'what is, in effect, a complete reconceptualization—in a sense, a downgrading—of industrial sociology and industrial social psychology. These fields are now but a part of a much more comprehensive study of all kinds of organizations. There is widespread recognition that whatever characteristics may be especially pronounced in organizations in the economic sector of society, these characteristics are best highlighted through deliberate contrast with organizations in other sectors of society. The scientific analysis of—and the practitioner's need to understand—the nature of managerial authority in industry, for example, is facilitated by comparing it with authority in armies, public administration generally and welfare agencies and prisons specifically, voluntary associations, schools, hospitals, research laboratories, and trade unions.' (pp. 8–9)

Landsberger here is pointing to the limitations of studying industrial phenomena in isolation, but the brunt of his thesis is that a great deal is lost by confining one's analysis of any empirically defined area through applying the perspectives of only one discipline such as sociology. Rather, much is to be gained, at least for some purposes, by bringing all the resources of social science to bear upon a particular issue, and by comparing and contrasting in an orderly fashion the insights of the different disciplines even if they cannot as yet be welded together within the confines of a single, overarching theory. This is to say,

> 'stated positively, our thesis is that all of behavioral science—and the non-behavioral social sciences too—are applicable to industry, work and organizations. The student would do best to take a single problem—say, unemployment or professionalization, or perhaps selection—to see how the different social sciences have approached its analysis. This is likely to be more enlightening and stimulating than taking a single one of the social sciences…and examining all the possible and very diverse problems relevant to it.' (p. 1)

Landsberger is, therefore, not only contending that the concept of industrial sociology is too restrictive because it inhibits valuable comparison between the

industrial and other spheres of social life, but he is also arguing that it is of value to combine the contributions of all the social sciences in one's analysis and that this means that attention has to be focused on specific issues and problems in order to be at all manageable.

The field of study known as organisational behaviour exemplifies Landsberger's preferred approach. This seeks to utilise the contributions of all the social sciences in seeking to understand what goes on within and between organisations, and the impact they have on people's lives. Thus within organisational behaviour one finds 'organizational psychologists' pursuing investigations which are beginning to suggest links between previous work on technology, organisation structure and community value-systems as points of reference for the explanation of behaviour (e.g. Hulin and Blood, 1968). Similarly, connections are developing between the work of economists and sociologists through studies of 'managerial capitalism', while the focus on organisational analysis has encouraged a fruitful exchange of concepts and propositions between students of business, of hospitals and public organisations, and of trade unions (e.g. Marris, 1964; Perrow, 1970).

Recent formulations of industrial relations as an area of study provide a further alternative framework within which to develop much of the subject-matter of industrial sociology as it is now defined. Largely under the influence of Dunlop's (1958) theory of 'industrial relations systems', many students of industrial relations are today moving beyond a purely descriptive formal and institutional approach towards a treatment of the work organisation as an open social system in which the structure of formal procedure and its connections with external institutions is but one of a number of relevant and related aspects. This new methodology of industrial relations, like that of organisational behaviour, allows the use of theoretical tools from a number of specialist disciplines of which sociology is one:

> Thus, it permits the use of a sociological concept, such as status, a psychological concept, such as personality, and economic factors, such as the product and factor markets. As these theoretical tools are applied within the area of industrial relations they will probably take on similarities which distinguish them from those used in the fields in which they originated.' (Blain and Gennard, 1970; see also Hill and Thurley, 1974)

Those who wish to return industrial sociology to the mainstream of sociological development will view this prospect of conceptual particularism with alarm. They will argue, along with Talcott Parsons, that sociology is itself capable of offering an 'overarching theory' which subsumes contributions from other disciplines. They may also feel that specialisation into fields such as organisational behaviour and industrial relations simply recreates the old problem

of the student in one becoming unaware of the relevance of the other. A great deal of organisational behaviour writing does, after all, proceed as though industrial conflict, trade unions and the substance of industrial relations did not exist and industrial relations specialists have frequently overlooked the relevance for workplace behaviour of the ways in which the labour process is organised.

Those who sympathise with Landsberger will, on the other hand, point to the limitations of available sociological perspectives in regard to theories of human action and argue that it is not sufficient to compartmentalise subjects of study into the boxes supplied by traditionally defined academic disciplines. Some would, perhaps, go further and maintain that the pursuit of research within frameworks such as organisational behaviour and industrial relations only represent convenient stages on the way to attaining a mature social science. The ultimate criterion is whether new bounded areas of inquiry such as these enhance our understanding through the development of theory that integrates relevant propositions more effectively than that so far available.

RECOMMENDED READING

Buraway, M. (1979), *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labour Process under Monopoly Capitalism* (University of Chicago Press) A participant observation study in a Chicago machine shop; advances a Marxist theory of the capitalist labour process in preference to conventional industrial sociology and organisation theory.

Clark, P.A. (1972), *Action Research and Organizational Change* (London, Harper) Attempts to compare action research with other forms of research, discusses its methods and problems, and illustrates with case-studies.

Landsberger, H.A. (1967), 'The Behavioral Sciences in Industry', *Industrial Relations,* 6, October. Argues that industrial sociology as traditionally conceived takes an artificially restricted view of industrial life.

British Journal of Industrial Relations (1974), special issue on 'Sociology and Industrial Relations', July. Contains articles which illustrate the contribution of sociology to industrial relations analysis and the interfaces between the two.

Chapter 16
Industrial Sociology and Industrial Society

Two accepted cliches about contemporary societies are that they are experiencing unprecedented rates of change, and that they have been drawn together by trade and mass communications into a 'global village'. Questions are naturally asked about the direction of the change, and whether the exchange of ideas is effecting a convergence in patterns of social behaviour and organisation. Do industrialism and its associated technologies impose a common logic of development on different societies? To what extent do industrial nations still bear the stamp of their own cultural and political values upon their modes of organisation? What are the likely consequences of current developments for the quality of our lives as citizens and employees?

The sociology of industry is addressed to the institutional area which typifies developed societies and which is steadily encroaching into others. It should be able to contribute a great deal towards answering such questions. Unfortunately, while considerable research effort has gone into investigating the minutiae of industrial life, less attention has been given to the difficult task of putting the pieces together and drawing some conclusions as to the roles which industry and organisation play in social development as a whole. The reluctance of the industrial sociologist to venture beyond his specialised area, and the lack of detailed knowledge about industry on the part of many general theorists, constitutes one of the boundary problems which hold back progress in sociological understanding. Nevertheless, this book would not present a balanced view of its subject if it failed to draw attention to some of the questions which have been raised about industrial society, and the discussion of which requires an appreciation of the research discussed in previous chapters.

INDUSTRIALISM

It was, of course, Marx's basic thesis that similar underlying economic forces within capitalist societies would lead to their evolution along a given path of development culminating in communism. More recently, during the 1950s and 1960s, some sociologists (such as Kerr *et al.,* 1960) and economists (such as

Galbraith, 1967) advanced another model of development which envisages convergency in the social structures and political processes of industrial societies even though these are founded upon quite different political ideologies. Particular reference was made to a supposed convergence between Russian socialism and American capitalism. The process of industrialisation was seen to hold a certain logic for social phenomena. Industrialisation created structural constraints of an economic and technological nature and it was argued that, as a result, all advanced industrial societies were coming to possess similar occupational structures, income differentials, rates of social mobility, and problems of planning, economic management and organisation. Convergence theorists did not claim that modern industrial societies are alike, but that they are becoming increasingly so as time passes.

The debate which developed around the convergence thesis has stimulated a number of avenues of research, each of which will help to clarify more precisely the nature and degree of variation in what we too indiscriminately label as 'industrial societies'. One approach involves the close comparison of economic institutions in two or more societies with a view to ascertaining how these have developed and whether they show signs of converging.

Dore's (1973) study of two British and two Japanese factories exemplifies such an investigation which attempts to test broad theoretical generalisations through an attention to detail. Dore concludes that in spite of a considerable exchange of ideas, Japanese industrial organisation remains significantly different to the British model in particular and to Western trends in general. He suggests that if any convergence takes place in the future it is likely to represent a move in British industry towards the welfare, companybased bargaining and bureaucratic features of the Japanese system. He also argues that the Japanese system is not simply a manifestation of Japan's cultural uniqueness or a feudal hangover. It also reflects the fact that later industrialisers can learn from the mistakes of others and get ahead by adopting new modes of organisation, while older industrialisers are still trying to break through institutional patterns inherited from the nineteenth century. The exchange of ideas made possible by mass communications and easy travel does not therefore necessarily encourage uniformity between societies—it may strengthen the resolution of their members to remain different.

Dore's study also contributes to the general debate as to how far structures of organisation are determined by economic and technological exigencies. One of the arguments of convergence theorists such as Harbison and Myers (1959) was that the 'logic of industrialization' called for the development of certain forms of organisation. Industrialisation brings about changes in the configurations of organisations. In particular, they grow larger and more complex. These trends are seen as necessitating certain complementary developments in organisational structure. There is a greater internal fragmentation into specialized departments

and units; hierarchies lengthen; and there is an increasing reliance upon formal rules and paperwork for purposes of co-ordination and control. In other words, the basis is created for bureaucracy.

Some confusion has attended the interpretation of this argument, which is an important one to consider since bureaucracy is another hallmark of contemporary society. Comparisons of organisational structures made across different societies has led writers such as Hickson *et al.* (1974) to conclude that relationships between structural variables and economic factors such as size, technology and dependence on other organisations are stable across societies. Cultural particularism does not seem to have a marked effect. Other studies such as Crozier's (1964) research into French bureaucracy have, however, drawn attention to the ways in which culturally distinct values infuse themselves into formal organisations. On the basis of a comparison between British and West German companies, Child and Kieser (1977) suggest that a distinction must be drawn between formal structures and the behaviours which take place within them. There may be certain common patterns in the formal structuring of organisations operating a similar configuration in terms of size and so on, but the quality of relationships, modes of decision-making and other behaviour within those formal frame-works tend to be different and to reflect cultural norms peculiar to each society.

It appears, then, that there are some common trends of development to be found within industrial societies and that these may result in broadly similar forms of organisation which are, however, operated according to contrasting principles. There may be evidence of a general growth of bureaucracy, but bureaucracies are run in different ways in different societies. This variety is of considerable sociological interest. It also undermines much of the argument that undesirable features of organisation have to be imposed upon people for reasons of technical efficiency, since it points *prima facie* to the availability of viable alternatives. It would be misleading, however, to underrate the significance of the common elements in industrialism and the implications these have, through bureaucratisation and growth of organisation, for questions of political control.

BUREAUCRACY, MANAGERIALISM AND POLITICAL CONTROL

In Chapter 2 we described the trend in industry towards larger company size and concentration of control in the hands of fewer enterprises. In Britain, the 100 largest companies accounted for 46 per cent of the country's manufacturing output by 1970, and a similar growth of concentration can be observed in all major industrialised countries. This means that decisions on economic investments, on the opening and closing of plants, and on levels of employment are now taken by relatively few people located within this small number of large

companies, many of which as multinationals play a major role in societies other than their own. Outside industry, the trend has also been towards big organisation. Amalgamations have taken place in the name of economies of scale and rationalisation. In Britain, major reorganisations of local government and of the National Health Service in 1974 created larger units. Umbrella 'super'-ministries manifest the same trend in central government (Child, 1976).

There are a number of reasons why this emergence of big organisation is both a matter of considerable sociological significance and public concern. It generates bureaucracy which has a number of dysfunctions associated with remoteness, impersonality and rigidity. It creates problems concerning the accountability of the controllers of bureaucracies. The size and significance of large organisations also raises questions regarding their relation with organs of government and the consequences this may have for the democratic process.

Previous chapters have pointed out some of the consequences of large-scale organisation. It tends to be associated with a low level of involvement in work on the part of employees and a poor quality of working life as evidenced by higher rates of labour turnover, absenteeism and strikes. Explanations advanced for this association usually point to the remoteness from decision-making and significant information of employees located at the bottom of an extended hierarchy, the impersonality of relationships and communication in the large unit, and the tendency to restrict discretion and initiative through formality. The formality and rigidity with which large organisations tend to operate can be a source of particular frustration to the skilled and professional employee trained to expect some autonomy in how he works. Under changing conditions these bureaucratic features can seriously undermine the organisation's capacity to adapt with appropriate speed.

The elements of remoteness from decision-making in larger organisations also raise questions of accountability. It is clear that large industrial organisations represent considerable aggregations of economic resources, the disposition of which has consequences for the community as a whole. They are governed like all bureau-cracies by salaried officials. To what extent do these now possess power without responsibility? This question points up the relevance of the debate over ownership and control in modern industry. The argument that participation in industrial decision-making should extend to the policy level and involve community as well as employee representatives is founded on a recognition that even if managers are still effectively held responsible to shareholders, the power that the administration of large organisations gives cannot be entrusted to the surveillance of only one sector in society. Concern is equally being expressed about the attenuation of effective public control over public authorities whose very size has rendered their senior officials less accessible. The tendency of all bureaucracies towards secrecy, which Max Weber noted, only serves to exacerbate this problem of public accountability.

The growing scale and concentration of organisations has consequences for a society's mode of political organisation. One of the assumptions of the convergence thesis advanced by Kerr *et al.* (1960) was that industrial societies were all developing from class, mass or monolithic totalitarian models towards a pluralist model of multiple interest groups competing within a set of rules established by the state. Almost two decades later, the extent to which the major interest groups in Britain have become involved with the state in the regulation of competitive market forces *per se* has led commentators such as Pahl and Winkler (1974b) to argue that the political model now emerging is corporatism.

Clearly, once the major decision-makers on both sides of industry have become concentrated geographically and in numbers, it is easier for a government and its departments to involve them in the consideration of policy and in its implementation. It also becomes less practicable for the state to operate its legislation without the agreement of large employers and trade unions in a situation where each of those groupings is highly concentrated. What, however, raises most concern is that corporatism largely by-passes the parliamentary process with its links to local community interests, and it is liable to exclude representation from the members of smaller groups or associations. The participation of major institutional leaders in the governmental process is by no means necessarily experienced as participation by their members or employees, who remain far removed from the decision arena by the extended hierarchies in their large organisations.

A DREAM TO BE SHATTERED?

Meaningful participation, fulfilling activity and economic security has been the dream of those who foresee a further stage of development beyond industrial society as we know it today. Up to the early 1970s, western capitalism appeared to be making this dream a possibility. It had provided political democracy and there was talk of extending this to industry. It seemed to be absorbing the working class into new-found middle-class affluence and economic security. It was becoming soulful, professing concern with the quality of life both in work and in the community. This philosophy, applied to the potential of the new electronics, might open up unprecedented opportunities for personal development in work, community and leisure.

Today, the optimism has evaporated. A latent demand for personal fulfilment certainly persists, but at the surface anxieties about economic security and the impact of change are more in evidence. We now know that there are real possibilities for democratising relations at work and for improving the design of jobs. Experiments have taken place in many countries ranging from the establishment of self-managing worker cooperatives to the creation of semiautonomous work groups and the 'enrichment' of individual jobs. Yet in

practice very little real progress has been made, especially in Britain, and a significant extension of industrial participation appears as remote as ever. There is a sense of disillusionment.

Part of the explanation must be in the fact that the underlying institutional framework of capitalist industrial society and the economic forces it contains have not been modified. Indeed, with the continued thrust towards gigantic remote monopolies and the pressures for greater productivity which stem from falling rates of profit, it is difficult to envisage any significant implementation of democracy or social objectives in industry (Edwards, 1979). Moreover, the priority which employees, trade unions and management attach to such improvements in the quality of working life tends to drop appreciably as recession and redundancy become immediate threats. Many British firms have, of course, faced increasing competition and uncertain demand in recent years, and these have quite often induced crisis measures inimical to experimentation. It is worth noting that at the time of writing virtually all of the rather few developments towards group technology in British companies are being pursued purely for their productivity benefits with no thought given to the opportunities they could provide for increased work-group autonomy and participation.

There is an inherent resistance to the extension of participation on the part of those who already hold authority in industrial enterprises. A formal arena of decision-making such as a company board can be circumvented through the operation of cabals outside the boardroom and by the control of information to it. The failure of employee-directors to have a significant impact, especially when they are in a minority, has been noted in Brannen and his colleagues' study of the British Steel Corporation (1976). One problem lay in the employee-directors' attenuation from their constituents, which is a further manifestation of the remoteness between top and bottom that the extended hierarchies of larger organisations generate. Even in advanced systems of joint management such as that operated by the Israeli Histadrut, the factor of large plant size tends to reduce the effectiveness of communication between representatives and employees (Child, 1975). In a situation like that the relevance of participation for the employee is inevitably restricted and the consequent inertia becomes allied with managerial resistance. There is little question that participation is far more difficult to achieve in a larger unit of organisation, and as we have noted already, the size of organisations in modern society is tending to increase.

The expansion of higher-level and non-manual jobs, described in Chapter 12, is a process which might be expected to offer more opportunities for intrinsically rewarding work. The trend is connected with the development of new quasi-professional occupational skills. Yet the proportion of the total working population in professional and managerial jobs is still relatively small. A large part of the increase in this sector is in fact taken up by employment which is not independent in the traditional professional sense but which is for profit-making

companies or for the state. Professionals are becoming increasingly subject to the restrictions of working in bureaucracies, and to governmental financing and regulation. The professional road to an enhanced quality of life does not offer the clear-cut path it once did, even though it is now available to more people.

This chapter has concluded on a note, not of pessimism but of realism. There are formidable obstacles in our industrial structure which stand in the way of attaining desirable social objectives. Their recognition and analysis is the first stage in the gaining of control over them. A continued questioning into the nature of industrialism and a comparison of approaches adopted in other industrial societies will lead to an enhanced awareness of the choices which are available in the pursuit of progress.

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Dore, R. (1973), *British Factory—Japanese Factory* (London, George Allen & Unwin) A comparison of two factories in each country forms the basis for an informed analysis of the 'convergence thesis'.

Edwards, R. (1979), *Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century* (New York, Basic Books) An important analysis of the transformations in workplace control which also confronts the issue of whether democratisation is possible under modern capitalism.

Human Relations (1976), special issue on 'Participation and Industrial Democracy', May. Several articles point to difficulties which attend the development of participation in modern society.

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A comprehensive bibliography of all items relating to different aspects of the sociology of industry would extend to several thousand entries. In the following selected bibliography we include (a) all items mentioned in the text, (b) full details of the recommended reading appearing at the end of each chapter, and (c) additional items regarded by the authors as appropriate further reading, with emphasis on more recent items but including a number of the more important classic works.

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