Organizations, Occupations, and Work

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Chair

Little could I know that when I would start my term as Chair it would be under the unimaginable circumstances surrounding the attacks on New York and Washington, and Bush's "war on terrorism." Not only are the ASA meetings now far behind us but in the current context, any upbeat summary of them, any cajoling to find new members, nominate books and articles for awards, or submit papers to section sessions seems hollow. I cannot even bring myself to speculate on how these events might reshape theorizing about organizations, or how they bear on our field. I welcome comments from people about the latter issues, however. We could post them either on the listserve or on our web site so feel free to forward them to myself (vasmith@ucdavis.edu) or Frank Steinhart, web site coordinator (fsteinhart@northpark.edu).

Long before September 11, I had planned to highlight in this newsletter an issue that seemed to me to be salient for our section. My first sustained exposure to the section came when I was elected in 1990 to serve on the Council of what was then named Organizations and Occupations. In the intervening years I have observed and reflected on what many members see as a split within our section, between organizational theorists on the one hand, and work and occupations scholars on the other. While there are exceptions, I view the overlap between these areas as all-too small. Scholars who conduct organizations research, working with new institutionalist, population ecology, network, and resource dependency theories, tend only rarely to incorporate insights about work and occupations. This isn't deliberate neglect or dismissal of work and occupations; more, their research tends to focus on macro-level dynamics and processes, analyzing larger populations of organizations in niches or across time. Yet the focus on larger populations, whether of industries, of organizations, legal processes, and administrative structures means that this research stays far afield of lived experiences at work, of how organizations become gendered and racialized, or of how populations of workers such as contingent workers become institutionalized within businesses, to name just a few examples.

Work and occupations scholars, on the other hand, while often referencing organizational contexts, tend to focus on the micro level, looking at particular labor processes, occupational groupings, skill, authority, and gender/race/class power relations. The strength of work in this tradition is that we gain far greater sense of the texture of work and employment, of the subjective dimensions of the structure of work and hierarchy, and of how, through workers' actions and beliefs, they sustain particular organizational settings over time. Yet, in studying changes in work processes, or in focusing on discrete elements of occupations in in-depth case studies, this group is less inclined to situate their findings in or generalize about aggregate populations of organizations or industries. It is more difficult for these researchers to comment on how work practices and experiences, for example, animate and perpetuate specific organizational populations. We face a classic problem faced by sociologists in many other fields: how to connect the macro and the micro and show how each level affects the other.

Establishing linkages between these areas of research has been challenging. Steve Barley and Gideon Kunda have taken up this challenge by highlighting the contemporary intersections between work and organizational theory, and theorizing about how scholars might synthesize the two sides of this equation. In this issue, we run an excerpt from a major article they recently co-authored in the journal Organization Science. I hope that you find this article as intriguing, thoughtful, and useful as I did, and if you want to share your responses with the section, again, you can contact myself or Frank Steinhart.

The winter issue of the newsletter will feature an original article by Woody Powell, about his current research on networks and knowledge in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries. We will also publish the full line-up of the Organizations, Occupations, and Work Section Program for the 2002 meetings in Chicago. In the meantime, let's fervently hope for a sane year, to the extent that is possible.

Vicki Smith, University of California, Davis
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Comments? Share your responses with the section by contacting Vicki Smith *vasmith@ucdavis.edu* or Frank Steinhart Web Coordinator fsteinhart@northpark.edu

Featured Article

Bringing Work Back In

Stephen R. Barley, Stanford University
Gideon Kunda, Tel Aviv University

All theories of organizing are at least implicitly linked to some image of the concrete activities that they purport to describe and explain. In most instances these activities are what people call work. Work and organization are bound in dynamic tension because organizational structures are, by definition, descriptions of and templates for ongoing patterns of action. When managers impose new organizational structures, they invariably alter patterns of work. Conversely, when the nature of work in an organization changes, perhaps because of new technologies or markets, organizational structures either adapt or risk becoming misaligned with the activities they organize. Because work and organizing are so interdependent, eras of widespread change in the nature of work in society should lead to the emergence and diffusion of new organizational forms and institutions. This was precisely what Weber, Durkheim, and Marx observed: by the end of the 19th Century, the shift from agricultural and craftwork to factory and office work had stimulated the birth and development of bureaucracy, the cornerstone of industrial organization. Over the next fifty years the investigation and analysis of bureaucracies and their associated patterns of work occupied organizational researchers from Taylor to Blau. Since then work has slipped increasingly into the background as organizational theory converged on the study of strategies, structures and environments as its central and defining interest. The study of work processes found its home in associated fields, such as industrial relations, industrial psychology and the sociology of work, whose influence on organizational theory gradually declined.

For most of the 20th century, the nature of work remained sufficiently stable for organizational scholars to assume that concepts and theories developed for bureaucratic settings were adequate for studying most organizational contexts. There is growing evidence, however, that work in industrial society has now changed sufficiently to render such an assumption suspect. The occupational structure of the United States has changed dramatically since mid-century. Blue-collar employment has fallen steadily since the 1950's, while white-collar work has expanded. Employment in

services now outranks employment in manufacturing. Managerial work has become increasingly differentiated and clerical employment has begun to wane. Today, professional and technical occupations, which exclude management and administration, employ more Americans than any other occupational sector monitored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Similar occupational trends are occurring in other Western nations.

The dynamics of work appear to be changing within occupational clusters as well. Stable employment is declining and contingent work is on the rise, even among professionals and managers. Computers and other digital technologies seem to be eliminating some types of work, creating others and transforming a significant portion of what remains. Work that formerly required direct operations on materials can be increasingly performed remotely. Interpersonal skills and the ability to collaborate in distributed, cross-functional teams appear to be more important than in the past. Under team systems even factory workers are said to require interpersonal and decision-making skills previously reserved for managers, although the scope of this development is disputed.

Such changes pose an extraordinary opportunity for organizational theorists. Because of the interdependence of work and organizing, significant shifts in the nature of work should coincide with significant changes in the way organizations are structured and in how people experience work in their daily lives. Contemporary organizational theorists may, therefore, face the same challenge that confronted the field's founders: the need to develop images of organizations that are congruent with the realities of work in a new economic order. Recent trends in organizational theorizing suggest that scholars are aware of this situation. The notion of a new economic order is precisely what motivates most of the literature on "post-industrialism," the "knowledge economy," and the "information society." Furthermore, over the last decade organizational scholars and observers of the business world have proposed numerous concepts for characterizing post-bureaucratic organizations. Virtual organizations, shamrock organizations, network organizations, boundaryless organizations and lean structures are but a partial list. These attempts at identifying new organizational forms are often provocative and some have generated fruitful streams of debate and research. Yet, on close examination, most fall short of offering either a nuanced description of the attributes of post-bureaucratic organizing or a full account of why new forms of organizing have emerged.

In this essay we argue that both popular and academic attempts to come to grips with post-bureaucratic organizing are hampered, in part, by inadequate conceptions of work and that until our images of work are updated, efforts at specifying post-bureaucratic forms will continue to be seriously hampered. We begin by explaining why we believe this is the case and then suggest what organizational theorists may need to do to bring work more clearly into focus. We conclude by offering illustrations of how bringing work back into organization studies might benefit the field.

The Search for New Concepts

Given the recency and complexity of the developments with which organizational theorists are grappling, the fact that there is little agreement on the core attributes of post-bureaucratic organizing should come as no surprise. An extended period of exploration, debate and incremental approximation is to be expected whenever scholars must sift through an abundance of ambiguous data in search of new concepts to describe a rapidly emerging and multi-faceted situation. In fact, it is worth recalling that scholars required at least fifty years to develop our current comprehension of the dynamics of bureaucracy. Yet, even though a post-industrial analog of bureaucratic theory is unlikely to emerge either quickly or easily, it is worth identifying weaknesses in current conceptualizations so that better theories can be devised. Two weaknesses that can be traced, in part, to insufficient grounding in concrete work activities seem of particular relevance: the strategy of inverting concepts to sharpen contrasts between the present and the past and the tendency to explain changes solely in terms of environmental forces. The first is more common in managerially oriented organizational theory, while the latter is characteristic of academically oriented research.

Conceptual Inversion

Conceptual inversion occurs when theorists formulate images of post-bureaucratic organizing by contrasting traditional models of organizing with their perceived opposites. Consider, for instance, the image of a "network organization" which has been widely touted as the antithesis of bureaucracy, especially in the managerial literature. Analysts seem to have embraced the image of a network organization largely because of its evocativeness as a metaphor for the widely held belief that firms are becoming less hierarchical and that cross-functional relationships are becoming more common.

Although the dynamics that theorists hope to reference by speaking of network organizations may be integral to post-bureaucratic organizing, the claim that organizations are

suddenly "becoming networks" and that these networks are not hierarchical is overstated. In fact, portraying networks as counterpoints to bureaucracy may actually obscure the utility of network analysis for studying how and why organizational forms are changing. As network analysts have repeatedly shown, any organization can be depicted as a network by mapping the work relationships that exist among people. From this perspective, organizations have always been networks. Furthermore, network analysts have shown that hierarchy is a property of a network's structure, not something that a network replaces.

Network analysts would therefore argue that interest in network organizations is warranted not because organizations are becoming networks, as proponents mistakenly suggest, but because work relations in organizations are changing and these changes are likely to alter the way networks are structured. To determine whether such changes are occurring requires longitudinal data on concrete work activities that, in turn, would enable researchers to depict the structure of the networks that those activities inscribe. At the moment, such data do not exist because those who postulate network organizations rarely study work practices and the way they structure interaction. Even more scarce are longitudinal data on work practices and relations that would allow researchers to assess change in the modal pattern of organizing.

Another example of the logic of conceptual inversion and its evocative power is the idea that organizations and careers are becoming "boundaryless." Theorists who speak of boundaryless organizations do so to call attention to the fact that contemporary organizations increasing rely on strategic alliances, extended supply chains and distributed work groups, all of which involve relations that span and perhaps integrate collectives previously thought to have distinct identities and memberships. Although these tends are reasonably well documented, the claim that they yield organizations without boundaries seems overstated. To be sure, organizational theorists have often written as if bureaucracies are surrounded by the social equivalent of a bold (and occasionally perforated) line that demarcates them from their environment, but on close examination the notion of a boundary has always dissolved into a problematic construction. Boundaries are social objects fashioned out of spatial locations, personal identifications, patterns of interaction and legally defined distributions of rights and obligations. It is unlikely that boundaries are any less socially constructed today than they were in the past. To determine whether organizational boundaries are constructed differently today requires data on where people

work, with whom they work and, most importantly, how they conceptualize their identities and the social collectives of which they are a part. In short, the issue is not whether boundaries do or do not exist, but how and where people draw boundaries in the world of work and whether the nature of the boundaries they draw has somehow changed.

Similarly, researchers have used the term "boundaryless career" to denote that people are increasingly moving between organizations and that stints of employment are becoming shorter as firms jettison promises of job security, dismantle internal labor markets and turn to contingent labor. Without doubt, these represent substantial changes in the institutions of employment that emerged over the first half of the 20th Century. To argue that fewer people are playing out their careers within the confines of an organization or that employment relations are changing is different, however, from saying that careers no longer have boundaries. Hughes long ago noted that all careers traverse a series of statuses, only some of which consist of hierarchically ordered jobs within an organization. Significant numbers of people have always devised careers against the background of an occupation, an industry or a subculture. Moreover, the boundaries of a career are partially determined by the sense that individuals make of the flows, sequences and locations of their work activities. By speaking of boundaryless careers, theorists risk characterizing an important change in employment relations in a way that focuses attention away from a crucial empirical question: when people are no longer able to use a single organization as the backdrop for their career, how do they lend meaning to and set boundaries around their trajectories? Answering this question requires researchers to study work practices, work biographies and how people interpret both. Simply noting that the objective structures of careers are changing is insufficient warrant for inferring a lack of boundaries.

Environmentalism
Macro theories of post-bureaucratic organizing encounter difficulties insofar as they attempt to account for new organizational forms and practices solely as responses to changing environments. The issue is not whether environmental conditions play a role in the rise and spread of new forms of organizing: they most certainly do. Organizations would have little pressure to change without such developments as globalization, intensified competition, changing political climates, new technologies, integrated financial markets and reductions in product life cycles. Rather, the problem lies in trying to explain new patterns of organizing without taking into account streams of action that mediate the effects of environmental change.

As Pfeffer has noted, organizations do not respond to their environments like billiard balls struck by a cue stick; nor do they mindlessly await their fate like members of a species suddenly subjected to climatic change. Because organizations are composed of people who react or fail to react to perceived changes in the environment, it is the activities of people that determine how organizations become structured. Human action generates organizational variation. Failing to link macro-organizational changes to micro-organizational processes, therefore, risks not only overlooking the proximal reasons for variation, it risks promoting an overly homogeneous and undifferentiated image of socio-economic development.

This problem can be readily seen in arguments that link new forms of organizing to changes in technology. A number of theorists have tied the emergence of new forms of organizing to the spread of digital technologies which are said to undermine job structures, increase the complexity of production processes, and require a more highly skilled workforce. Others have argued equally forcefully that technology engenders precisely the opposite developments. More grounded studies indicate, however, that digital technologies are used in a variety of ways and have a variety of effects on the way firms organize. They can automate or informate work, they can create or eliminate jobs, they can deskill, enskill or reskill work and, more often than we think, they may occasion no change all. Thus, whether and how a digital technology affects the way an organization is structured depends on how the technology is designed, the way it is deployed and how it is used and interpreted in a specific organizational context.

A Grounded Approach

Conceptual inversion and environmentalism are troublesome because they are manifestations of contemporary organization theory's tendency to distance itself from a detailed understanding of work and how it may be changing. This distancing produces images of organizing that rest more on the persuasive power of metaphor than on data. Eliminating the distance would enable organizational theorists to account for new trends in organizing with greater scope, depth and accuracy. For example, consider how organizational theory currently treats one such development, the spread of contingent employment, and how a more grounded approach might open wider vistas for theorizing.

Most organizational researchers treat contingent employ-ment either as evidence for boundaryless organizations or as strategic issue posed by a increasingly volatile and competitive economic environment. From this point of view, contingent employment is portrayed as a means by which organizations can reduce costs, gain flexibility or acquire knowledge. This emphasis on the firm's perspective and its demand for labor leaves unquestioned the assumption that work occurs within an employing organization and that the primary theoretical issue is a shift away from long-term employment. Although how firms manage employment relations is certainly an important issue, if one looks at contingent work from the point of view of those who perform it, the firm becomes less figural than organizational theorists currently presume and other relevant social structures come into view.

The most important issue facing any contractor is the need to enter the labor market repeatedly to find new jobs and build a career. Highly skilled technical contractors attempt to resolve this problem in a variety of ways. Most make use of staffing firms that specialize in matching technical professionals to positions in client organizations that require the professionals' skills. Most technical contractors also establish and maintain a network of relationships with other technical professionals, both contractors and permanent employees, who do similar work. Some participate in users' groups to acquire leads on job openings while also enhancing their skills. Yet others have formed collectives and partnerships to manage the job search process. In every case, however, highly skilled technical contractors envision their career as a sequence of projects. When seeking and accepting a contract, the identity of the organization in which the project is located is generally secondary to personal and professional considerations ranging from hourly rates to opportunities for learning new skills to the intrinsic challenge of the work itself. These criteria are defined by the technical parameters of a project, not by the employment strategy of the firm that offers the contract.

Examining contingent work from the perspective of skilled contractors, fosters a different view of firms than the one traditionally found in organizational theory. With respect to the firm's internal structure, projects are a more salient structural feature for contractors than are the managerial hierarchies and functional departments that have played such a large role in organizational theorizing. This raises the question of whether a theory of post-industrial organizing might usefully reconceptualize firms as contexts for projects. Suppose projects have increasingly become a primary locus of affiliation and decision-making and, hence, an appropriate focus of theorizing. A comprehensive understanding of organizing would then require greater attention to the

logistical, technical, temporal and managerial dynamics of project life. To explore the full ramification of this framing, researchers would have to go beyond studying high-end contracting, which is undoubtedly a special case, to investigate the work of project managers, human resource professionals, top level decision makers and others who affect project dynamics before they could develop a grounded and comprehensive theory of post-bureaucratic organizing in which projects play a pivotal role.

Understanding contractors' work also offers an alternative view of firms' roles in the labor market. From the contractors' point of view, firms are less figural than mediators who broker information and match individuals to positions. The labor market, therefore, appears as a tripartite structure consisting of contractors, clients and mediating institutions (such as staffing firms, users' groups and on-line resume services), not the bipartite structures (firms and contractors) implicitly envisioned by strategic theories of contingent labor. Furthermore, the tripartite structure appears to be overlaid with and laced together by multiple, loose networks of contractors organized around technical specialties. Because these personal networks are based on similarity of skill, they tie employing organizations into a higher order network of work sites that offer similar types of work. In short, by examining the work of technical contractors organizational theorists can move toward a more nuanced view of organizing as a set of work processes and relationships that straddle the boundaries of more traditionally defined entities and that involve multiple types of actors and social collectives.

Although it might seem that studying the work of highly skilled contractors leads to an image of organizing similar to that found in the literature on boundaryless, network organizations, there is a crucial difference: The image is grounded in specific, verifiable details that provide a foundation for broader comparative analysis. For example, one might expect research to show that the dynamics and structures of unskilled temporary labor markets differ from those of highly skilled contingent labor markets. But they may resemble, in important respects, the organization of markets for other types of goods and services in which mediating actors play a significant role. In other words, the insights derived from close studies of work in limited arenas alert researchers to patterns of variation and possible sources of comparison that are prerequisite for rigorous, grounded theorizing. As organization theory's intellectual history reveals, detailed, comparative studies of work were crucial for successfully articulating a theory of bureaucratic organizing.

Conclusion

The field of organization studies currently confronts a significant challenge: discovering, documenting, analyzing, and perhaps even shaping, the organizational implications of the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy. We have argued that facing this challenge of conceptualizing the future may ironically require a renewed appreciation for organizational theory's past. In particular, we contend that organization theory's effort to make sense of the post-bureaucratic organizing is hampered by the absence of what once served as its empirical foundation: detailed studies of work. The dearth of data on what people actually do--the skills, knowledge and practices that comprise their routine work-- leaves us with increasingly anachronistic theories and outdated images of work and how it is organized. We have attempted to show why studies of work are central to good organizational theorizing, where such studies are currently found, why the field ignores them, what would be required if organizational theorists were to reintegrate the study of work into their research efforts, and what the conceptual payoffs of such an approach might be.

Some might interpret our argument as nostalgic longing for a glorious past. We do believe that fields of inquiry are not well served by pressures for constant conceptual innovation or the search for a unique identity that requires severing intellectual ties with what has gone before. Nostalgia, however, is not the impetus for our argument. The past never repeats itself. Instead, our call is for a mode of scientific inquiry that rests on close empirical observation of the phenomena that we hope to explain and a recognition that emerging social developments can not be neatly compartmentalized by the boundaries of established specialties. Grounded empiricism and disciplinary eclecticism are particularly crucial in the social sciences during periods of large-scale institutional and infrastructural change. We have recalled the era of Industrial Sociology as an inspiration for and an exemplar of such an approach. Whatever its shortcomings, there can be no doubt that Industrial Sociologists enabled us to solidify our theories of bureaucratic organizing, in large part, by building on close observations of work and by drawing on data and ideas generated by researchers in related disciplines. Our hope is for a "Post-Bureaucratic" organizational theory that will make comparable empirical and conceptual contributions.

OOW Section News

2001 Winners of the Max Weber Award for Best Book

This year's Max Weber Award Committee was chaired by Patricia Thornton of Duke University, who was joined by Randy Hodson of Ohio State University and Steven Vallas, Georgia Institute of Technology. Nominations were open to books that exemplify the spirit and acumen of Weber's example and that were published during the past three years. The committee received a large number of extremely strong nominations this year, totaling 16 nominations in all. To avoid the appearance of any conflict of interest, the committee adopted a strict rule that required that any committee member with a significant institutional tie to any of the authors be recused from evaluating that submission.

Each committee member read and ranked all the submitted books independently of one another. The rankings were then pooled and compared. Despite the complexity of the task and substantial difference in the committee members' intellectual orientations, an extremely high level of correspondence characterized each individual's rankings. In the end, the task proved in fact to be a simple one, in that one nomination stood out from the rest as the single most exemplary work. That book is the jointly authored book, *Institutional Change and Healthcare Organizations: From Professional Dominance to Managed Care* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). Thus the winners of this year's Weber Award are: W. Richard Scott, Stanford University; Martin Ruef, University of North Carolina; Peter J. Mendel, Rand Corporation, and Carol A. Caronna, Robert Wood Johnson post doctoral candidate in the Health Policy Research Program, University of California, Berkeley.

The theoretical basis for the work lies within both institutional analysis of organizations and population ecology. Fusing insights from both perspectives, Scott, Ruef, Mendel and Caronna have focused steadfastly on the nature of organizational change. Specifying several distinct types of health care organizations, they set about understanding the ways in which the predominance of such types within the field can be explained environmentally. The empirical focus for their analysis centers on organizations within the San Francisco Bay area, though the analysis skillfully extends to statewide and national processes and events far beyond this locale.

Approaching the nature of long-term changes in the structure and logic of health care organizations, the authors distinguish three distinct periods in the trajectory of health care during the second half of the twentieth century. Specifically, they recognize the era of professional dominance (roughly 1945-1965), that of federal involvement (1966-1982), and finally, the current period of managerial control and market mechanisms (1983 to the present). The authors suggest that each period was characterized by a distinct organizational logic (which they describe in terms of the quality of care, equality of access, and finally the efficiency of delivery, respectively). The bulk of their analysis is devoted to a systematic effort to tease out the environmental influences (including the work of professional associations, legislative bodies, and shifts in educational specialties) that have reshaped the aggregate character of health care organizations and which account for the transition from one to another logic. In constructing a richly nuanced, historically attuned analysis, the book distinguishes itself in at least three obvious ways.

The first is the skill and imagination the book employs in its effort to sort out the causal impact of environmental influences on organizational populations over time. The book represents an exemplary achievement in this respect, demonstrating how quantitative analysis, coupled with case study data, can be used to test complex organizational theories in a historically sensitive and cogent way.

A second contribution is the book's sensitivity to historical ironies and unanticipated consequences. This characteristic is especially apparent in the book's effort to show how the professional dominance of the physicians was weakened not only by federal involvement, but also by consumer groups and other social movements. Prying loose the physicians' grip on the provision of health care, these groups eventually opened the flood gates for corporate intrusion into this field – an historical irony that is reminiscent of the Weberian legacy.

A third contribution again resonates with the Weberian tradition. Despite the book's specialized empirical referent, its central concern (to quote the authors) lies with "a more general social trend affecting all modern societies: the ascendance of corporate forms and the intrusion of managerial logics into ever more arenas of social life" (p. 27) Understanding the institutional processes that account for this historical development, the authors have provided an analytical model that is likely to be useful for scholars studying organizational patterns far beyond health care, however important this field may be.

Patricia Thornton, Duke University

2001 Winners of the Thompson Award for Best Paper Written by a Graduate Student

Devah Pager and Eric Grodsky. "The Structure of Disadvantage: Individual and Occupational Determinants of the Black-White Wage Gap."

First, I would like to thank the committee for their assistance in selecting the winner of this year's Thompson Award. David Hachen and Angela O'Rand volunteered their time to read the papers that were submitted. We received quite a few papers, and really it was a joy to read them. They were all excellent.

But one paper did stand out, and the committee decided with little trouble that that paper deserved this year's Thompson Award. The paper is a co-authored paper, written by Devah Pager and Eric Grodsky, both graduate students at the University of Wisconsin.

Devah and Eric's paper is called "The Structure of Disadvantage: Individual and Occupational Determinants of the Black-White Wage Gap." The paper explores inequality between black and white men as a function of their individual and occupation characteristics. The paper extends research on racial earnings disparities by concentrating on inter-occupational variation in the effects of race on earnings and the extent to which occupational measures can explain that variation.

One of the unique things their paper does is to challenge the assumption that the race gap is constant across occupations. They find that the higher the average earnings of an occupation, the greater the racial disparity. This creates an important paradox: as black men become more successful, they are simultaneously less well off relative to their occupational peers. While this is just a snapshot of what Devah and Eric accomplish in this paper, I hope it gives you a sense of both the quality of the study and the importance of the contribution they make. This is an excellent piece of research that promises to mark the beginning of two excellent careers.

Lisa Keister, Ohio State University

2001 Winners of the W. Richard Scott Award for Best Paper:

Roberto M. Fernandez, Emilio J. Castilla, and Paul Moore. "Social Capital at Work: Networks and Employment at a Phone Center." *American Journal of Sociology*, March 2000.

This paper is a "landmark achievement" because it examines with great care and detail the inner workings of the demand side of labor markets. This area has remained a "black box" for much of the sociological research on labor markets. The paper deals with the controversial area of employment referrals and succinctly reframes this research into three competing theories with testable hypotheses for each theory. It also challenges and advances current thinking about the role of social capital in employment.

In addition to these theoretical accomplishments, the authors analyze a uniquely suitable and detailed data set and do so with an impressively wide range of methodological tools. In short the nominator stated "I, for one, will be learning from and emulating this work for many years to come."

Holly McCammon, Vanderbilt University

OOW 2001 Call for Nominations

The Organizations, Occupations and Work Section invites nominations for three awards in 2002. Please send nominations letters and a copy of the nominated works to each of the Committee members listed below. The deadline for receipt of nominations is March 31, 2002.

2002 Max Weber Award for the Best Book Published in the Past Three Years

Send all material to the Chair: Calvin Morill, Dept. of Sociology, University of California, Irvine, 3151 Social Science Plaza, Irvine, CA 92697-5100, (ph) 949-824-9322; (fax) 949-824-4717; calvin@uci.irvine

And to:
Richard Hall, Dept. of Sociology, SUNY-Albany, NY, 12222.

Chris Williams, Dept. of Sociology, University of Texas, Austin, TX, 78712.

2002 W. Richard Scott Award for the Best Paper Published in the Past Three Years

Send all material to the Chair: Amy Wharton, Department of Sociology, Washington State University, 14204 Salmon Creek Ave., Vancouver, WA 98686, (ph) (360) 546-9617; (fax) (360) 546-9036; wharton@vancouver.wsu.edu.

And to: Rudy Alvarez, Dept. of Sociology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA, 90095-1551.

David Knoke, 7305 Wooddale Ave., So., Edina, MN, 55435.

2002 James Thompson Award for Best Paper Written by a Graduate Student

Send all material to the Chair: Beth Bechky, Graduate School of Management, University of California, Davis, CA 95616, (ph) (530) 752-0911; (fax) (530) 752-2924; babechky@ucdavis.edu

And to:
Richard Arum, Dept. of Sociology, NYU;, NY, NY, 10003-6687.

Jackie Krasas Rogers, Dept. of Labor Studies & Industrial Relations, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 16802.

Call for Papers, Chapters, Books

2002 Session Listing for the American Sociological Associations Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL. 2002

Session Organizers for the OOW Section.
Program Committee Chair: Sean O'Riain (Dept. of Sociology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616; sporiain@ucdavis.edu

1. **Invited Session**: Social Constructions of Labor Markets and Industry

Organizer: Vicki Smith, Dept. of Sociology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616, (ph) (530) 752-6170; (fax) (530) 752-0783; vasmith@ucdavis.edu

2. **Open Session**: Occupational Communities

Organizer: John Van Maanen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management, E52-588, Cambridge, MA 02139, (ph) 617) 253-3610; (fax) (617) 253-2660; jvm@mit.edu

3. **Open Session**: Network Organizations: Synthesizing Instrumentalism and Trust

Organizer: Laurel Smith-Doerr, Dept. of Sociology, Boston University, 96 Cumming St., Boston, MA 02215, (ph) (617) 358-0633; (fax) (617) 353-4837; ldoerr@bu.edu

4. **Open Session**: Gender and Race Restructuring in Organizations

Organizer: Lisa Catanzarite, Dept. of Sociology, University of California, San Diego, 9500 Gilman Dr., La Jolla, CA 92093-0533, (ph) (858) 534-3918; (fax) (858) 534-4753; lcatanza@ucsd.edu

5. **Open Session**: Organizations, Occupations, and Work Refereed Roundtables

Organizers: Send submissions to Kim Shauman, Chair, Roundtable Committee, Dept. of Sociology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616, (ph) (530) 754-8072; (fax) 530) 752-0783; kshauman@ucdavis.edu

Other organizers: Diana Okamoto, Jonathan Isler, Eileen Otis, University of California, Davis.

6. **Open Session**: The Social Organization of Care work (co-sponsored with the Sex & Gender Section)

Organizer: Paula England, Dept. of Sociology, Northwestern University, 1810 Chicago Ave., IL 60208-1330, (ph) (847) 491-7488; p-england@northwestern.edu

7. **Invited Session**: Authors Meet Critics: Featuring the Winners of the 2001 OOW Max Weber Award

Organizer: Frank Dobbin, Dept. of Sociology, Princeton University, Green Hall, Princeton, NJ 08544, (ph) (609) 258-4541; (fax) (609) 258-2180; dobbin@princeton.edu

A New Book Series, Women, Gender, & Technology, Published by University of Illinois Press. Series Editors: Sue V. Rosser, Mary Frank Fox, and Deborah Johnson - Georgia Institute of Technology

Volumes in the Women, Gender, & Technology Series bring together women's studies and technology studies, focusing upon women and technology, feminist perspectives on technology, and/or the gendering of technology and its impact upon gender relations in society. Volumes may be written from multiple perspectives and approaches, reflecting and aimed toward audiences including women's

studies, science and technology studies, studies of organizations and occupations, ethics and technology, cultural studies of science and technology, history of technology, and public policy.
Topics focus upon:

1. Cultures and societies: comparative approaches in the study of gender, science, and technology; representations of gender and technology; politics and the state as they reflect and reinforce patterns of gender, science, and technology.

2. Institutions: gender in technological training; structures of education and outcomes; work and organizational contexts among women in technology; programs and interventions to support gender equity.

3. Individuals: social psychology of gender, science, and technology; interactions, expectations, identities, and networks as they are embedded in institutions (e.g., education and work) and outcomes of science and technology; effects of technology on human development and life-span development between generations.

Send inquires and proposals to: Sue V. Rosser, Dean, Ivan Allen College, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0525; sue.rosser@iac.gatech.edu; Mary Frank Fox, Professor of Sociology, School of History, Technology, and Society, and Co-director, Center for Study of Women, Science, & Technology, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0345; mary.fox@hts.gatech.edu; Deborah Johnson, Professor and Director of Program in Philosophy, Science, and Technology, School of Public Policy, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, Georgia,30332-0345; deborah.johnson@pubpolicy.gatech.edu

AFL-CIO and Michigan State University to host Workers' Rights Conference, Call for Papers

The AFL-CIO and the Michigan State University School of Labor and Industrial Relations are co-sponsoring a conference on workers' rights, especially the freedom to unionize and bargain collectively. The conference is scheduled for: October 11-13, 2002 at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan.

This message is a solicitation for papers and paper proposals for presentation at that conference. Persons interested in submitting a paper or a paper proposal are asked to go to the following address for details:

http://www.lir.msu.edu/event/worker-rights/ The due date for responses to the solicitation is October 1, 2001.

Special issue on Work

Sociological Focus, the official journal of the North Central Sociological Association, is planning a special issue entitled "Organizations Transforming Work; Work Transforming Organizations" to appear in February 2003.

OOW ABD Dissertation Abstract

Getting Saved From Poverty: Religion in Poverty-to-Work Programs

William H. Lockhart
Department of Sociology
University of Virginia

Poverty-to-work programs have expanded under current welfare reforms. President Bush and others promote faith-based solutions to poverty. Unexplored is what goes on in these programs and how religion impacts them. If faith-based programs are said to be more efficient and effective, in what ways is this said to be accomplished? Are there secular equivalents to these mechanisms? To explore the differences religion makes in these programs, my dissertation investigates six poverty-to-work programs, half of them secular and half of them explicitly religious. I utilize the concepts of status relations and of human, cultural, and social capital in my analysis.

Compromise, Confrontation, and Coercion: Formal and Informal Dispute Resolution in Cooperative and Hierarchical Worksites

Elizabeth A. Hoffmann
Department of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Madison

This research explores the impact of formal and informal power on grievances, by comparing workplace dispute resolution strategies in matched pairs of hierarchical and non-hierarchical (worker-owned cooperative) organizations operating in four industries. The first three industries--coal mining, taxicab, and wholefoods--demonstrate how the degree of formal and informal power workers hold affects their choice in grievance strategy. In the fourth industry,

homecare, workers with different amounts of power had very similar grievance strategies. The triangular nature of disputes in the homecare industry (i.e., worker-manager-client), as well as the industry culture's ethic of care, overrode the straightforward influence of power on grievance resolution.

A Multilayered Explanation of Job Training In U.S. Organizations

Song Yang
Department of Sociology
University of Minnesota

I investigate the relations between organizational-based training and gender, occupations, managerial beliefs in training nature, and institutions. I review relevant theories and research from economics, sociology, and management sciences. Synthesizing those theories and research,
I propose four conceptual models explaining how the associations between training and gender, occupations, training nature, and institutions are contingent on a number of factors. Using the data from 1996 National Organizational Survey, I am conducting statistical analysis on the hypotheses produced from my conceptual models.

Division of Labor, or Labor Divided?: Health Care Workers, Health Care Work, and Labor-Management Relations

Teresa Scherzer
Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences
University of California, San Francisco

This dissertation explores the changing nature of health care labor at Kaiser Permanente Northern California in the 1990s. This study focuses on workers' experiences, and asks how intersecting inequalities of race, gender, and class inform the organization of work, labor relations, and inter-group relations and stratification of the workforce. The data suggest that Kaiser's restructuring entrenches exploitation of and divisions between workers. Despite workers' shared concerns about working conditions and patient care, solidarity was consistently undermined by historical and locally-specific factors, which reproduced racialized and gendered structures and processes of exploitation, stratification and conflict among the Kaiser workforce.

Post-Docs, Fellowships, and Funding Opportunities

Post-Doc, Department of Sociology at UC Los Angeles. Oscar Grusky and his UCLA research team have openings for recent Ph.D.'s in Sociology who are interested in applying for two-year postdoctoral training awards funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. Oscar Grusky and his UCLA research team have been recommended by the NIMH for a research grant award (MH -62709) for five years (total costs $3.3 mill.) to study "Organizational Factors in the Early Detection of HIV." The research project will contribute a model for studying HIV-related health behaviors at the organizational rather than the individual level. Oscar Grusky also directs (and has directed since 1989) an NIMH-supported multi-disciplinary AIDS research training program (current grant is 2000-2005) that is located in the Department of Sociology at UCLA. He can be contacted at grusky@ucla.edu

OOW Book Notes

Beamish, Thomas D. 2002. Silent Spill: The Organization of an Industrial Crisis. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (February).

One hundred seventy miles north of Los Angeles and 250 miles south of San Francisco, in the Guadalupe Dunes, an oil spill persisted unattended for thirty-eight years. Over a six-year period (1990-1996), the national press devoted 504 stories to the Exxon Valdez accident and a mere nine to the Guadalupe spill--even though the latter is most likely the nation's largest recorded oil spill. Although it was known to oil workers in the field where it originated, to visiting regulators, and to locals who frequented the beach, the Guadalupe spill became troubling only when the people involved were no longer able to view the sight and smell of petroleum as normal. This book recounts how this change in perception finally took place after nearly four decades and what form the response took

Taking a sociological perspective, Thomas D. Beamish examines the organizational culture of the Unocal Corporation, whose oil fields produced the leakage; the interorganizational response of regulatory agencies; and community interpretations of the event. He applies notions of social organization, social stability, and social inertia to the kind of environmental degradation represented by the Guadalupe spill. More important, Beamish uses the Guadalupe Dunes case as the basis for a broader study of environmental "blind spots." He argues that many of our

most pressing pollution problems go unacknowledged because they do not cause the large-scale social disruption or dramatic visible destruction that triggers responses. Finally, he develops a model of social accommodation that helps explain why human systems seem inclined to do nothing as trouble mounts.

Lazega, Emmanuel. 2001. The Collegial Phenomenon: The Social Mechanisms of Cooperation among Peers in a Corporate Law Partnership. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Collective, non-routine, knowledge-intensive work is impossible to account for using the model of bureaucracy as an organizational form. This book outlines the characteristics of a collegial organizational form, in which particularistic social ties are used by members to make it possible for social mechanisms (such as generalized exchange, a lateral control regime, and oligarchic negotiation of precarious values and rules) to operate. It uses a network study of a New England corporate law firm in which partners locked themselves in a cooperative and constraining situation without much hierarchy and formal power differences to enforce their partnership agreement. Members of the firm are portrayed as interdependent entrepreneurs who build social niches in their firm, and find ways to both cultivate and mitigate status competition among themselves. They need to engage in such behavior in order to manage various types of resources (work-related goodwill, advice, social support) and fulfill their commitment to this constraining contract. Their firm is shown to depend on largely the abovementioned informal social mechanisms to govern itself. These mechanisms, for example, help maintain individual performance and quality output, deal with opportunistic free-riding, balance the powers of rainmakers and schedulers, and integrates a multi-city firm in spite of many centifugal forces. The firm is examined using a broadly-conceived structural approach combining network analysis, ethnography of task forces performing legal work, and organizational analysis of internal politics in the firm. The book provides a fresh look at the social discipline underlying collective action among peers or rival partners, and thus at Weberian collegiality.

Perrow, Charles. 2002. Organizing America: Wealth, Power, and the Origins of Corporate Capitalism. Princeton Press book (April).

American society today is shaped not nearly as much by vast open spaces as it is by vast, bureaucratic organizations. Over half the working population toils away at enterprises with 500 or more employees—up from 0% in 1800. Is this the logical outcome of technological forces in an all-efficient market, as some have argued? In this book, the first organizational history of nineteenth-century America, Yale sociologist Charles Perrow tells a different story. He shows that there was nothing inevitable about the surge in corporate size and power by century's end. Critics railed against the nationalizing of the economy, against corporations' monopoly powers, political subversion, and "wage slavery." How did a nation committed to individual freedom, family firms, public goods, and decentralized power become transformed in one century?

Bountiful resources, a mass market, and the industrial revolution gave entrepreneurs broad scope. In Europe, the state and the church kept private organizations small and required consideration of the public good. In America, the courts and business-steeped legislators removed regulatory constraints over the century, centralizing industry and privatizing the railroads. The corporate form undercut resistance to become the model for the next century. Bureaucratic structures spread to government and nonprofit organizations. Writing in the tradition of Max Weber, Perrow concludes that the driving force of our history is not technology, politics, or culture, but large, bureaucratic organizations

New Books By OOW Members

Bose, Christine E. 2001. Women in 1900: Gateway to the Political Economy of the 20th Century, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press (March).

Call, Kathleen Thiede and Jeylan T. Mortimer. 2001. Arenas of Comfort: A Study of Adjustment in Context. Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Smith, Vicki. 2001. Crossing the Great Divide: Worker Risk and Opportunity in the New Economy. Cornell University/ILR Press.

GOT NEWS????????
Send your news, short papers or paper ideas, new publications, calls for papers, or opinions to the newsletter editor or OOW's Chair !!!!!!!

Vicki Smith (OOW Chair) University of California, Davis, vasmith@ucdavis.edu
Tom Beamish (Newsletter Editor) University of Georgia, tdbeamish@arches.uga.edu