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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF PHD

MANAGERS, WORK AND IDEOLOGY

ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with developing and contributing to the sociological study of managers and management. More specifically, it considers the relationships between processes conferring occupational identity, with managerial ideology and the social organisation of managerial work. It asks how people come to see themselves as managers in the context of social and organisational change. Central to this process of developing a managerial identity are the sets of ideas managers draw upon to legitimise their own position in organisations and the division of labour generally. This process is explored through the examination of a management training and development course designed for middle managers. It is argued that this course is essentially concerned with the confirmation of managerial identity. In this sense it approximates to a rite of passage. This process of creating an occupational identity as a manager takes place against a background of social, technical and organisational change which threatens important elements of the employment relation of middle managers. These changes are examined, as are the range of response managers may make to them. Finally, it is suggested that on the basis of the empirical material presented we may need to reconsider the location of managers in recent reformulations of service class theory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who have helped in the production of this thesis. In particular I would like to acknowledge the tremendous help given by the late Derek Allcorn. Like many other graduate students of his I have been greatly influenced by his teaching. His depth of learning, sharp insight and personal support are much missed. Since his death Professor Richard Scase has taken over as supervisor and I am grateful for his detailed comments on draft chapters and his consistent encouragement to finally finish the thesis on time. My colleagues at the London Business School have been generous with time and advice; especially Rob Goffee who has responded to manic phone calls and frequent interruption with tolerance and friendship. Jane Crabtree has typed an untidy manuscript but more than that has always cheered me up when the black clouds gathered. Shirley Neal has endured the final preparation of the thesis with consistent help and support, uniting infinitives on the way. My daughter Rhian has proved a wonderful distraction. Finally, I would like to thank my respondents, their unions and staff associations and the organisations I have worked in for their help.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is essentially concerned with developing and contributing to the sociological study of managers and management. More precisely, it considers the relationships between processes conferring occupational identity, with managerial ideology and the social organisation of managerial work. It asks how individuals come to see themselves as managers in the context of social and organisational change. Central to this process of developing a managerial identity are the sets of ideas managers draw upon to legitimise their own position in organisations and in the division of labour generally. This is explored through an examination of a management development course. Finally, changes in managerial work and the problems this creates in sustaining a self- conception as manager are examined. These changes may have implications for our understanding of the wider social structure.

There are substantial sociological reasons for expanding our knowledge of managers and managerial work and in what follows these reasons are outlined. First, it is prima facie a large and expanding category of employment. Whatever difficulties there may be in using the categories employed in official statistics, there can be little doubt that, according to the best available sources, there has been a marked growth in the personnel employed in management and administration. Thus, examining the published findings of the Manpower Services Group (M.S.G. 1980) we find the following:-

Table 1.1

Employment by Occupation 1961 - 85

Year	Managers - Administrators in Britain
1961 -	1,636,000
1971 -	1,890,000
1978 -	2,146,000
1985 -	2,268,000 (estimate)

These figures chart a spectacular and accelerating growth and should encourage, questions about the characteristics of these occupations and the people who fill them. This pattern of growth in absolute numbers of managers is a relatively long-run trend. Between the censuses of 1911 and 1971 the increase was over 300%. This growth in numbers is matched in proportional terms: between 1911 and 1971 the increase was from 3.6% of the employed population to 8.6% (Price and Bain 1976). Using a comparison of the censuses of 1951 and 1981 we obtain an even more startling measure of the expansion of the managerial and administrative group. The 1981 figure expressed as a percentage of the 1951 figure is 212.5% (Routh 1987 p.37). Of course, we should recognise that we are dealing with a highly heterogeneous category. As we shall see later, there may be good grounds for distinguishing different kinds of managers. For example, it might be important to differentiate between management functions, ie production, marketing, sales etc. In addition, the aggregate figures fail to distinguish levels of management which may be of sociological significance. Finally, there are sectoral differences. For example, there is a higher proportion of managers and administrators in service industries as compared to production (Rajan and Pearson 1986). It may well also be the case that close examination of their work reveals that managers in different sectors do different kinds of things and that their various activities and functions generate

different kinds of occupational identities. Despite these complexities the aggregate trend is significant enough to justify further inquiry.

Secondly, the growth in this category of employment has had a major impact on two of the central obsessions of both classical and modern sociology. Namely, the structure of social stratification in capitalist societies and the role of social mobility in either changing or reproducing these structures. While this thesis bears only indirectly and inconclusively on these themes, it is important that we recognise the extent to which they supply a background against which the argument and evidence are presented.

Like many of the debates in modern sociology we can find the origins of the problem in Marx's analysis of British society. In particular in his discussion of the 'intermediate strata' within society. That is to say, individuals whose class position is neither that of the bourgeoisie nor of the proletariat but who need to be conceived of as somehow between the two great classes. Marx's analysis of these strata is concerned with two separate problems. The first is the fate of the petit bourgeois elements in society. On these Marx is absolutely clear. They are doomed to social and numerical decline. Subsequent historical development has not lent unqualified support to Marx and Engels prediction. The rate of decline of the petit bourgeoisie has been uneven between societies and its persistence in the U.K. has been the subject of persuasive sociological research (Bechofer and Elliot 1981, Scase and Goffee 1982). Nevertheless, at least Marx's analysis of these groupings is crystal clear.

Of much greater interest for current concerns is his treatment of occupational groupings occupying intermediate positions which were largely created by the development of capitalism. Significant among these were the industrial managers and administrators created by the expanded scale of industrial plant and commercial activity and by the rise of the joint stock company. Marx's analysis of this phenomena is rather equivocal (a further treatment of this issue follows in chapter Three). On the one hand, Marx suggest that these occupations are bound to increase in number

under conditions of capitalist production. The antagonistic character of such production requires an extensive control system and this 'labour of superintendence' is carried out by managers and supervisors. In addition, the increasingly complex accounting processes of the larger enterprises produce a growing number of office employees. On this account, the growth of this new intermediate strata looks intrinsic to Marx's view of capitalist development. On the other hand, and in other parts of his writing, Marx proclaims the inevitable polarisation of the class structure and the disappearance of these intermediate strata. Or at least, the increasing approximation of their conditions of employment to those of the proletariat such that their interests become coterminous (Capital Vol.3 p292-3 Marx 1974). The apparent and continuous growth of this category of employment in the 20th century poses considerable problems for this position. Suffice to say at this stage, that it provides good sociolgical grounds for wanting to know more about the occupants of these strata.

In addition, the apparent growth of the intermediate strata has fuelled interest in the role of social mobility in either facilitating or inhibiting class formation. The crucial modern work in this area is by J.H. Goldthorpe and his colleagues (Goldthorpe 1980) who themselves acknowledge the origin of interest in social mobility as arising from Marx's own formulations of the processes of class formation and, more particularly, from revisionist thinking in the early part of 20th century. Clearly, Marx's primary interest was in downward social mobility which took place through proletarianisation. It was this process which was to make the 'two great classes' of capitalist socities. However, as implied by his discussion of the new intermediate strata, he was interested in the effect of these positions on class consciousness and therefore, class formation. It would be incorrect to say that Marx produced anything like a complete analysis of recruitment into these new intermediate strata but there are tantalising insights which are not always in sympathy with other elements of his general analysis. For example, in a comment on the emergence of the modern banking system, he remarks that "a man without fortune, but possessing energy, solidity, ability and business acumen may become a capitalist..." (Cap Vol.III p587 Marx 1974) A remark that may have come straight from Conservative Central Office. Indeed, Marx goes further and suggests that this

recruitment from beneath of the most talented can only invigorate an existing ruling class and thereby stabilise its rule. However, we never get anything like a full account of recruitment to the intermediate strata and it must be conceded that some of the positions might be filled by the downwardly mobile bourgeoisie. If, however, substantial recruitment takes place from the proletariat then, given the general model, this must have implications for the emergence and maintenance of proletarian consciousness(1).

We must conclude that the existence, persistence or growth of these new intermediate strata constitute at least a 'countervailing tendency' to the overall proposition of class polarization.

However, the modern theorists of social mobility, most notably Goldthorpe (though in an earlier period Sorokin develops similar arguments (Sorokin 1927)) use the extent of mobility to more generally refute Marxian suggestions of class polarization.

According to their analysis, the growth of the new intermediate strata and the levels of recruitment into them constitutes a fundamental barrier to the kinds of class formation and action envisaged by Marx. These arguments are presented by Goldthorpe bolstered by significant empirical support. He does appear to have demonstrated that there is a growth of managerial, professional and administrative jobs and that some of those recruited into these positions come from families whose fathers were either low level non-manual workers or skilled manual workers. It is acknowledged that there is little evidence for greatly increased fluidity in British society generally but that the increasing rates of social mobility evident in recent decades are to be explained by changes in the occupational structure which have increased the proportion of managerial, professional and administrative jobs.

It is not the concern of the present work to subject these claims to rigorous consideration. They have in any event generated considerable discussion (Heath 1981, Marshall et al 1988). However, it is relevant to raise in this context questions about the character of the managerial, professional

and administrative occupations to which Goldthrope refers. Before being convinced of the importance of mobility into these positions for the analysis of class structure we would need to know more about them. At the same time we need to know more about the people who fill these positions, the kind of work they do, their employment conditions and their attachment to their employing organisations. Some of these questions, at least as they relate to managers, are elucidated by evidence produced in this thesis. Indeed one of its claims is that we should examine the work and world of the manager very carefully before making general statements about their significance for the structures of social stratification.

Thus far it has been argued that the growth in the numbers and proportion of managers in British society and their significance for recent discussions of social mobility are persuasive reasons for extending our knowledge of this occupational group. If these are not reasons enough, then it must be conceded that the role of manager has been regarded as of central importance to the emergence of modern industrial societies.

Indeed, the significance of the manager in modern society has been a persistent theme of much 20th century social thought. One thread has been the extent to which industrial societies of both capitalist and socialist varieties generate similar problems of co-ordination, control and administration. These arise as an inevitable consequence of the division of labour, the appliciaton of modern technology to production, the intensive use of capital and the scale of productive activity. Industrial society theorists claim that the resolution of these problems increasingly becomes the function of the manager. (see Aron 1967, Dahrendorf 1959, Galbraith 1967, Harbison and Myers 1959, Kerr et al 1962, Lenski 1966). The manager therefore, becomes a crucial economic resource in modern industrial societies, to be nurtured by advantaged employment conditions and produced by institutions of higher education (Poole et al 1981). Indeed, in some variants of industrial society the managers become almost a new ruling group able to dislodge "proprietary capitalist, family patriarchs or political commissars" (Kerr et al 1962 p145). This latter claim is closely associated with the view that ownership and control have become separated in modern capitalist economies.

Such that the ownership of productive capital is no longer the crucial resource. Rather the control of economic organisations has become paramount and this control is the domain of the manager. This thesis has been subject to extensive empirical testing and conceptual clarification (Gilbert 1972, Nichols 1969, Zeitlin 1974, 1976, Scott 1979). For both those who accept this argument and those who reject it, questions remain about the power of managers, the constraints on their activities, their goals, attitudes and values. Indeed, the significance of management in the control of labour is established quite independently of any claimed divorce of ownership and control. If the divorce has occurred, management is vitally important. If it has not occurred, management is simply very important. Again we are led to the conclusion that there are substantial grounds for knowing more about them.

Finally, the resurgence of interest in the sociological study of work itself provides grounds for an interest in managerial work. Much of this recent interest is undoubtedly a by-product of Braverman's work (Braverman 1974) but it is worth noting that for British sociology a powerful influence has been the work of Baldamus, Lupton and Cunnison (Baldamus 1961, Lupton 1963, Cunnison 1966). The main theoretical thrust for this resurgence of interest is the view that crucial processes of class formation and power relations are accessed through the detailed study of the social organisation of work itself. The model analysis, from this perspective, was Marx's own study of the capitalist labour process and the rise of the factory system in Britain contained within Volume 1 of Capital. Braverman summarised this work thus, " .... Marx shows how the processes of production are, in capitalist society, incessantly transformed under the accumulation of capital. For the working population, this transformation manifests itself, first as a continuous change in the labour processes of each branch of industry and second, as a redistribution of labour among occupations and industries. " (Braverman op.cit p 89). Braverman claims that this form of analysis has been rather neglected by subsequent Marxist analysis and that the processes require futher empirical elaboration for the 20th century. He attempts to show that there is a tendency to progressively deskill work in capitalist societies; work becomes increasingly routine and fragmented and control is concentrated in the hands of the capitalist or his agents. This process

is not confined to manual work, (though the bulk of Braverman's evidence is drawn from this area) but operates also on clerical work, and in the service sector. This line of enquiry has ramifications for the study of managers. Most obviously, from Braverman's perspective, managers are revealed as the agents of this process acting in the interests of the capitalist. However, there are at least hints that managerial work itself may be subject to the same dynamic of deskilling which affects other parts of the capitalist labour process. Braverman argues that "... capital, as soon as it disposes of a mass of labour in any speciality - a mass adequate in size to repay the application of its principles of the technical division of labour and hierarchical control over execution by means of a firm grasp on the links of conception - subjects that speciality to some of the forms of 'rationalization' characteristic of the capitalist mode of production" (Braverman op cit p 408). The suggestion here is that Taylorism, the vehicle for deskilling, is unlikely to stop at either manual or clerical work but to include some kinds of managerial work too. The questions raised by this possibility are surely worthy of investigation.

It appears, therefore, that there are good grounds for developing our knowledge of managers. Firstly, as a category of employment that has been expanding. Although, there is some evidence that this expansion may have peaked (Rajan and Pearson 1986) the managerial and administrative element of the occupational structure has grown considerably in the twentieth century. Secondly, the growth in this kind of occupations, taken together with the expansion of clerical and professional jobs, constitutes an apparently significant change in the occupational structure, which has fuelled important debates concerning social mobility and class formation. Thirdly, managing is an occupational role to which much importance has been attached. The ownership and control debate and the convergence thesis have both been concerned with managers, their work and their attitudes and values. Finally, the recent revival of interest in the labour process has highlighted the role managers play in the deskilling process (Wood 1982, Burawoy 1978). Here they need to be considered either as the agents of the process or perhaps as both its agents and as its objects. The extent to which managerial work is itself changed by rationalisation remains empirically open.

If these arguments have any force we are left to ponder why the sociology of management remains rather undeveloped. The reasons are complex and a full discussion of them falls outside the scope of our current theme. However, several points do need to be recognised. Firstly, there may be a belief amongst some sociologists that the study of managers is somehow ideologically tainting. That having read and remembered Becker's '(Whose side are we on?' (Becker 1967), a generation of sociologists treat the world of managers and managing as unworthy of attention. The pollution is exacerbated by the apparent proximity of managers to either the capitalist personified or at least the 'capital function'. This is deeply ironic given the attention generally directed towards understanding the continuing development of the capitalist mode of production. There is a second reason, almost a converse of the first, namely the distrust which many industrial organisations seem to have borne for sociologists. Certainly, gaining access to businesses to study their managerial practices is generally difficult for sociologists. (See Chapter Two for further discussion of this point).

Of course, much more developed is the sociology of organisations. Here the influence of Max Weber is much in evidence. Thus, the central concerns have been with analysing the consequences of the bureaucratic form of organisation in modern society, and with the location of managers within complex structures of authority. (This perspective is more fully explored in Chapter Three).

Not withstanding this partial sociological reticence, a sociology of management established on the basis described would have a number of characteristics. It would start from the role of the manager in the social division of labour. This would imply an interest in the nature and content of managerial work. Central to this interest is the need for an analysis of the function of managerial work within the enterprise, in particular with the extent to which managerial work is concerned with tasks of co-ordination or with the exercise of control over labour on behalf of the capitalist. However, we would also be interested in the functional differentiation of management itself. For

example, the possibility that within an organisation, different interests, attitudes and values may be generated according to the proximity of a particular department to the productive activity itself. Building on this basis, we would be led to consider questions of occupational identity and ideology. For example, the extent to which the occupation generates particular interests and ideologies and the ways in which these are articulated, both in terms of attitudes and values and as working practices. We are, therefore led to inquire how managers legitimise their positions within organisational hierarchies and in society generally. What kinds of general ideas do they draw upon to produce both a legitimating ideology and a sense of occupational identity? Of more general sociological significance would be the question of whether managers' experience of their work and employment generates a shared sense of identity and a set of societal interests. If this were the case, with what other groups in society would managers ally? These rather abstract questions of occupational and social consciousness can be represented as empirical questions about how it feels to be a manager: whether the work experiences of managers cohere to generate both occupational and social identities. Such a perspective would contribute to debates about stratification and social mobility. Finally, to return to our starting point of concern with the role of the manager in the division of labour, we would be interested in the extent to which the division and redivision of labour affected managerial work itself.

This thesis relates to some of these questions. In particular, it focusses on the sense of identity implied by occupying a 'managerial' position in an organisation. It examines ways in which this identity is conferred and confirmed, through an examination of managerial work and management training and development, where it is argued that management thought serves as a source of legitimatory ideas. More generally, it is concerned to stress the fragility of these processes in a context of social and organisational change. The impact of these real and ideological changes on managers and their work is discussed.

However, as suggested earlier the category managers is highly heterogeneous. The managers whose work experiences form the bulk of this thesis are middle managers. Of course, this term itself has

no precise meaning but we can at least locate them approximately amongst the ranks of the modern corporation. The top of the modern business organisation is peopled by directors and by executives who report directly to them. None of this category feature in our discussion, though some of the respondents may refer to them in the context of describing their work and organisation. Next come the general managers; this rank consists of senior executives who have control over all, or at least several, of the traditional business functions, sales, finance, marketing etc. They may carry 'full profit responsibility' for particular business units. To some extent they overlap with the first group and certainly some of them have aspirations to join the directorate. Several of this category were interviewed in this study and their presence is certainly visible to most of the respondents who refer to them as their boss. Beneath this rank come the middle managers. They will have other managers reporting to them but not from either of the first two groups. In the main, they will still have specialist functions though some will have moved away from their original area of technical expertise. For some becoming a middle manager will constitute a career destination, for others a stage they pass through en route to general management or above. Most of the managers who feature in this thesis are located in this broad group. They come from a variety of functions, mainly, but not exclusively in a large manufacturing organisation (further details in Chapter Two). Finally, comes 'front-line' management; concerned with the direct control of operating staff. None of the respondents openly admit to being in this group but some are quite close to it.
These general strata give some indication of where our respondents are located. Within a hierarchy of authority but often lacking much control over organisational resources; in addition, they may be held accountable for activities of the operating staff over whom they have no direct control.

The argument and evidence is presented as follows. Chapter One discusses the development of management thinking from Taylor and the rise of 'scientific management' to the work of Herzberg and 'modern neo-human relations' thinking. The purpose of this discussion is to show how mangagement thought provides a repository of general legitimising ideas for managers. Further that it supplies particular images of managers which are significant in the generation of managerial identity. These ideas are disseminated through management via training. Chapter Two discusses

the collection and analysis of empirical material and raises methodological issues concerning its reliability and validity. A deliberate attempt is made to reflect the real experiences of fieldwork rather than the presentation of an idealised account. In Chapter Three it is argued that understanding managerial work requires a full discussion of the location of the manager in the social division of labour. In particular, it is argued that the work of Marx, Durkheim and Weber offer important elements of an analysis of the social location of the manager but that each on their own are insufficient. A synthesis of elements from the classic sociological tradition is attempted. Such an analysis facilitates the structural and interpretive understanding of managerial work, and the social consciousness of managers. Therefore, in Chapter Four empirical material illustrating the social imagery of managers is discussed. We move on to a discussion of managers and their work in Chapter Five. Here our concerns are to analyse managers' accounts of their work attempting to focus on those activities which are seen to build a managerial identity and those activities and relations which threaten this. In addition, we examine changes in the organisation and content of managerial work and consider how these impinge on the middle manager. Chapter Six is primarily concerned with the ways in which management training contributes to the creation and maintenance of managerial identity. It is argued, through the description of one particular training course, viewed as a rite of passage, that the training is as much concerned with occupational socialisation as it is with the transference of knowledge or expertise. However, the content of modern neo-human relations theories which underpins the training course actually weakens the identity of middle managers, by threatening just those activities which are perceived to confer a managerial identity. Finally, in the conclusion we speculate as to how middle managers will respond to the changes in their work and employment situation which make the attainment of a secure identity as a manager harder to achieve. This argument points to the fragility of many managerial careers and has implications for their location in recent influential theories of social stratification.

NOTES

1. Marx makes this point when describing the immaturity of the American labour movement, claiming that in 19th century America there is a movement of wage labourers into the position of independent peasants (see Selected Works 1968 p 224).

CHAPTER ONE

Management Thought and Managerial Ideologies

This chapter will be concerned to examine selected developments in managerial thought, beginning with Taylor and ending with Herzberg and the 'self-actualisation' school. It is this school which provides much of the intellectual input for the management training course which we will be discussing later in the thesis. As indicated in the Introduction, one of our central concerns is with the ways in which management thought generates particular conceptions of the managerial role. In so doing, it contributes to the process of occupational socialisation, such that access to a body of thought helps to confer an occupational identity. Finally, we will comment on the implications of recent developments in managerial thinking for middle level managers.

However, there are a number of preliminary methodological points to be raised but not resolved. On the contrary, these initial comments are concerned to stress the difficulties involved with writing any history of ideas. For example, to what extent must these ideas be related to the particular historical circumstances of their origin? Or perhaps instead to their immediate ideal precursors? Are the originators of the ideas to be treated as part of an unusually 'free-floating' social group somehow distanced from their respective social structures or as as representatives of their age? These difficult questions are made more complicated when one of the reasons we wish to construct a history of management thought is because we are interested in managerial practice. So that we are always having to face the problem of analysing the relation between theories and their implementation, between management thought and the practice of managers. This relation may have several forms. Management thought and theory could be construed solely as a source of legitimation for managerial activity; in this case it should be more correctly conceptualised as ideology (Baritz 1960). Or it can be treated as a more or less separate body of thought, more like

a branch of organisation theory, which has little consequence for managerial practices. Or there may be a complex interplay between the ideological, scientific and practical aspects of management thought in which consequences, intended and unintended, make up the social reality of managerial activities. These relationships will need to be established empirically in each case.

In what follows I will present a brief and selective history of management thought before addressing some of the rather more abstract issues raised schematically here. The treatment is selective because it seeks to identify the major influences on the conception of the managerial role. We will focus mainly upon Taylorism, the Human Relations movement, and the 'self-actualization' school. All of these have had implications for the activities and identities of managers. They have contained powerful implicit or explicit models of the managerial role. Of course, any such selection will exclude some important writers, who, it might be argued, deserve inclusion. Certainly, there is little discussion here of either Fayol, Barnard or Urwick, all of whom have made substantial contributions (see for example Barnard 1938, Fayol 1949 and Urwick 1943). However, these contributions have been concentrated in the fields of administrative and organisational theory. Further, their influence has been mainly in the creation of 'rational' models of managements' functions. In this, they have been important in constructing organisational definitions of the managerial role but the general thrust of their work has been towards the depersonalisation of management; to its increasing systematization (cf Weber 1947). For example, Urwick stressed that the problems of organisation were technical rather than human:-

"... there are principles which can be arrived at inductively from the study of human experience of organisation, which should govern arrangements for human association of any kind. These principles can be studied as a technical question, irrespective of the purpose of the enterprise, the personnel composing it, or any constitutional, political or social theory underlying its creation". (Urwick in Gulick and Urwick 1937 p 49.)

Such a view owed much to the analytic principles set out by Fayol (see Child 1969 pp 88-103) and made claims for the depersonalisation of management by its reduction to abstract principles of administration. Even Barnard's treatment of communication (Barnard 1938), which seems more psychological in orientation, should be viewed as adding a dynamic element to principles of organisation already firmly established. Of course, it can be argued that Taylor is very much a part of this 'rational' school of thought. However, as we shall see, while Taylor may appear to offer 'technical' solutions there is an undoubted element of moral crusading in his writing. In any event, intellectually influential though the ideas of Barnard, Fayol and Urwick may have been, they have remained less influential upon managers than the schools of thought examined below, all of which have generated powerful and popularised messages for managers. Indeed, it is interesting that we can speak of Taylorism but not Urwickism or Fayolism. In summary, then, our emphasis will be upon those writers around whose ideas managerial 'movements' have formed, often through the vehicle of popularised versions of their thinking.

In general, management thinking has mainly been examined to extract either its image of the worker or the model of the enterprise. The following discussion will add the image of the manager and the conception of managerial work implied by management thought.

It is commonplace to begin a survey of management thought with F W Taylor. This seems sensible and tidy. However, it is worth noting that Taylor's work in so far as it relates to 'grand' questions about human nature and work springs from exactly the tradition that Marx sought to criticise and contribute to in Capital. There is a continuity between the social theorists of the 19th Century, like Marx and Durkheim, who grappled with the consequences of an extended division of labour in industrial societies and the emerging management thinkers of the Twentieth Century. The comparison may not be flattering for management theory but there are issues which are addressed by both sets of writers. First, and most importantly, the consequences, positive and negative of the division of labour. The desired position is for a level and form of division which maximises human productivity without negatively constraining essential features of human nature. Taylor's advocacy

of the 'one best way' is another answer to the same question which produces Durkheim's 'spontaneous division of labour'. Secondly, they all address the place of work in modern human societies. Taylor's equation of employment with the pursuit of narrowly economic interests is, of course, the very epitome of Marx's conception of alienation but they are both concerned to evaluate work in the context of basic propositions about human nature and motivation. Thirdly, they address the issue of what kind of organisation structure replaces the owner/entrepreneur. Are managers agents of capital or a category of intellectual labour? Managers as functionaries or management as a necessary function? These continuities require further work for there is, as yet, no detailed treatment of this connection. For the British experience, it should be noted that Taylor's writing made little impact on management thought before the First World War, though subsequent to this it did receive a great deal of critical attention. It was viewed with suspicion, because even though it shared a dislike of laissez-faire with 'progressive' employers of the period like Cadburys and Rowntrees, it offered a much less sympathetic model of the worker than that which guided the Quaker employers. Therefore, it was criticised on the grounds that it did not take into account the dangerous physical effects that followed 'speeding up', that it relegated the worker to the status of 'living tool' thus, undervaluing the spiritual, and that it failed to understand the importance of variety in work (see Child 1969 p 38).

One of the crucial elements of Taylor's work is his model of the worker. If we follow through from Taylor to Herzberg by examining either the explicit or implicit model of the worker, we can situate modern 'neo-human relations' thought in order to examine its implications for managerial practice. Taylor, unlike his more 'social scientific' successors never indicates clearly just what model of man he is working with. However, it is not too difficult to draw out his feelings on these issues from a perusal of his analysis of the condition of American industrial organisation. Ironically, for the alleged founding-father of managerial theory, Taylor saw the worker as rational and the managers as incompetent. The reasons for this are complex but revealing. To some extent scientific management has two targets: on the one hand the 'systematic soldiering' of workers, but, just as importantly, its critique of the amateurishness, almost decadence, of an owning elite which knows

little of production proper. Unlike the founding entrepreneurs, established capitalist families were proving relatively unsuccessful at combining ownership with knowledge of and interest in the business of production. Recognition of this helps to explain why in a later period, the 1920's and 1930's, the management movement has a significant 'progressive', anti-capitalist current. (Rose 1975).

Workers' rationality was actually exemplified in 'systematic soldiering', that is, the group control of output, while the managers' incompetence was exhibited in their failure to gather information about the time in which workers could be expected to complete certain tasks. Indeed, Rose suggests that managerial incompetence was believed by Taylor to indicate a more fundamental malaise; he portrays managers as "ignorant, arbitrary, selfish and blind to their own real interests, ie, largely irrational" (Rose, ibid p 34). In contrast, the industrial workman was rational precisely because he did pursue his own real interests and these Taylor perceived to be measured almost entirely in terms of maximising economic returns. This objective the worker pursued individualistically; all men were out to do the 'best' for themselves and the 'best' was measured in economic terms. This summary does rather vulgarise even Taylor's rather crude psychology. He did recognise other motivations; the pursuit of pleasure, for example, or that not all the work force would be prepared to work harder in pursuit of bonus payments. Nevertheless,his view of the industrial workman is one of the rational, individualistic materialist seeking to maximise economic returns.

There are clear implications for management and the role of managers in such a view (Copley 1923). Firstly, recommendations about organisational structure; secondly, a concern with the measurement of work and the design of tasks and thirdly, with the problems of selecting and motivating workers. Under the first can be placed Taylor's plea for 'functional foremanship'. This scheme would make the worker responsible to four supervisors who would deal with different functional aspects of the production process such as maintenance or quality control. More importantly and famously, Taylor recommends the formation of a 'thinking department' to take over the planning of production, the supply of materials for production and the crucial task of

calculating pay. Under the second can be placed the essential managerial task of performing scientific work-study in order to measure and relate to each other the time taken, the methods and tools used and the fatigue generated. When this was done, the 'one best way' could be described (Taylor 1903). Finally, Taylor's perspective has implications for managerial activity in the sphere of selection and motivation. These can be summarised in two formulae. First, every task should be performed by a 'first-class man' for that type of work. Second, 'first-class' men should be given 'a fair day's pay for a fair day's work'" (Taylor 1906). The concept of a 'first-class man' derives from Taylor's belief that almost everyone can be good at something and therefore the allocation of particular tasks could not be left to chance; for every task the man with the most relevant aptitudes must be chosen. Such allocations are part of management's task. A fair day's work can be arrived at scientifically employing the methods of work- study. It could be calculated through linking wages to output. Failure to reach a 'scientifically' arrived at target incurred a proportionate loss of earnings, exceeding target brought bonuses.

It is clear then that management's responsibilities are to create the conditions in which workers can maximise their incomes while performing their tasks in the 'one best way' which has been decided by the Planning Department on the basis of work study. Taylor thus offers two images of the manager. Before the adoption of scientific management techniques managers are prey to the organised, rational practices of systematic soldiering to which they have no adequate response because they are ignorant of the real world of production. After scientific management they are transformed into scientists of work, pioneering ergonomists, who monopolise knowledge of production in their labours of conception.

It is not my intention to list the by now well-known criticisms of Taylor and scientific management, except to note that they have encompassed the psychology of the worker, the form of organisational structure, the payment system and work-study. In short, very little of Taylor's work has remained untouched by substantial criticisms. Nevertheless and importantly, it has remained as a back-drop for the new developments in management thought and as a straightforwardly adopted managerial position. Its attraction lies in its apparent ability to combine the scientific with the practical. It

seems scientific, practical and also curiously commonsensical; that men were most strongly motivated in the pursuit of economic rewards and that this could be tapped through work study and bonus incentive schemes. A powerful underlying theme in the development of management theory is the power of science as a vehicle of legitimation. Taylorism, as an ideology, exemplified the notion that science could be applied to the organisation of work. This partly accounts for its influence and longevity. Certainly, the Hawthorne teams of researchers, who are often presented as major opponents, began their research with an implicitly Taylorian model.

The connection between Taylorism and its 'successor', 'human relations' theory are well-illustrated by Child's treatment of the British experience in the period following the First World War into the twenties (Child 1969). He notes an apparent paradox. On the one hand, a succession of leading British industrialists and academics have focussed on causes of industrial unrest such as "fatigue, monotony, speeding-up, lack of worker autonomy on the shop-floor, class consciousness, the disparity between the ideal of political democracy and the absence of democracy in industry" (Child, 1969 p55). However, "management thought tended increasingly to place its main hopes for worker motivation and the resolution of conflict not on an attempt to mitigate the factors just listed, but rather on the persuasive powers of personal managerial leadership" (Child ibid p35). It did this partly because it saw many of the former kinds of problems as inherent, unavoidable aspects of technically efficient industrial societies and partly because, since they were unavoidable, managers must concentrate their efforts on those things which were under their control and, in particular, must develop their understanding and manipulation of human motivation. This development begins a process in which management theory moves away from the point of production. In human relations, this means a move into applied behavioural science, developing interests in motivation and the environmental contexts of consent. Later theorists of management concern themselves more clearly with the sphere of realization, producing new management 'disciplines' - accounting and marketing (Armstrong 1987). A further complicating factor must be taken into account. Although it is customary to examine 'human relations' as the successor of Taylorism, it is neither historically accurate nor theoretically enlightening to present such a picture. 'Human factor industrial

psychology' must be inserted because it provided much of the scientific evidence upon which human relations later developed; in particular, by refuting the psychological assumptions about motivation which underpinned Taylorism.

This work, which was led by the British industrial psychologist, C S Myers, has been unfairly neglected. Its importance stems from its substitution of "an image of the workers as a complex organism for Taylor's greedy robot" thus "it opened the way to study of the less tangible influences on worker behaviour" (Rose 1975, p65). The research generated by Myers and his colleagues began to accumulate in the 1920's following the foundation of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology in 1921 under Myers' leadership. The NIIP and the Industrial Fatigue Research Board, founded in 1918, were the two research institutes which led this almost exclusively British Research. Together they engaged in consultancy work and 'pure' research through the 1930's, generating a large volume of reports and publications. To begin with, the work was highly focussed on the quantitative study of fatigue and monotony but by the 30's there was a clear and increasing concern with less quantifiable aspects of work, especially with the social environment of industrial work. Initially, even in the 1920's, Myers and his colleagues had been critics of Taylorism; arguing against the notion of the 'one best way' on the grounds that its basis in the 'best demonstrator of the best method' was scientifically unrespectable (Myers 1920). In any case, workers showed a correct and highly laudable opposition to the 'one best way' which could only survive where collective organisation was weak. By the 1930's the work of Myers and his followers contained much that was concerned with the social and economic environment of work rather than with the description and measurement of work itself. For example, there was concern with competing 'group loyalties' as a feature of social relations at the factory and with the workers' domestic and market position (Myers 1932). Friedmann's concluding remarks on this body of research praises the model of human nature which emerges:-

> "Man, with the whole of his personality, is again introduced ..... The abstract worker conceived by the Taylorians - a crude composite of laziness and desire for

gain - yields to a complex being, both body and mind, in whom an all-important act such as work involves the whole personality" (Friedmann 1955 p 84).

Myers and his colleagues, in a somewhat surprising way, managed to push forward with a scientific study of work, to severely undermine the psychological assumptions of Taylorism and to produce a body of empirical material, much of which foreshadows the work of the 'human relations' school. They were able to do this by combining a strong belief in the efficiency of rigorous science with an authentic humanitarianism (linking with the Quaker tradition discussed by Child 1969, pp 36-40 and pp 47-8). The former enabled them to illustrate the shaky foundations of much 'scientific management'; the latter enabled them to, in part, remove the workers' doubts about the relationship between Taylorism and industrial psychology. In the intellectual space created by espousing science and denying Taylorism they were able to adopt a 'value neutral' technocratic stance which amply suited their largely consultative role. The crucial limitations of the Myersians were, firstly, this essentially consultative role which hampered fundamental research. Secondly, and importantly, if the connection with human relations is to be correctly established, the Myersians retained a basically individualistic psychology. Nevertheless, it would be quite misleading to present this work as entirely ideological or apologetic for the existing order. It was based on a legitimate application of scientific method to the study of work. It developed not only with a social logic but an intellectual one. Certainly, they began to illustrate the impact of the 'human factor' in work and this left the way open for the 'social man' of the human relations school. It is to this familiar figure that we now turn.

However, human relations theory should not be thought of as a unified set of ideas. It was clearly intellectually differentiated and was fed by various intellectual currents. Rose produces a persuasive account of these differences, arguing convincingly that if human relations is to be correctly understood, then this diversity must be understood (Rose op cit). This said, however, my account will not pay detailed attention to the internal disputes of various human relations theorists. Rather

I will attempt an 'ideal typical' presentation of human relations theory which emphasises what I take to be its most important characteristics.

One of the first points that needs to be made is the connection between a Taylorite emphasis on economic incentives and working conditions and the early phase of the, by now, infamous Hawthorne experiments. Indeed, it cannot be over-stressed that much Twentieth Century development in management thinking is in some respect a response or reaction to Taylorism. Certainly, the early stages of the experimental work were an elaboration and extension of the Taylor paradigm. They were concerned with the discovery of the forms of work organisation which optimised worker productivity under management control. For example the 'Relay Assembly Group' experiment involved altering the conditions of work of selected workers and measuring the effect of these changes on output. Hours of work were altered and rest periods varied, the workers were paid on a group bonus scheme. The apparently startling consequence of all these changes was a more or less constant increase in output. The operatives became more friendly and cooperative with each other (forgetting the two who were taken out of the study because of 'uncooperativeness') and were envied by their colleagues not involved with the experiments. The conclusion drawn was that the productivity increases could be explained by the additional and special attention they were receiving.

These observations were complemented by periods of direct observation. It became clear from these that strong social controls were operating within the group to maintain control over work and output; overproducers were labelled 'rate-busters' and 'encouraged' to hold back work; underproducers 'chisellers' and urged in an opposite direction. It seemed a puzzle as to how these actions should be evaluated. Perhaps, they should be interpreted as an exemplar of economically motivated action, as some attempt to maintain long-run earnings; or as action connected with struggles over control of the work process itself, or as a combination of both. However, the Hawthorne researchers focussed their attention on the mechanisms of social control employed by the workers as they emerged from their social interactions. The use of sanctions to enforce

conformity to group norms, the ways in which membership of the work group was established by nicknames etc captured the attention of the observers. It was partly this research which was responsible for the alleged discovery of 'social man'. As opposed to the rational individualistic worker of the Taylorite model, 'social man' derived considerable satisfactions from harmonious, meaningful, social relations at work - a work situation based on a consensus about the rules governing social actions.

It is worth considering why this set of observations was to become so central to the Human Relations School (Smith 1987). To answer this we have to step back from management theory and examine a meta-theoretical question which underpins much of the work and which has important implications for managers. It concerns the nature of order in human organisations. We can grasp the genuine novelty of human relations if we return to Taylor's thoughts on the issue of internal order. His writings are infused with the language of order. Constantly order is equated with efficiency (and rather more grandly with goodness). However, disorder is natural, or more correctly it resides in the nature of workers and managers. Left to their own devices they are disorderly. Workers are shirkers, naturally 'soldiering'; and managers are moral pygmies because they will not impose order. Worse still, if this situation is left alone individuals combine to enforce group norms of work rationing, that greatest evil of all for Taylor, 'systematic soldiering'. There can be only one way out of this situation. The 'one best way' derived from 'rational' Taylorite principles must be imposed on workers and managers alike. This will release production, which is in the economic interests of all and, moreover will, produce order which is morally virtuous. The thrust of this argument is that reason must be used as an ordering mechanism against the natural instincts of men. The force of this 'rationality' is justified because it is science. Science presented 'neutrally' as without values is paradoxically used as part of a moral crusade against disorder.

The Hawthorne observations forced a very different conception of the genesis of order. Here order seemed to arise spontaneously in the work group. It constituted both a resource and a potential problem for the organisation's controllers. On the one hand, it indicated the possibility of joint

commitment to a common purpose. On the other, it was feasible that integration with the organisational goals would not be evenly spread throughout the structure. Individuals could combine to pursue cooperatively the desired ends or they could limit commitment and pursue (again cooperatively) alternative ends. This is precisely the problem elaborately avoided in Barnard's The Functions of the Executive (1938). His systems assumptions make order appear natural but the central task of the manager is the integration of individuals into the organisation's goals (or, as we would no doubt call it now, the organisational culture). The dilemma is this (in some ways it predates the central problem of the later Parsons) (Parsons 1951; Brim and Wheeler 1964): if the former assumption is correct then there is little left for the managers to organise. Just as for Parsons, the logical choices are plain; problems at work arise either through the influence of defective individuals or individuals are ineffectively socialized. Barnard and much more recent management thinking takes the socialisation route and hence the concern, then and now, with the transmission and inculcation of organisational values.

For human relations theorists the observation of 'natural' cooperation inserts into the problem precisely what Taylor's individualist, reductionist assumptions sought to remove. The customary reading of human relations theory is that Mayo and his colleagues uncovered a layer of affective behaviour which explained the networks of workplace cooperation. Thus Rose can argue that human relations shows workers have 'hearts'. This seems a slight misreading, or at least we may need to distinguish Mayo's work (1947) from that of Roethlisberger and Dickson's (1939). P.D. Anthony (1977) describes the widespead influence of Mayo as a kind of romantic movement in management thinking which was a response to Taylor's version of reason.

> "It was as though a romantic movement in management was beginning to follow the age of reason; reason was never entirely discredited but it began to be recognised that other forces, some of them dark and mysterious, had to be accounted for in exploring and influencing human behaviour" (Anthony 1977, p223). He continues

"Hawthorne emphasized the importance of non-rational feelings among workers ... The emphasis was taken to the point at which the worker seemed to be regarded as incapable of rational action so that it required an entirely therapeutic reaction from management in order to control him". (ibid p 223).

This view may well be a fair presentation of Mayo and certainly accords with the orthodox presentation of human relations as uncovering the creature of sentiments but there are important ways in which it misrepresents the key monograph by Roethlisberger and Dickson, Management & the Worker. Certainly Roethlisberger and Dickson share with other writers of the School an interest in affective behaviour at work and often they seem to explain networks of cooperation at work in these terms. However, they seem not to insist on the necessity of the particular causal connection. Rather they present an image of the organisation in which the psychological and social needs of workers are interacting variables with the technical characteristics of the workplace. These characteristics form a framework of constraints and opportunities around which these needs are articulated. Further, patterns of social life outside the workplace, just as the technical system itself, facilitate or inhibit certain actions within it. It is true that in the monograph they concentrate on internal group networks on the shop floor as bases for worker action and that often these are seen as having a base in 'sentiments' but the possibility exists inside their model of these networks arising out of needs other than affective ones. The orthodox interpretation of Human Relations is nonetheless broadly correct. However, it may be that we ignore some of the genuine advances of the research when focussing entirely on arguments concerned with the 'logic of sentiments'. At least in principle it is possible to integrate needs other than affective ones, into Roethlisberger and Dickson's model.

In another respect the orthodox critique of human relations is entirely correct. This concerns the presentation of conflict at work. Conflict is almost invariably presented as being 'symbolic' rather than 'rational'. For example, it is occasioned as a release of tension rather than as a clash of interests. 'Unitary' assumptions are so deeply entrenched in much human relations writing that a

recognition of conflicting interests is almost impossible. Nevertheless, it is obliged to offer an explanation of conflict. The explanation adopted by the Human Relations movement was rooted in a particular account of worker psychology as it was formed in response to the process of industrialisation. In order to understand this, we have to acccept a 'golden age' vision of pre-industrial society. In this social order each individual knew their place, deriving meaning and satisfaction from his contribution to the community. Such arrangements met the human need to belong. It was this need for belonging and identification which was threatened by industrialisation. Not only did high rates of rural-urban migration destroy traditional, supposedly close- knit communities, but also the extensive divisions of labour practised in the industrial workplace further isolated individuals. Since the need for belonging is so fundamental, it is not surprising that individuals robbed of a sense of group identity, both outside and at work, respond by engaging in symbolic conflict. Or rather, to put the argument more fully, they form informal groups at work which give them a sense of group identity from which managers are excluded. This process of exclusion arises because workers feel that management has ignored their need for identification. It thus becomes highly likely that the creation of informal groups at work will form a fertile basis for opposition to management. Further, managers must accept some blame for this state of affairs. It is they who have failed to recognise and respond to workers' needs for belonging and identity, and, therefore, it is they who become the target of strong informal group formation at the workplace. However, the Human Relations School offers more than an explanation of conflict at work. It also offers a cure. It is possible for managers to tap this need for belonging and turn it to their advantage.

Of course, this message had ramifications for how managers were to manage. Far from distancing themselves from the 'labour of execution' in order to perfect the 'labour of conception' as Taylorism implied, they were to become involved in the working lives of their subordinates. They were encouraged by the Human Relations School to develop their leadership skills so that they could exercise influence inside the social groups that would inevitably form at work. However, leadership alone could not be relied on. Managers were trained to become more sympathetic to employees

feelings, to develop social relations based on knowledge of workers' homes and localities, and to use less punitive and more consultative supervision styles. Some of this became quite bizarre; memory techniques were taught to enable managers to remember large numbers of first names and an associated item of personal knowledge, so that they could appear to know their subordinates well. All of this would, it was claimed, enable managers to gain cooperation and commitment from their subordinates, tapping their natural propensity for forming social groups in order to satisfy their need to identify.

As we can see, much was claimed for this approach and together with the social skills and communication programmes that flowed from it, it became very popular amongst 'progressive' business organisations. Conflict was to be understood in terms of under-developed social skills on the part of managers. When these had been sharpened through training programmes, conflict would disappear. In addition, there would be the bonus of subordinates transferring their group identification from the informal group, where it might form the basis for opposition, to the enterprise itself.

The fundamental error of this approach lay in its misunderstanding of the basis of group formation at work. It assumed that the motivation for group formation was satisfied by the group itself. Individuals satisfied their needs for identification and belonging simply through the process of group membership. The group was an end in itself. These assumptions foreclosed any questions about why individuals formed into particular groups and for what other purposes than to simply belong. It saw group formation only in affective terms, ignoring any more narrowly rational purposes. For example, workers employed under piece-work conditions may form strong informal social groups characterised by high levels of sociability, but it is surely mistaken to imagine that increased sociability is the sole function of the group. Rather sociability may be the mechanism through which other group objectives, like control of output, are achieved. This is not to say that groups will not exhibit a rich cultural life of their own, no reader of Roy's famous studies (Roy

1952, 1955, 1960) could ignore this but it is vital to understand patterns of groups formation and survival in response to the overall distribution of power and authority in the work place.

Nevertheless, for current purposes it needs to be stressed that Human Relations theories and their practical offsprings - social and communication skills training - did change managers' conception of themselves and their work. They came to see themselves as orchestrators of human feelings and emotions, generating loyalty and attachment through the exercise of their own well honed social skills. Increasingly the main constituent of effective management became not technical, conceptual or administrative skill but human and social skills. Armed with human relations theories and sensitivity training, their recognition of human identification needs made them powerful manipulators of subordinate motivation. Perhaps more important, they could rest easy that conflict at work developed not from conflicting interests but from defective communication. It is easy to underestimate the extent to which human relations theory has entered managerial culture and continues to provide a powerful thread of managers' occupational identity.

Indeed, Human Relations theories continue to occupy an important place in managerial ideologies. They do, after all, give the manager a very important and knowledgeable role. However, in terms of practical outcomes, they promised much more than they could deliver. Conflict at work continued even where managers and supervisors were well-versed in appropriately sensitive management styles. In consequence, management thinkers began to probe the weaknesses and limitations of human relations theory. The most important intellectual source of these criticisms were firstly, Maslow's work on human motivation (Maslow 1943) and secondly, the growth of socio-technical systems theories (Trist and Bamforth 1951, Davis 1957, Emery 1959, Emery and Thorsud 1964). This later development argued that focussing exclusively on the social organisation of work, allegedly the failing of the human relations school, or focussing on the technological imperatives on work, was misplaced. Instead, the social organisation and the technical system were themselves elements of a single system - the sociotechnical system (Woodward 1958). Applying this conception to the emerging process-based technologies of the post-war period they argued for

the progressive removal of repetitive, fatiguing jobs, the legacy of scientific management, and their replacement by jobs with greater variety and autonomy. These jobs would produce both satisfaction and efficiency and were well-suited to the well-educated, ambitious young workers produced by post-war social change (Guest 1957). Interesting though these ideas were and despite their continuing development in the sixties and seventies (Blauner 1964, Trist 1976) they did not feed into managerial ideology in the way that their predecessors scientific management and human relations, had. There were no clear implications for what managers should do, save that they should seek to jointly optimize (Kelly 1982) the social and technical systems. Of course, the job reform programmes instituted by 'progressive' employers like Volvo, Philips, AT & T and IBM were influenced by sociotechnical systems thinking. But in the main this influence was exercised on managers located at strategic decision-making levels in the organisation. Indeed some of them became public promoters of job redesign (P Gyllenhammar (Volvo), I McDavid (BSC), R Fort (AT & T), see Kelly 1982 for further examples). Managers located nearer the 'coal face' were much more influenced by Maslow's motivational theories and it is to these and their popularizer, F Herzberg, that we now turn.

Maslow's work on motivation culminated in his 1943 paper, 'A Theory of Human Motivation' (Maslow 1943). It lies outside outside the scope of this thesis to elaborate Maslow's ideas in great detail but, because they have become so important an element of modern management thinking, they need to be at least outlined. Maslow argues that human needs are organised into a hierarchy composed of five levels. These are physiological, safety, social, self-esteem and self-actualising needs. Their titles are largely self-explanatory except for the term 'self-actualisation'. By this Maslow means "the desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for one to become actualised in what one is potentially" (quoted in Vroom and Deci 1970 p 33). This need comes into action when the other need levels have been satisfied such that "a new discontent and restlessness will soon develop, unless the individual is doing what he is fitted for" (ibid p 35). The theoretical advance claimed for Maslow is that as one particular need level is satisfied it no longer motivates. Rather the individual is motivated by the next need level in the hierarchy, until he reaches the need

to self-actualise. Just as particular individuals may move up the hierarchy in the direction of self-actualisation so they may also move down. For example, to use a Maslovian example, safety needs re-emerge in periods of emergency like natural catastrophes. However, the most significant proposition for our purposes is that satisfied needs no longer motivate. You cannot obtain more motivation by adding more of the same once a particular need level has been satisfied. This proposition appeared to have clear implications for the study of work motivations. However, these were not developed by Maslow himself but by other authors, most notably Frederick Herzberg.

Herzberg's original research emerged in the context of a review of studies of job satisfaction (Herzberg et al 1957). He claimed that the apparently contradictory findings reported in the research literature could be adequately explained using a different set of concepts. In particular, it was crucial to reject the commonly-held assumption that any one factor at work, such as pay or conditions, were on a continuous scale from high to low satisfaction. On the contrary he claimed that factors which gave rise to job satisfaction were discrete from those which caused dissatisfaction; the removal of factors causing dissatisfaction did not automatically create satisfaction, and vice versa. The factors creating dissatisfaction were called 'hygiene' factors and those creating satisfaction 'motivators'. The hygiene factors were company policy and administration, pay, supervision, and working conditions. The motivators were achievement, recognition, work itself, responsiblity and advancement. The hygiene factors were concerned with the context of work and the motivators with content. Thus, if you wanted to improve job satisfaction you had to alter job content. Further, according to Herzberg, motivators were positively associated with work performance and hygiene factors with absenteeism. The implications were clear; if your managerial problems were concerned with absenteeism in a tight labour market you concentrated on hygiene factors but if you desired increased productivity through improved worker performance you had to examine job content. At this stage of the development of Herzberg's position quite what you did to job content was not clear but by 1966 with the publication of Work and the Nature of Man (Herzberg 1966) two important developments had taken place. Firstly, Herzberg tried to link his job satisfaction studies more closely with general problems in human

motivation theory and it is here that he explicitly embraces Maslow's hierarchical conception of needs. The hygiene factors were generally associated with the lower order needs of Maslow's hierarchy and the motivators with the higher order needs. Secondly, Herzberg begins to develop the job redesign ramifications of his hygiene- motivation theory. Esentially, these amount to the view that motivation and performance are improved when jobs are "enriched". At least at the level of theory these suggest greater autonomy over the work itself, higher levels of responsiblity, increased identification with the task and more skill. Using these principles of job redesign, Herzberg claims increases in productivity and satisfaction. As we shall see later in this chapter, it may be wise to be sceptical of these claims, (Kelly 1982 reviews the evidence pp 156 - 168) but the Herzberg message was enthusiastically taken up by management training programmes in many organisations and several notable 'successes' (like Volvo and ICL) became enshrined in the new managerial wisdom (Butteriss 1971). Two further points need to be emphasised before we move onto the implications of these developments for management itself. Herzberg was absolutely clear that his approach was radically different from human relations theories. Unlike human relations Herzberg had no room in his theory for informal social groups. The unit of analysis was always the individual.

Indeed, he goes further in distancing himself from human relations when he positively recommends that participation by those subject to job redesign be avoided, because participation "contaminates the process with human-relations hygiene" (Herzberg 1966 p 123). Finally, Herzberg concedes that some workers will not be amenable to job enrichment. Either they will be psychologically ill-disposed to it, trapped in the relentless pursuit of 'hygiene', or their jobs are highly technologically constrained thus curtailing the scope for job redesign. Both of these elements, the distance from human relations and the recognition of permanent hygiene- seekers, had attractions for managers. The former encouraged changes in working arrangements without altering the wage effort bargain. The latter created a population well-suited to repetitive, fragmented work.

Although Herzberg goes to some lengths to distance himself from human relations there is at least one aspect of his thinking that is also shared by both Taylorism and Human Relations, namely a conception of conflict at work as pathological. Certainly, the diagnosis of conflict is different in the case of each school but a central assumption is that there are no inevitable conflicts of interests in the workplace. For Taylor, conflict arises because incompetent managers have failed to organise the work scientifically in order to tap the economic motives of workers. For human relations theorists, it is because affective and social motivations are ignored. For the disciples of job redesign, it is because an incomplete model of human motivation is employed in applying the division of labour. From each perspective a cure is available such that conflicts of interest more or less disappear, and the cure is to be administered by managers. Managers emerge as the facilitators of effective work organisations.

Management thinking has absorbed ideas from Herzberg and the 'self- actualisation' school by amalgamating them with socio-technical systems thinking. These elements come together to provide a new core of management thought, into which is woven strands of human relations thinking. The result may be called 'neo-human relations' (Child 1969 pp 177-187). It argues that work should be intrinsically satisfying, offering opportunities for self-actualisation and that the need for such work is inherently human. Further, it is management's responsibility to so organise the structure of work that this need can be met. However, it still adheres to a unitary human relations model of the enterprise, in which conflict arises from inadequate communication, rather than competing interests. In consequence, it makes no firm distinctions between managerial and other employees except to note that work is worse at lower levels in the hierarchy and that it is managers who must change this. Nevertheless, it is distanced from human relations through its recognition that work itself must be changed and that, therefore, employees' compliance cannot be brought about simply through improved supervisory style and illusory 'participation' schemes. It recommends more fluid organisation structues in which power and discretion can be devolved, weakening the vertical hierarchy. In addition, great attention must be given to the design of the jobs and the creation of effective work-groups (Andreatta 1974). Some managers will be entrusted

with this key task of designing organisational structures made up of satisfying and enriching jobs. However, the application of these ideas may have implications for other managers not directly concerned with the strategic design of work. Indeed, analysing the implications of neo-human relations thinking will need to concern itself with questions of compliance, conflict and organisation structure. It is to consideration of these issues that we now turn.

The important elements of the argument can be approached through an examination of two competing interpretations. Particular attention will be paid to the work of two authors, Theo Nichols and M Bosquet (Nichols 1975, Bosquet 1972, see also Friedman 1977). They are especially appropriate for these purposes because they present almost diametrically opposed views of 'neo-human relations'. However they both miss certain consequences of the implementation of neo-human relations theory which are important to the concerns of the present thesis. Despite their relative age, they represent the clearest statements of a particular interpretation of neo-human relations theories and practices. First, an outline of their arguments.

Bosquet's analysis begins from the kind of industrial militancy which he claims grew in French car assembly plants from the late 1960's. He argues that one of the causes of this is the discontent which arises out of job fragmentation which renders work increasingly meaningless. This discontent found powerful expression, he argues, in the May '71 Renault strike which "traumatized the bosses as much as May 1968" (Bosquet 1972 p24). Indeed apart from long (five weeks) strikes like this, the employers incur increased costs and disrupted production frequently in the form of breakages, spoilt parts and sabotage as well as problems of labour shortage, absenteeism and high labour turn-over. The employers' response to this has been to increase factory repression and intimidation. This in its turn increases the hostility of the work-force until eventually the question is posed:

> "How long can one run a factory by repression and intimidation, ... what does this barrack-room atmosphere cost in terms of spoilt parts, discreet sabotage, disabling accidents, breakages, daily disturbances, growing difficulty in replacing workers who leave?

> What is to become of an industrial country which has to look as far afield as Southern Africa for its manpower because its own citizens, even the unemployed, reject imprisonment in its factories?" (p 24).

The French employers federation (C.N.P.F.) completed an inquiry into this area concluding "The problem is vast and difficult. We believe that it is inescapable" (quoted by Bosquet op cit p 25).

In the USA the problem appears again. Even though neither absenteeism nor labour turnover has reached French or Swedish dimensions in the automobile industry, Fortune magazine of July 1970 reports in an article entitled "Blue Collar Blues" that "some assembly line workers are so turned off, managers report with astonishment that they just walk away in mid-shift and don't even come back to get their pay for the time they have worked ...In some plants worker discontent has reached such a degree that there has been overt sabotage ... The result of all this churning labour turmoil is, inevitably, wasted manpower, less efficiency, higher costs, a need for more inspections and repairs, more warranty claims - and grievous damage to company regulations as customers rage over flaws in their glistening, but all too often, defective, new cars" (quoted by Bosquet ibid p 26).

What, you may ask, can be done to overcome these appalling labour problems threatening international capitalist automobile production? Bosquet, at least, thinks that major advances in the solution of these problems could be made by the introduction of neo-human relations management techniques which will, at least in part, contribute to the only complete solution.

> "The only correct solution is to re-frame, broaden and enrich jobs so as to make them intrinsically interesting" (p 30).

Bosquet reports enthusiastically Herzberg's work for the American Telegraph and Telephone Company (A T and T). The claims and invoices department was plagued by problems of high labour turnover and the proportion of errors in sorting, transcribing and verifying cheques and

invoices stood at a stable 13%. This required an additional checking system which both slowed down processing and increased costs. Herzberg had been called in during 1966 to make recommendations which would ameliorate both the problems of turnover and error. He observed that the processes of checking and sorting had been broken down into ten separate successive tasks, so that individual clerks may not necessarily ever deal with, for example, whole invoices, or the invoices for one particular company. Herzberg, following the principles of job enrichment, reasoned that the correct solution was to reverse the process of job fragmentation and to make each clerk responsible for a particular number of clients. This change, together with a slight alteration in the way the operatives worked their hours, reduced errors to 3%, resulted in a 27% increase in productivity and an annual saving of $534,000. The jobs of the checkers could now be dispensed with.

Given the reported 'success' of such schemes as this in solving problems of absenteeism, labour turnover, and low productivity, Bosquet has to explain why the managers in the French automobile industry are not introducing job enrichment schemes themselves. He reports that "the great majority of bosses (75% in France according to a recent poll) remain stubbornly hostile to the abolition of fragmented, idiotic work" (ibid p 32). Bosquet dismisses as excuses either economic or technological reasons for this hostility. He offers another explanation.

> "In reality the bosses' hostility is not motivated by technical or economic factors; it is political. Job-enrichment spells the end of authority and despotic power for bosses great and small" (ibid p 32). For Bosquet, the restructuring of work is such a potent change agent that employers are fearful of introducing it into their factories lest workers doing intelligent, more creative, autonomous and responsible work will question the irrationality of the capitalist system as a whole, rejecting useless or shoddy products produced for profit not use. The introduction of job enrichment schemes may 'boomerang' against the interests of capital; by pointing to the essentially cooperative nature of industrial work it will bring

into question the total social organisation of production. Managers dare not enrich jobs; it will expose them to wider, more informed criticism".

This view of the implications of neo-human relations can be instructively compared with Theo Nichols' account (Nichols 1975). Nichols' intention is to raise some problems with Bosquet's analysis in order to encourage further debate on the interpretation of innovations in management strategy, such as that represented by the implementation of some of the ideas of the neo-human relations school. His evidence is derived from "3 years intensive study of a chemical company in the South of England during 1970-73" (Nichols op cit p 246). The company, part of a large multi-national, manufactures agricultural fertilisers using continuous process technology. In the sixties the company (Nichols calls it Chemco) experienced problems of labour turnover and at the end of the sixties it introduced a productivity deal said to enshrine a 'new philosophy of management', based on new consultative machinery and job enrichment, both elements of neo-human relations theory. Nichols sees the central management problem as arising out of the necessity in capital intensive continuous process technology for "an actively-involved and flexible workforce" (ibid p 248). This is because a feature of the technology is that any hold-ups in production which involve plants coming off-line have significant ramifications in other parts of the factory and may severely disrupt production. Even the non-militant workforce at Chemco provides a management problem; what the management require is a work-force who will actively strive to avoid production hold-ups or, in the event of a plant coming off-line, will work extra hard to get back into production. Chemco managers call this 'the problem of motivation'. Faced with this problem, and stimulated by the work of Herzberg, Chemco's management has reasoned that to overcome the motivation problem, jobs must be enriched to render them more meaningful and power must be devolved to the shop-floor through participation schemes. The particular Chemco scheme abolished piece-rates and increased basic wages while introducing a new grading system; it also decreased supervision, 'enriched' jobs and tried to improve the availability of information for shop-floor employees. This latter feature was introduced through the new improved consultation machinery.

One of the great virtues of Nichols' account is that he does not assume that this change in management policies really does enrich jobs. Indeed, he produces evidence to suggest that jobs were not greatly restructured, and there was no increase in the meaningfulness of work (Berg, Freedman and Freeman 1978). He provides us with one of the most well-known quotations in modern sociology when one of his respondents says: "You move from one boring, dirty, monotonous job to another boring, dirty, monotonous job. And somehow you're supposed to come out of it all "enriched". But I never feel enriched - I just feel knackered". (ibid p 253).

Nevertheless, Nichols recognises that there have been changes in work procedure and that minor alterations in work practice suggested by the men through the consultation system are implemented. He concludes that "despite management's philosophy the changes in jobs that have occurred hardly merit being described in terms of 'enrichment'. To the extent jobs have been enlarged and workers given a little more say in the organisation of work, this evidences as much a trend for workers to manage themselves for management, as it does a tendency for them to take control" (ibid p 257). He insists therefore that we must view such schemes as management control devices: that the appearance of more control over work weakens the desire for real control (Ramsay 1976). Further, frequently, job enrichment schemes are even in their own terms, a fraud. However they can have real consequences. Nichols' notes that the 'new deal' at Chemco restricts considerably the areas over which local negotiation is possible. The grading system and the wage structure are now matters for national negotiation. This increases the problems faced by those attempting to improve site trade union organisation at Chemco. Several crucial issues are no longer within the compass of local union representatives.

Nichols' analysis of this case study highlights three weaknesses in Bosquet's argument. Firstly, he demonstrates the dangers of accepting the potency and reality of job enrichment without careful examination of the extent to which work is in fact restructured. Secondly, he points to the managerial origin of such schemes (not a sin in itself) and argues for their utility as control devices: removing from management some of the tasks of disciplining the work-force, luring dissent

into an illusory 'participation' scheme and curtailing areas open to local negotiation (Hunnius 1979). Finally, and most importantly, in my view, he challenges the central connection of Bosquet's argument. Bosquet's central point is "that a questioning of purpose and profit springs logically from any extension of job enrichment". Against this Nichols' mounts a two-pronged attack. On empirical grounds he shows that very few workplaces have the characteristics of Bosquet's examples, certainly not Chemco. On theoretical grounds he questions the extent to which there is a logical connection between increasing the meaning of work and questioning its purpose or overall organisation. There are no grounds for believing that those whose jobs have been enriched develop an extensive critique of the social organisation of work. Nor are there good reasons for believing that devolving some power to the shop-floor leads to demands for more power (cf Burns 1979, Kelly and Clegg 1981). Or as one of my respondents, a management consultant, put it 'job enrichment is not the thin end of the Marxist wedge'.

Nichols' work then raises severe doubts about the accuracy and utility of Bosquet's analysis. However, Nichols' himself may have missed some significant implications and consequences of the implementation of neo- human relations theory. These concern the impact of neo-human relations on managerial work and management structure. Extending the Chemco example it may be possible to illustrate these. We know that Chemco is part of a large multi-national corporation which has, no doubt, large central offices concerned with, for example, personnel management and at least the outline planning of industrial relations. The 'conversion' of the company to the 'new management philosophy' probably took place through these centralised functions and the dissemination of the view was achieved through the use of management training courses. Local management may have had little to do with the decision to embark on a different strategy and perhaps only the personnel department was concerned with the details of the scheme. Nichols' gives us only a hint of this when he remarks that managers too "work in a large corporation where change often comes from the top and in which human relations policies tend to be most warmly supported by those in personnel who don't have to manage" (ibid p 253). Given this employment situation certain consequences may flow from the implementation of neo-human relations exercises. If it is the case

that following the introduction of neo-human relations schemes routine supervisory and managerial tasks are devolved to the shop-floor (and even on Nichols' account there is some evidence that this does happen) then, increasingly, the jobs of middle-managers lose meaning and content until they become less relevant and useful. It is part of the intention of this thesis to examine the implications of such changes for the social consciousness of the manager. It should be stressed here that it is necessary to distinguish between those occupying unequivocally managerial positions and those occupying the multiplicity of positions lower in the managerial, administrative and supervisory hierarchy. Our concern is with the latter, in particular those occupying middle management positions and in subsequent chapters empirical material which bears on these matters will be discussed. Of particular interest will be changes in managerial work, modifications of organisational structures which affect careers and the increasing control of managerial work itself.

In addition to these areas, we need to examine the model of managing implied by neo-human relations theory. This becomes clearer if we contrast it with the images of managing associated with Taylorism and Human Relations. Under Taylorist assumptions the manager is the vehicle for the labour of conception. Indeed, knowledge and expertise is increasingly concentrated in the hands of managers as discretion is progressively removed from the work of others. As already discussed, the Human Relations movement presents the manager as a skilled reader of human motivation, charged with developing productive consensus at work through the adoption of appropriate supervision styles. However, under neo-human relations assumptions the manager has an obligation to increase the discretion of those beneath, to create meaningful work for others. There is at least the lurking suspicion that, in so far as managers are successful in these aims, there is little distinctly managerial left for them to do. The implications of these ideological shifts need to be examined in combination with real changes in the managerial work situation and with their perceptions of them.

This chapter has been concerned to chart the development of management thought in order to achieve two objectives. Firstly, to situate the current behavioural training of managers which draws

heavily on neo-human relations thinking. Secondly, to demonstrate the ways in which management thought offers images of work, enterprise and manager. These images contribute to processes of occupational socialisation and access to them confers a sense of being a manager. However, recent developments in neo- human relations thinking taken together with real changes in the organisation and structure of management, may create problems for this sense of managerial identity. In the next chapter we discuss how empirical material bearing on these issues was collected and analysed.

CHAPTER TWO

Fieldwork and Methods

Most sociological accounts include a discussion of how the research was organised, the experience of fieldwork, and the problems of data-analysis. Often these descriptions present an idealised picture of the research process, such that hardened fieldworkers can hardly recognise their own experiences in Platonic chapters on 'Fieldwork and Methodology'.

The problem has worsened as sociologists have become more worried about the epistemological status of their investigations. Assaulted on the one hand by number-crunching econometricians and on the other by phenomenologically-inspired pursuers of various 'life worlds', they have become ever more concerned to provide persuasive accounts of the grounds for their claims to knowledge. This has increased the pressure to produce either neat and tidy accounts of the research process which misrepresent the realities of fieldwork or, infected by certain kinds of prevailing scepticism, they labour long to convince the reader that they are not sure they know anything at all (Phillips 1971 & 1973). This writer is not sure he wants to embrace either option: to pretend that in the empirical material that follows I have adhered rigidly to the 'canons of social scientific method' such that my interview material somehow exactly represents the social experiences of middle managers, or to reproduce the doubts and uncertainties about reliability and validity which plagued me in the process of actually trying to find something out. My own situation is made worse because my professional socialisation has moved me from tape-recorders and well-thumbed copies of the Phenomenology of the Social World (Schutz 1967) to questionnaires and equally well-thumbed (though not always understood) SPSS manuals. In response to these difficulties I propose a degree of honesty. To begin by saying how I conducted the investigation, warts and all; to discuss my methodological thoughts during the conduct of fieldwork and finally, to discuss the various methods

of data-analysis I have utilised and my recognitions of the partiality of all of them (see Bell and Encel 1978, Bell and Newby 1977, Hammond 1964).

However, even my pursuit of honesty is fraught with difficulties. First of all, in my experience, it is very difficult during periods of fieldwork to be sensitive about distinctively methodological concerns. Part of the rationale for fieldwork is to produce empirical material related to some substantive concern - be it domestic economies in South London, Ford workers and their work or - as in my case - middle managers and their training. The purpose of enquiry is not to produce a fat file on interviewing and its difficulties but to generate useful information using the interview as a research method. Besides, there are often time- pressures which prevent the field-worker from noting methodological observations while actually conducting the investigation. Often interviews may have been arranged closely together (even when you have recognised the utility of a break between interviews) or, new, unexpected research opportunities offer themselves which it seems foolish to miss in order to keep up a diary of methodological observations. Even if you decide, as I often did, to write up a methodological commentary at the end of a day of investigation, fatigue interferes; either stopping you altogether or dulling your perceptions. There is nothing quite so tiring as listening carefully (Clarke 1975). Secondly, there is a sense in which the fieldworker is the worst person to monitor his or her own methods. You quickly become involved in substantive concerns and develop an almost proprietorial attitude to <u>your</u> research. This can easily generate a defensive approach, and when applied to methodological matters, lead to an over-emphasis on success and a refusal to acknowledge failure or limitation. Methodological reflexivity, is in any case, difficult for an apprentice researcher more concerned with actually managing to undertake any fieldwork at all than with the (often depressing) analysis of the utility of the methods or the ultimate viability of the enterprise (Johnson 1975, Wax 1971). Offered any opportunity to 'enter the field', especially in an area where access for sociologists is difficult, the researcher is keen to accept, without rushing to standard texts on methods.

Frequently, you have to accept opportunities as they occur in the hope that they may generate relevant sociological data (Brown, De Monthoux and McCullogh 1976). Of course, occasionally you are pleasantly surprised; what looks like a standard 'introduction to the organisation' interview turns out to be a fascinating commentary on its recent history and structure; tours of the factory which delay interviewing proper may lead to all kinds of new, possibly interesting insights and lines of inquiry. A conversation in a lift may highlight some important aspect of the organisational culture. On the other hand, you may grasp an opportunity which generates little of value for the research but which consumes time and effort. If I have any conclusion to draw from this mixed experience it is that you will have to put up with the wasted time and effort because you cannot afford to miss the good times.

To conclude, there are pressures on the social researcher to smooth over the experiences of fieldwork, and to minimise methodological doubts and limitations. On the other hand, honesty on these matters is itself a difficult objective. You become too close to your subject, too defensive about your efforts, and psychologically ill-prepared to acknowledge failure. What follows is an attempt to recognise and at least minimise these tendencies.

Ever since I was an undergraduate student of history and sociology (and I think before that) I have been interested in the world of work and the social relations which the organisation of work entails. Like most sociology students I had been brought up on a steady diet of coal-miners, car-workers and chemical process workers. All of course, very interesting but I could not help but be curious about the occupations which attracted rather less attention. One attraction was to the truly (or seemingly) exotic - the prostitute, the gangster - the other was to that wide wedge of occupations which interposed itself between the shop-floor and the board-room, with clerical, administrative and managerial work. I was always surprised that sociologists who showed a healthy interest in the world of work and manual workers seemed generally rather less interested in non-manual and managerial workers. Changes in the occupational structure involving the expansion of the category of clerical, administrative and managerial worker make this relative lack

of interest even stranger. Further, most of the studies of manual workers which I read seemed to roundly condemn the organisation of their work, often, it seemed to me, with good cause. Yet, there seemed little work on what surely follows from this, the process through which the work was organised. This led me, no doubt somewhat naively, into an interest in managers and their work. If Donald Roy was determined to 'take a trip to the bottom' I was keen to have at least a look at the middle levels of the world of organised work.

This apparent lack of interest in managerial work derived in part I think from two threads of the sociological tradition. The first, to examine society from the bottom up; to self-consciously take up the view-point of the disadvantaged, and the exploited (see Becker 1963 and Townsend 1962). The second, more specific to the sociology of work, concerned the influence of Marx's analysis of 19th Century capitalist societies upon 20th Century sociology. The study of the unambiguously proletarian seemed wholly legitimate. Often, with an implicit, sometimes explicit, set of questions concerned with why they had not acted quite as we might have imagined them to. The study of the powerful seemed legitimate as well (though usually more difficult). In contrast, the growing numbers of people apparently in the middle seemed an unexciting, even unworthy, area of interest. Perhaps sheer bloody-mindedness led me to develop research interests in this area but as suggested elsewhere in this thesis, there are more substantial reasons for a sociology of managers and their work.

Having decided that I was interested in the social world of middle managers the problem of access emerged. Most sociologists will know that gaining entry to organisations in order to carry out first-hand investigations is almost always difficult (Crompton and Jones 1988, Beynon 1988). It is especially so in the study of work organisation. Most managements are suspicious of you and this problem is worse if you describe yourself as a sociologist. It is far easier if you can lay claim to the title 'management consultant', or 'organisational analyst'. I was stuck with 'sociologist'. In this context, it seemed important to develop an angle which would allow me to gain access to business organisations and to gather data from middle managers about their work. As the introduction will

have made clear, part of this thesis is concerned with the way in which management training feeds into the social world of the middle manager, perhaps helping to make up a functioning ideology. This interest in training supplied at least one of the routes into organisations which I have used. An interest in management training seemed to be a good 'angle' for gaining access.

Initially I was introduced to a group of senior training managers from large business organisations. I attended their occasional meetings and arranged to interview each of them at length about their views of management training. They proved a fascinating group. Their roles seemed to be to act as intermediaries between the academic world and that of business. For example, to translate recent developments in social psychology into tools for their organisations. They were just the kind of people who had made Herzberg and Job Enrichment a craze in certain organisations. Because of their roles they had a sympathy with the academic researcher and helped a great deal to introduce me to people who might allow me access to their organisations. They also proved a useful source of information in themselves and some of this is presented later. They had a certain cultural distance from their organisations which made them well placed to comment on its structure, history and problems. (It was rather like the anthropologist meeting the key informant who explains the symbolism of the ritual). This period of work was very useful in sensitizing me to the issues current in management training. It enabled me to use the appropriate vocabulary when talking to training managers inside organisations and to the academics who feed them. I became used to 'course reviews', 'examining process', 'career milestones' 'enabling roles', 'facilitator'. Mastery of these notions helped to create an air of credibility which eased access.

It was through one of these interviews with a senior training and development manager that my best opportunity of access arose. A very reasonable concern of those organising and planning management training courses is the evaluation of its effectiveness. Indeed, there seems to be a high degree of insecurity about this which needs to be 'treated' by regular evaluations. One of the organisations to which I had been introduced was considering an evaluation of a course which had been running for several years aimed at its middle managers. The evaluation was to have been carried out 'in-house' but the opportunity of asking someone outside the organisation to do it (very

cheaply) was appealing. Certainly, there are considerable advantages in not being seen as from 'Head Office' or 'Central Personnel'. You occupy no obvious place in the organisational hierarchy, nor are you to be placed in any particular clique or faction in the internal politics. You may even be able to take on a 'confessor' role; a safe repository of doubts, fears, and criticisms, if not for sins. In the context of evaluating training this role is even more useful. As we shall see later, there was widespread concern amongst my respondents about the relationship between training and appraisal. This made them very wary of commenting freely on the training courses to people from within the organisation (Agar 1980). The organisation asked me to carry out the evaluation and it is the data collected during this time which forms a proportion of my empirical material.

However, other material is used and the sources of these data will be made clear later in this chapter.

The Course

The course was of a type popular in the 1970's but still a standard ingredient of 'in-house' management development programmes. Its essential aim was to improve managerial performance through increasing participants' understanding of their own impact on others and of the basic elements of group processes. The learning model was heavily experiential and the course apparently unstructured. Perhaps extracts from the course programme capture the flavour better than description. It begins with a quotation from Galileo, "You cannot teach a man anything ... you can only help him to find it within himself". It continues

> "This course, ... is dependent on what the member brings himself, in sharing and comparing his own management experience with others. For instance, it is not uncommon for managers to find that conviction of the worth or appropriateness of a policy fades as it spreads through colleagues and subordinates who are charged with it s implementation. At the same time, there is a feeling that, if only the potentialities of personal, group and

organisational resources could be more fully realised, the prospect of achieving objectives and of improving control over uncertainty would be considerably enhanced. Related to these problems are issues of balance and compromise between individual or departmental goals and the demands and collaborative opportunities presented by other roles and functions in the company; between day-to-day operations and longer term considerations or review of working methods: between decision-making and taking executive action on the one hand and building a climate of trust and calculated risk-taking on the other".

The primary mechanism used in pursuit of these goals was the Work Group. These groups "consisting of about eight members of varied experience provide an opportunity for sharing experiences and comparing problems and situations, deriving learning and principles of management and group behaviour. The staff members will help the work groups identify the different features and processes of group functioning as they occur. At other times, the work group will "suspend business" to take stock of the way it is managing its affairs and explore the roles, values, authority patterns and methods of working which the group has evolved for itself". The course lasted for five full days spread over a six day period and was residential. There were some formal inputs by staff members and films and videos were occasionally used but the primary emphasis was upon self- learning. Quite how this model of management learning arises is partly explained by the discussion of management thought, theory and ideology in Chapter One. Clearly, however, the emphasis is on managing as involving high levels of inter-personal and group skills, as being self-conscious about its own processes and relatively open to communication flows. The way in which the course proceeded, and its impact on participants is discussed later in Chapter Six. Suffice to say, at this stage, that in the context of this thesis, the training course had a great deal to do with the confirmation and reaffirmation of managerial status.

The People who attended

One way of describing the participants is to say middle managers in a large multi-national organisation producing products in a wide range of markets, but concentrated in electrical and electronic products. The products in question vary considerably in technical sophistication, from standard consumer electrical goods through to highly complex electronic systems. Participants work throughout the UK and, very occasionally, there are participants from other European countries. However, in this description the term 'middle manager' is, it might be argued, unnecessarily vague, the use of occupational titles should add something.

Examine the following course lists:-

1. Product Manager

   Senior Physicist

   Audit Manager

   Sales Training Officer

   Group Leader

   Section Manager

   Product Engineer

   Financial Accountant

Senior Valuation Surveyor

2. Senior O.R. Assistant

Chief Industrial Designer

Building Superintendent

Sales Engineer

Manager, Computer Department

Manager, Export Department

Computer Systems Manager

Managerial Accountant

Audit Supervisor

Divisional Manager, X-Ray

Mechanical Service Engineer

Personnel Manager

Cost Accountant

Service Manager

Chief Engineer

Marketing Manager

It is true that these occupational titles tell you something; that participants come from a wide variety of functions; that some titles mention 'manager', others not. But it is very difficult to get beyond these titles to examine the work that these people do or where they stand in the organisational hierarchies. In the discussion of their work and their training some aspects of this will be illuminated. However, it needs to be conceded that the term 'middle manager' has no precise definition. Organisations have different ways of describing individuals' functions and their positions in hierarchies. These should be examined in context; we need a sociology of job titles (Baron and Bielby 1986).

There are, nevertheless, some aspects of the work situation of my respondents which they hold in common:-

i) They are held accountable to people above them in the organisation.

ii) They are rarely involved in the formulation of policy or organisational strategy. They are, however, concerned with implementation.

iii) They will need to use their own technical skills in the exercise of their roles, as well as managerial skills.

iv) In terms of organisation charts they occupy a variety of positions depending on their function and the precise balance between their technical skills and managerial skills. Even

the term 'middle' is misleading, implying as it does a position between two other entities. In a case where technical skill is highly emphasised, perhaps in a technically sophisticated area, there may be very little 'below' the 'middle' but the organisational status will still be middle management.

For this particular organisation we can also examine their age and length of service which will add to our picture of course participants. Typically, the company has a high proportion of individuals pursuing organisational, as opposed to occupational, careers (Brown 1982), therefore there is a close relationship between age and length of service. Below is a typical list of course participants showing age, length of service and job title.

Age	Position	Company Age
56	Head of Production Control	13
39	Senior Mechanical Designer	4
48	Department Head	20
30	Management Acountant	12
37	Personnel Manager	4
34	Technical Efficiency Officer	4
35	Cost Accountant	17
34	O.R.	4

42	Personnel	10	
42	Head O.R.	18	
51	Manager, Metal Works	21	
49	Stores Unit Manager	5	
45	Training	8	
30	Snr Physicist Working in Projects		6
37	Section Leader	8	
36	Development Engineer	10	
47	Department Head		

Course Evaluation

When it was thought that the course evaluation would be done "in house" a preliminary research design existed. Initially, written comments from former course participants would be collected and, on the basis of these, an elaborate questionnaire would be constructed and distributed to a relatively large number of managers who had attended the course. The purpose of the evaluation was to discover if people's behaviour had changed. It was not at all obvious to me that these were the best people to ask about whether or not their behaviour had changed. I suggested an alternative method of conducting the research. It involved selecting a much smaller number of course attenders (I ended up with 20), interviewing them at length about their work, and their

experience of training. The intention was to evaluate the effectiveness of the training through discussion of their work and work situation. The interviews with course participants were to be accompanied by interviews with one subordinate, one peer and one superior. These would enable the work of the manager to be examined in context and would supply at least some possibility of gathering information about changes in work behaviour. Like all investigations which have an implicit longitudinal set of questions but no direct access to longitudinal data, this design was far from perfect. It was not clear how a researcher could make statements about individuals changed behaviour if he/she had no record of their earlier behaviour. At best one could collect their accounts of their earlier behaviours and the observations of their colleagues. Of course, these data should not themselves be discounted. Actors are able to describe how their lives change in response to certain events, like marriage, deaths, births. They can often cite evidence of the kind 'I used to do this but now .....' and they have explanations for why the changes have taken place 'I can't play darts five nights a week now because of the children' etc. There is, therefore, no reason to suppose that managers cannot give accounts of the way they used to handle their work, the way they do now, and of why any changes have taken place. However, we should treat all of this as problematic and connected to the more general processes of social construction. As we shall see, for my respondents, asking questions about the impact of this particular course offered them the opportunity to talk more generally about their roles in the organisation and was closely connected with the maintenance of a particular sense of self-identity.

In any event, my plan to complete the twenty sets of interviews was not achieved. There were difficulties arranging some, others refused to take part in the research. Finally, I completed seventy interviews, always managing to interview at least one person who worked with the former course participant. The reasons for refusal were themselves interesting. Some pleaded pressure of work, claiming that they had no time to be interviewed. Sociologists working inside organisations will be familiar with this story; they will also view it with some scepticism. On many occasions I have begged a 'busy man' to spare me half an hour of his time only to leave his office four hours later with an appointment for a follow-up interview several months later. I telephoned others who

refused to take part in order to discover the reasons for their refusal. Most suspected the motivation of the research, believing it to be connected either with a central move against their part of the organisation or to be part of a surreptitious review of their performance. Nevertheless, seventy interviews completed out of a targetted eighty was a respectable success rate. In any event, as I shall make clear later, the distinction I was using between key respondents, their peers, superiors and subordinates became less relevant as the research developed.

It is worth recalling briefly at this point some of the methodological reasons for favouring a study of a smaller number in more depth, as opposed to a larger surveyed group. A traditional social survey will share some of the following characteristics, whether or not it utilises a questionnaire or an interview schedule. First, there is usually only one contact with each respondent. Second, since they are drawn randomly from a wider population they are unlikely to know one another. Third, social surveys are based on the assumption that respondents' first answers are their 'real' ones; that they carry around with them a set of articulated attitudes, values and facts which can be reliably produced at will. Fourthly, most of the data collection will be carried out by someone other than the principal investigator. Fifth, the research instrument will be pre-coded, assigning values to an expected range of responses (see Fletcher 1974). Such traditional guidelines have considerable strengths. They allow a large number of people to be contacted. They free the principal investigator from time-consuming, arduous data-gathering, enabling more time to be spent on data-analysis. There is considerable scope for testing hypotheses drawn from a survey of the existing literature because the researcher can define variables operationally in the same way as previous investigations.

However, there are problems. First, the whole approach is based on a model of knowledge production which is cumulative and because of this, large survey research tends to assume the validity of previous research while working to either fill in 'gaps' or to test hypotheses emerging from previous work. This is, of course, highly appropriate where the field of study is clearly delineated and in which the key variables have been established and operationalised. In the

absence of such conditions it is less appropriate. The situation I found myself in seemed not to fit into an area of study already well-researched by sociologists (though it had certainly been researched by educationalists, psychologists and management scientists) and which required the opening up of the subject area rather than the testing of hypotheses based on well-defined variables.

Moreover, there are a series of problems concerned with the degree of contact with the respondent. The assumption that the immediate response is the 'real' one seems to have little foundation in many areas of social life. For example, respondents may be asked to assign themselves to a social class - a task with which they may be unfamiliar and which requires some considerable thought. Or they may produce answers which they think are somehow required by the researcher. In addition, respondents may require discussion with significant others before they can articulate their views in a way suitable for the researcher. This isolation of the respondent produces other problems in some research settings. It does not enable the researcher to collect different versions of the same series of events, nor is the researcher able to address the problem of varying accounts produced in different settings. In the sociology of work we are familiar with the difference between interview data collected at the workplace and that collected at home (Scase and Goffee forthcoming). Or in research on kin relations we are aware of the importance of the situation in which the information is collected (Corbin 1978). The research design I utilised does not overcome all of these problems. In the main, I only saw my respondents on one occasion. However, I did attempt to collect more than one version of the same series of events and, as the interviews were fairly lengthy and relatively open-ended, there was the opportunity for respondents to formulate and re-formulate their thoughts. Certainly, I regret not having been able to interview away from the workplace.

All of the interviewing was carried out by me. This contact with respondents was invaluable in sensitizing the researcher to important issues. Even in larger scale research there are benefits if those involved in analysing the data are closely associated with its collection (see Crompton and

Jones 1984). In many areas of sociological research there are grounds for scepticism of analysis conducted without any first hand contact with the respondents. At least one of the aims of sociological research is to render problematic the commonsensical. This is very difficult to do from a distance.

One other problem needs to be considered. In the survey method much attention is paid to pre-coding. This involves setting limits on the range or form of responses. For example, respondents may be asked to choose one of a number of alternatives or to rank the strength of their attitudes on a scale. In other words responses are only recorded (or if recorded not used) when they fit the pre-coded range. Again, there are clear advantages of time and convenience here. Providing that the initial premises are sound, that the correct variables have been identified and operationalised and the relevant population identified, then sophisticated statistical techniques can be applied to the data collected. There is no lengthy recording of information which may later turn out to only have significance for one or a small number of respondents. There is greater comparability between different settings in which the data is collected. These are certainly not negligible gains. However, in my situation, which was essentially exploratory, few of these conditions held. In any case there are in principle objections to a high degree of pre-coding. Firstly, there is little opportunity to record additional information as it emerges from the respondent. Indeed, if professional interviewers are used they may well be under time-pressure to ignore this material. Secondly, the study proceeds on the basis that the existing codes do 'map' on to the structure of responses. While there may be a stated willingness to recode if necessary there will be strong pressures to stick to the original codes, leading to either a significant distortion of the data or to ignoring some of it altogether. Thirdly, little of the relationship between interviewer and respondent will be recorded. This may turn out to be of some significance.

Taken together, all of these objections to orthodox survey methods amount to the charge that, far from ensuring an objective picture of social reality, they inhibit the ability of the researcher to tap the actors' social world. The gap between the observer's definition of the situation and the

respondent's remains. The actor's view of the situation is accessed and recorded only in so far as it fits the researchers preconceptions.

One of the most frequently used alternative methods of data collection which, it is claimed, overcomes these difficulties is participant observation. I want to discuss the advantages of this method for my concerns. To explain why I did not adopt it, and finally, to discuss the compromise solution at which I arrived.

It should be conceded that the term 'participant observation' covers a wide variety of research practices. There are those situations where the researcher seeks to share directly the life world of the actor. For example, it might be possible to be recruited into a particular occupation in order to experience directly the processes of occupational socialization (Roy 1955). There are other kinds of setting where the researcher adopts a role which enables closer and longer-term observation of the actors without ever seeking to directly share their experiences. For example, the role of look-out adopted by x in his study of male homosexual behaviour in public lavatories (Humphries 1970). My discussion will not focus on these differences directly but will stress that all of the varieties of participant observation are more or less concerned with maintaining a presence with the respondents in order to further the research.

Various advantages are thought to attach to this continued contact. Firstly, and most obviously, since you have to spend more time with your respondents, you will have to make your presence acceptable. This will force you to learn their language and to master their mores. It may even be that it is in learning their informal rules that you discover an unexpected focus for the research. Of course, learning their language is not an entirely semantic and syntactic exercise, it will involve understanding their concepts. Then, since you will see your respondents actively in their social relations rather than reflecting on them, you can compare their actions with their accounts of themselves. You can collect differing versions of the same events. All of these versions may be legitimately regarded as data. Further, you may be present when individuals discuss aspects of

their social relations with each other. Indeed, you may be in a position to share the subjective experiences of the actor. The theories of scientific management may be clearly illuminated by the experience of being timed and learning how to subvert the timing exercise. At the very least, if direct sharing is not possible, you will be well-placed to empathise with the actor. At the same time, you will be in a position to evaluate the extent to which your own interests and capabilities affects the material. There will be occasions when you realise that your own gender or class socialisation makes empathy very difficult. For example, I have often found it hard to empathise with respondents who draw anologies between society and their boarding school experiences. Finally, you will collect a rich abundance of data, without knowing as you collect it which of it will turn out to be of greatest relevance. You will be in a position to let new problems and issues emerge as you learn more of the situation. You can begin to introduce new variables which had not occurred to you before fieldwork. There will be the associated negative consequence that as your interests develop over the course of a lengthy piece of fieldwork, the data you have collected will be uneven and less systematic than that collected using traditional survey methods. (Becker 1970, Schwartz and Schwartz 1954). Nevertheless, for any project which requires the researcher to understand the actors' social world there are considerable advantages to participant observation. At the most general level my interests were in trying to understand what it was like to inhabit the middle levels of a productive enterprise. Particpant observation seemed a most attractive method to use.

However, there were difficulties in adopting this method. Two options seemed available. Firstly, to try to be recruited as a management trainee with a suitable organisation. Second, to occupy a spurious position in an organisation with senior management's help. I did try to succeed with the former but it became clear that this would be inadequate for a number of reasons. It would not allow access to the middle levels of the organisation which interested me. It might have provided an excellent opportunity to observe occupational and organisational socialisation but it would not have provided the opportunities I required. The latter proved, perhaps unsurprisingly, impossible to arrange. Organisations were unhappy at anyone occupying such a role and even if a suitable

cover could have been provided, it would have been difficult to sustain. It became clear that despite my reservations about the appropriateness of survey methodology in this context, and the apparent attractions of some form of participant observation, I would have to make do with something else.

Doing the Interviewing

Given my research interests and the difficulties of participant observation, I had pinned my hopes on the twenty sets of interviews. However, my reading of the research methods books had not prepared me well for what I had in store (Burgess 1982).

I planned to carry out twenty sets of interviews with my initial focus on the former course participant. The interviews would be used to tease out the connections between the respondents' training, their work and their work-related behaviour. It was my intention that the interviews would be 'in-depth' and relatively open-ended, leaving plenty of time for the respondent to formulate and reformulate his views. I felt quite confident that I would be good at encouraging people to speak freely. With these aims, and with this view of my own capabilities, I decided that an aide memoire was all I needed to conduct these interviews. I rejected the idea of a printed interview schedule for two reasons. First, I was not sure exactly what questions I wanted to ask. Second, the pre-coded element of many schedules seemed to reproduce many of the weaknesses of orthodox survey methods. The aide memoire covered the following list of topics, if possible to be treated in order:-

i) 'Face-sheet data' I would collect data concerned with age, length of service, job title and marital status. I already had this material from the company but thought that it would be a good starting point for the interviews, allowing both respondent and interviewer to relax.

ii) Current job I asked respondents to describe their current work. Sometimes they produced formal job descriptions and when this occurred I asked them to explain them to me. In general, however, people seem pleased to talk about their work to an apparently interested other.

iii) Employment History I collected fairly detailed records of previous jobs. However, there is no doubt that in collecting this material without an external check you collect a particular account of past employment. Certain events and periods are highlighted and others down-played. This pattern is, of course, itself of interest.

iv) Work-Related Training *I asked about the training respondents had received and their* general feelings about this.

v) Practice of Management Course Respondents were asked about their experience of this particular course. This topic produced discussion of a wide range of issues. In particular, respondents were concerned to relate their anxieties about selection of the course, the way it fed into their behaviour at work and their view of the work situation. These issues led onto two others.

vi) View of the Organisation In approaching this area, I tried not to ask prepared direct questions but to pick up and develop issues articulated earlier in the interview. For example, in discussion of the management training course respondents began to articulate their view of the nature of management and the way this fitted into the overall structure and culture of the organisation.

vii) Aspirations Almost without fail the discussion of the organisation led into a discussion of career aspirations. Occasionally, it also led into areas of aspirations outside the work situation.

viii) Finally, I always asked if there were any questions respondents would like to raise with me. This was used partly to signal the end of the interview and partly to deal with any lingering doubts about the confidentiality of the material. Interestingly, the signal that this was the 'end' of the interview often produced extremely interesting material. This occurrence, however, increases one's doubts about the validity of the 'normal' interview data. The length of these interviews varied. My estimate was that they would take about 1.5 hrs. However, using this aide memoire I found that the range went from 45 minutes to 3 hours. This made planning interviews extremely difficult.

Recording Interview Data

If the researcher has decided against pre-coded, or partially pre-coded interview schedules, the issue of recording interview material is raised. I tried several methods, before deciding on the use of a tape-recorder. There are clear advantages and disadvantages accruing to various methods. Note-taking loses the real speech of the respondent, and makes it much harder to develop rapport. On the other hand, it produces readily usable material. Tape-recording, once you are comfortable with the techniques, does provide an accurate record of the respondent's (and interviewer's) speech. However, there are problems. Firstly, the respondent may feel very uneasy about being tape-recorded. This is especially so when sensitive areas are being covered. My experience is that, in general, respondents are not intimidated by the recorder. Nevertheless, the researcher needs to assure respondents about confidentiality and to consider how the tape- recorder is introduced into the interview. Clearly, there are no hard and fast rules here; you need to develop procedures which work for you. I found that it was best to produce the recorder in a very matter of fact way, as if it were entirely normal practice; this places the burden of objection on the respondent. If you begin by using a phrase like "I hope you don't mind me using a tape-recorder ... " it is easier for respondents to object than if you say something like "I'll just start the recorder ..." which presents the respondent with a fait accompli. It could be argued that this is an abuse of interviewer power.

However, if you have decided that tape-recording the interview is important for your subsequent analysis of the data then this directiveness on the part of the interviewer seems admissable.

A second difficulty concerns what is to be done with the recording. I spent long hours transcribing each interview. It takes about six hours to transcribe one hour of interview. This is an enormous amount of work and, if it is to be carried out unaided, it ties up considerable amounts of time. Even when this task is completed one is faced with voluminous transcripts which take days to simply read. This is a very real problem especially for the lone fieldworker. Having carried out this laborious task, the researcher begins to feel totally immersed in the data but needs to think very carefully about the techniques of analysis he is going to use before embarking on this work (Bucher, Fritz and Quarentelle 1956). This problem of the relation between data-gathering and data analysis will be addressed later in this chapter. In my case, the transcripts of the interviews took several weeks to read through. Assuming that these will need to be read more than once, further considerable amounts of research effort are used up.

During the course of carrying out these interviews different questions presented themselves. The focus of the research moved away from management training and its direct impact on behaviour at work. The work and world views of these middle managers began to dominate the research. I had been operating with a set of occupational classifications in which my respondents were unambiguously managers and their work clearly managerial. However, the conduct of enquiry, the interviews themselves, made me increasingly doubt my own classifications. I became uncertain about what made these individuals 'managers' and what in their work was 'managerial' as distinct from 'clerical and administrative'. These doubts could have been put aside had it not been that I became increasingly convinced that my respondents shared my uncertainties. This re-direction of interest would have been impossible using orthodox survey methods. It was direct, fairly lengthy contact with my repsondents which produced a new focus. In particular, I became concerned to examine the social production and reproduction of the notion of 'manager' as an important aspect of social relations at work. At least one aspect of this process was the way in which training confirmed or affirmed a self-identity as manager. But the process was fragile and, as later

discussion will show, working against other forces like changing career patterns and managerial deskilling, which threatened a stable managerial identity. However, the research itself had not been designed to investigate directly all of these concerns. In particular one would require more data on the work itself, on careers, on organisational structures and on technical change. The interviewing process (in the way that these research methods are supposed to) opened up an area for further enquiry while suggesting particular lines for investigation.

Reviewing the utility of the material collected produced the following list of successes and failures:-

1. I had collected a great deal of information about the way a particular management training course was organised, its crucial social processes and its perception by participants.

2. I had come close to a relatively small number of managers and felt some capacity to see their work and the organisation through their eyes.

3. I had some data on employment history and careers. It seemed clear that I needed rather more of this since it was already clear to me that the notion of 'career' was crucial to my respondents.

4. I had collected quite a lot (nearly seventy) of fairly detailed descriptions of managers' work. This had been supplemented by some direct observation. The very process of being inside an organisation allows this kind of data collection. The walking about, the introductions, the waiting for interviews, the restaurants and canteens all provide opportunities for useful observation. It is almost as if lurking was a research method.

5. The material, however, was very difficult to analyse and present as evidence. I would have to find ways of handling this data and supplementing it with other material.

Listing the merits or otherwise of the material in this way does little to convey the excitement of fieldwork. Nevertheless I did feel that I had learned to operate in a setting generally unsympathetic to sociologists (Agar 1986). This had been achieved by cultivating the language of management, by becoming familiar with the "buzz" words which indicated that you were au fait with managers' concerns. Of course, it also involved a particular presentation of self; clothes, hairstyle, tastes and demeanour had to be adjusted. This was exciting and produced temporary feelings of comradeship with famous fieldworkers (Roy 1952, Whyte 1955, Townsend 1962, Polsky 1971). Nevertheless, it became increasingly clear that there were significant areas where the empirical material from this source could be developed and expanded upon. This thesis therefore draws upon two further sources of data.

As I have already suggested, one area of enquiry concerned the nature of managerial work, in particular the characteristics which mark it off from other non-manual work. This 'boundary' problem also arose while conducting research into white-collar work between 1979 and 1981 (Crompton and Jones 1984). This study was based upon detailed case studies of three large white-collar bureaucracies; a local authority, a clearing bank and a life assurance company. Although the focus of the study was upon clerical work, the case studies necessarily involved detailed investigation of the operation of the internal labour market. Research in this area must involve an examination of the relationship between grade structures, the building-blocks of internal labour markets, and the nature of the work. Of particular relevance to the concerns of this thesis was the distinction between clerical, administrative and managerial work. Part of this study involved analysing what people did, but also of importance was the way in which organisations created and maintained such distinctions. Some of this work will be drawn on later in the thesis.

Also of relevance to current concerns was the data on employment history collected during the white collar research. This information came from two sources. From a questionnaire administered to 887 employees drawn from all levels of the organisation and from limited inspection of company records (Hakim 1983). Both employment history prior to joining the organisation and internal job

moves were recorded. In addition, interviews with 262 clerical and administrative employees working in the case study organisations were completed. Some material relating to the organisational definition of management arose from these interviews.

Material from this research serves two purposes for current interests. Firstly, there are particular items of data which will be used directly, though this accounts for a small proportion of the data used. Secondly, however, and more importantly, the study provided access to a variety of organisational settings which could be observed in some detail. This familiarity with organisational life has undoubtedly helped me to make sense of my earlier observations. In particular, it re-inforced my conviction that the organisational classification of work was socially produced and reproduced and that these processes could become an object of study.

Finally, I draw on material collected while working with managers on management training and development programmes since 1984. In the main this data comes from group discussion of organisational change in a variety of organisations, for example, motor manufacture, brewing, pharmaceuticals, banking, telecommunications, and computing.

In addition, interviews with individuals concerning the impact of organisational change on their own work have been carried out during this period. However, none of this material constitutes a neat and tidy data source. Rather, it has helped to sensitise to and inform me of recent changes in managers' thinking and of organisational change. One of the qualities of this material is that managers have produced it unprompted in the course of open-ended discussions of their work, careers and organisations. It has, therefore, proved useful to keep a fieldwork notebook and this has been aided by the use of a dictaphone.

Taken together then, three sources of material will be used. The study of management training forms the bulk of the empirical material but data from both the white-collar project and from more recent work in organisations is used where it helps to inform my argument. There are advantages in using this range of material. It does facilitate discussion of change and provides points of

comparison between organisations. However, there are also problems. The research on white collar work was only indirectly related to current concerns and the recent contacts with managers have been primarily in a consultancy context, where it is often difficult to raise contentious or critical issues. Nevertheless it helps to provide a basis for an argument about managerial work, changes to it and the role of management training in creating a managerial identity and drawing the 'boundary' of management. However, data collection is only part of the process; data analysis remains to be discussed.

Data Analysis: Procedures & Problems

As will already be clear, various kinds of empirical material have been collected. Several kinds of interview material, (some of it tape- recorded), questionnaire material, and documentary data on organisation structures. A variety of methods of analysis were available, and the selections I have made need to be explained.

Before I do this, however, it needs to be made clear that the choice of particular methods of data analysis is not, in contemporary sociology, an entirely technical matter. A close association has developed between certain forms of analysis, particular kinds of theory and specific philosophical positions. In addition there has been a tendency for methodological questions to collapse into epistemological ones. These connections between epistemology, theory and method arise because particular conceptions of the social world imply particular ways of accessing it. So, if one views the social as the fragile creation and recreation of actors in their everyday lives, particular kinds of data are appropriate to its study, probably collected through careful direct observation or participation. The crucial task, given this view of the social, is to elucidate the actors' perception of the situation, or to go further and examine the methods by which actors themselves structure their social world rendering it meaningful and ordered (Berger and Luckman 1966). If, on the other hand, the social is conceptualised as external and constraining to the actor, such that individual behaviour is to be explained as responses to social forces, then methods directed to

accessing the social, independent of the actors perception of it, are desired. The researcher is directed to the 'real' structures of social life rather than definitions of situations. Survey methods may be directed at measuring indices of social facts, without reference to the meanings they may or may not have for individuals. Clearly, I have rather over- drawn the positions but it illustrates the view that certain ontologies of the social align with particular views of what is to count as knowledge and, therefore, suggests both particular kinds of data and the methods of data analysis. If one takes the former view, data analysis must pay considerable attention to the context of data collection and to the processes through which social actors produce and reproduce their social lives (Silverman 1985). If one takes the latter view, context becomes much less important in analysis (though it may be important to collection) and the key analytic task is to place measures of social forces in some kind of causal network.

It is no doubt true that ontologies of the social have implications for epistemology, and therefore for methodology. Answers to questions about what constitutes the social world will in part define what counts as social knowledge, and predispose the enquirer to a particular methodology. Nevertheless, the suggestion that choices about data analysis necessarily commit the researcher to certain ontological and epistemological positions rests upon several questionable assumptions (Bryman 1984, Platt 1986). Firstly, it implies that certain methods are the exclusive domain of particular kinds of theory. If this view is adopted, hard and fast distinctions are established between, for example, quantitative and qualitative methods. The danger of such a view is that it ignores the extent to which different methods are inter-dependent. For example, it is clear that quantitative methods of analysis must ultimately rest upon qualitative distinctions. That is to say, that in order for data to be aggregated and therefore susceptible to quantitative analysis, it must be based upon qualitative distinctions (Crompton and Jones 1988). If it is not then no amount of quantitative sophistication can render it useful data. Similarly, the qualitative treatment of a small number of particular social interactions can only be rendered sociologically significant in the context of data pertaining to a wider range of phenomena. Secondly, it implies that certain methods of data analysis are committed to particular domains of sociological enquiry. For example,

it appears to enshrine a distinction between micro and macro levels of analysis, linking some methods to 'micro' studies and other to 'macro' (Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel 1981).

Two kinds of argument can be made against this view. The first is that the distinction between macro and micro is less than helpful. That it is in the minutiae of social interactions that social structures, which may have considerable power and longevity, are sustained. The second is that even if for purposes of clarity we wish to distinguish various levels of analysis, there are strong connections between concepts used at the macro level and the observation of particular sets of social relations. For example, it is the orthodox sociological view of social class that it is partly constituted by 'work situation'. But no 'macro' level use of that term can be sociologically significant if it does not rest upon qualitative contextualised studies of work settings, or even of individuals' social experiences of certain occupations. Further, it is clear that in conducting large scale surveys, one can only ask appropriate questions on the basis of prior qualitative knowledge. It is not being suggested here that qualitative methods are somehow intrinsically superior. There are certainly occasions when it is in the aggregations of observations that patterns begin to emerge. It is, however, an argument for an electicism of analytic methods which recognises the inter-dependencies of various techniques. Indeed, one can argue that it is the commonality of problems involved in data analysis which should be stressed. In particular, the continuing and essential issues of 'reliability' and 'validity'. It is questions about this which guide methods of analysis, not a prior commitment to a particular ontology and epistemology.

In my case a range of methods of data analysis have been used. As discussed earlier, the collection of tape-recorded interview material presents practical problems of data handling. However, familiarity with the transcripts does enable the researcher to become immersed in the data. If this occurs choices about how to present the material arise. In the empirical chapters I have used three main techniques. Firstly, the use of illustrative quotations. This has become a standard method and is used both to provide evidence and to give the ethnographic flavour of the research. There are, however, difficulties with this approach. It is not unreasonable to ask about their

representativeness. Are the quotations used a fair summary of the view of a particular respondent and is that respondent representative of the group researched? These problems seem endemic to any study based on interview material. However, these concerns led to the development of a second way of using the material. In order to engage in some degree of aggregation, some sections of the transcripts have been coded. This process is fraught with difficulty but essential if some overall picture is to be presented. Therefore, on occasions I will make claims like for example 70% of respondents expressed concern with their careers. Once the coding has taken place it is also possible to engage in simple cross-tabulation procedures which allow the explanatory weight of variables to be explored. Finally, some sections of the interview transcripts are subject to close textual analysis. This method is not in common usage and needs to be explained. This requires the elaboration of the connections between ideology and language. (See Chapter Four).

This is, of course, an enormous topic of great complexity (Wooton 1975). What follows is not an attempt to summarise or synthesise the debates but, rather, to argue for the fertility of the connection between the sociological study of ideology and particular aspects of linguistic theory.

To put it simply, what role does language play in the articulation of ideologies? Or, more precisely for current purposes, in what ways may the language of actors be used to access their ideologies? If we make the clarifying assumption that ideology involves the classification of the social and the placing of these classifications in relation to each other, then it follows that the linguistic processes of classifying and of presenting causation must be central to the illumination of ideologies (Trew 1978). This emphasis on process and causation means, however, that no determinate ideological significance can be attached to any single linguistic characteristic. Nevertheless, the range of significance is limited by relations to other elements of the discourse. The ideological character is revealed in the systematic linguistic characteristics of the discourse. This concentration on systematic characteristics suggests that a linguistic theory like Halliday's account of systemic grammar will be fertile for the study of the ideological elements of a discourse (Kress 1976).

Although it falls outside the scope and competence of this thesis to deal with Halliday's work in detail, several points should be made clear. Halliday's work makes the representation of process and causality central to the functions of language. Following on from this, his concern with what he calls the 'interpersonal' aspects of language draws our attention to the linguistic presentation of 'modality'. This refers to the linguistic expression of attitudes to and evaluations of particular opinions. It will involve the use of distancing devices like tense, mood, attribution and is central to the study of ideology (Kress & Hodge 1979). Finally, systemic grammar will force us to examine syntactic as well as semantic elements of discourse. Thus, for example, causation may be established syntactically rather than semantically.

In summary, it is claimed that the domains of language and ideology overlap sufficiently to suggest that varieties of linguistic theory will contribute to the study of ideology. However, it is equally important to see that the sociological study of ideology does not collapse into linguistic analysis. Sociologists will be concerned with the production, reproduction and change of ideologies which will involve relations and practices which fall outside the domain of linguistic theory. For example, with relations of power, control and authority.

In conclusion then, a variety of methods have been used to analyse material itself collected in several ways. There are, it is claimed, methodological advantages to this eclecticism. It enables the enquirer to check one interpretation of the data against another and to supplement the weaknesses of one method with the strengths of another. All of the data has been used to illuminate the complex processes through which a managerial identity is created and sustained and to chart the social forces which either threaten or nurture such an occupational self- conception. However, this discussion of occupational self-identity itself depends upon an analysis of the location of the manager in the social division of labour. This forms the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

The Social Location of the Manager

As outlined in the Introduction the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the social location of the manager. The argument developed is that in order to understand the activities of managers we need to establish conceptually their role in the division of labour. Without this, no amount of detailed behavioural description of managerial work will answer questions about their roles and functions. The division of labour is central to the managerial role because without it there would be no need for the integration of divided activities. It is, therefore, proposed to examine the classic analyses of the division of labour in order to socially situate the manager.

In common with many others, the crucial sources for this examination of the division of labour are Marx, Durkheim and Weber. While turning to this powerful triumvirate may be established custom and practice for sociologists, some words of explanation are required as to why these authors, and not a host of others concerned with the division of labour, are examined. Most obviously, their general intellectual stature in sociology would draw you to them. As Worsley has argued "Marx stands, symbolically, alongside Max Weber and Emile Durkheim at the intellectual crossroads which saw sociology emerge from being a vague collection of social philosophies to become a rigorous social science" (Worsley 1982, p 5).

It remains the case that most of the significant varieties of social and sociological theory can be traced to these three authors. Marx's works are obviously the source of the various formulations of modern neo-Marxism. Durkheim, it is sometimes claimed, is the major inspiration behind structural functionalism and certainly is important in cultural anthropology. Weber's complex corpus provides the material for various forms of modern neo-Kantianism and for some of the ideas

and practices of phenomenological sociology. More particularly, for our purposes, these thinkers offer distinctive and penetrating analysis of the rise of modern industrial societies and it is in these that the role of the manager most clearly emerges(1).

In what follows, it is intended to outline the general analysis of Marx, Durkheim and Weber as they bear on our current concerns, and to extract certain central points in order to show their relevance for situating the manager.

It is in Marx that the issue is dealt with most explicitly, though not in an entirely straight-forward fashion. Nevertheless, Marx's own writings have a cogency not always to be found in later neo-Marxist writing. Two points need to be made about the apparent inconsistencies in Marx's own writings (mentioned in the Introduction) prior to their more detailed consideration.

Firstly, it has to be recognised that there is a distinction to be made between Marx's political, propagandist writings and his scientific ones. He was, after all, trying to launch a mass movement to revolutionise the modern world and therefore on occasions had little time for the kinds of issues that keep professors in employment! This point can, of course, be overplayed. Marx was deeply committed to a unity between theory and practice and it is therefore absurd to think that his work can be neatly divided into two mutually exclusive categories of science and propaganda. However, it is not unreasonable to argue that, for example, the Manifeso displays a different level and kind of analysis from that of say Capital. Secondly, over the course of a long and prolific intellectual career, Marx undoubtedly changed his mind. It is not necessary to embrace arguments for a fundamental break in Marx's work in order to conclude that there are significant differences between Marx's views on important issues over the course of his life. We must reasonably expect then a degree of inconsistency over time. However, in the case of Marx's analysis of managerial and administrative work, it may be that genuine difficulties with the problem are indicated by these inconsistencies.

As suggested earlier, the basic problem for Marx is that he wants to make two apparently inconsistent claims concerning the 'new' intermediate strata comprised of amongst others, managers and administrators. In Capital he provides good grounds for predicting the growth of these occupations, yet in other places he asserts the necessity for the development of a two-class model of society. This is so, even in Capital, where he can write that in addition to the capitalist class "there is according to our assumption - the general and exclusive domination of capitalist production - no other class but the working class" (Capital Vol I p401). There is, as well as this problem with class, another profoundly important issue at stake in Marx's discussion of the new intermediate strata; it is precisely the relation between the division of labour and the appearance and disappearance of classes. Quite clearly, in some works, most notably The German Ideology, Marx treats the concepts of 'class' and 'the division of labour' as entirely interchangeable. It is also clear that this is not an 'error' but a matter of the greatest importance. "The various stages of development in the division of labour are just so many different forms of ownership, i.e. the existing stage in the division of labour determines also the relations of individuals to one another with reference to the material, instrument, and product of labour" (Marx and Engels 1970, p 43)

It follows from this that the abolition of classes must imply the abolition of the division of labour. This has led influential commentators to categorise Marx's views as entirely Utopian (e.g Avineri 1968) with respect to any form of industrial society. While this consideration has implications far beyond the scope of this thesis (they are elegantly and persuasively developed by Rattansi 1982) it is of pertinence to the location of managerial work. To what extent is their function in the division of labour intrinsic to the capitalist mode of production? Or do they perform tasks of co-ordination required in any industrial economy? The view taken here is that Marx's later works recognise the necessity of a division of labour generally and of the role of co-ordination in industrial societies in particular. Before attempting to demonstrate this let us begin with a consideration of Marx's treatment of managers and administrators.

Perhaps, the most famous reference is to be found in Capital Vol 1.

"Just as at first the capitalist is relieved from actual labour so soon as his capital has reached that minimum amount with which capitalist production, as such, begins, so now, he hands over the work of direct and constant supervision of the individual workmen, and groups of workmen to a special kind of wage labourer. An industrial army of workmen, under the command of the capitalist, requires, like a real army, officers (managers), and sergeants (foremen, overlookers), who while the work is being done, command in the name of the capitalist. The work of supervision becomes their established and exclusive function ... When considering the capitalist mode of production ... (the political economist) treats the work of control, made necessary by the co-operative character of the labour-process as identical with the different work of control, necessitated by the capitalist character of that process and antagonism of interests between capitalist and labourer" (Capital, Vol 1, P 314).

This is a picture of managers and their work inextricably bound up with the capitalist mode of production. This is most clearly expressed in the phrases 'the work of supervisors becomes their established and exclusive function, ' and 'they command in the name of the capitalist.' They are both his agents and his functionaries. However, by the time of Capital Vol 3 Marx's views are rather different. Here he presents a more complex picture. To begin with, it appears that the tasks of superintendence and management are not exclusive to the capitalist mode of production. Thus, "The labour of supervision and management is naturally required wherever the direct process of production assumes the form of a combined social process, and not of the isolated labour of independent producers". (Cap Vol 3 p383)

However, it has a dual nature:

"On the one hand, all labour in which many individuals co-operate necessarily requires a commanding will to co-ordinate and unify the process, and functions which apply not to partial operations but to the total activity of the workshop, much as that of an orchestra

conductor. This is a productive job, which must be performed in every combined mode of production" (Marx op cit. p383)

There is clearly then a labour of co-ordination required whenever co- operation between individuals for production is required. However, the very next paragraph shows the effects of carrying out this labour in the general context of the exchange between capital and labour.

"On the other hand, ... this supervision work necessarily arises in all modes of production based on the antithesis between the labourer, as the direct producer, and the owner of the means of production. The greater this antagonism, the greater the role played by supervison" (Marx op cit. p384)

These two sides of managerial work are always, according to Marx, found together.

"The labour of supervision and management, arising as it does out of an antithesis, out of the supremacy of capital over labour ... is directly and inseparably connected, also under the capitalist system, with productive functions which all combined social labour assigns to individuals as their special tasks" (Marx op cit. p386)

The presence of these two aspects of managerial work together may produce difficulties for its empirical investigation but at least this section of Volume 3 makes clear that there is nothing per se about the managerial role in the division of labour which ties it to captial.

This finds telling confirmation in the following remark:

"In a co-operative factory the antagonistic nature of the labour of supervision disappears, because the manager is paid by the labourers instead of representing capital counterposed to them" (Marx op cit. p387).

However, even if convinced of this argument concerning the division of labour, there remains the unresolved problem of the class position of the new intermediate strata. For Marx, this is a highly complex question involving both theoretical and empirical questions. However, of primary consideration is that Marx was working upon a model of capitalist society and that in order to do this he constantly and quite fairly makes clarifying assumptions. (Harris 1939). He is trying to discover what is intrinsic to the system by excluding what he takes to be its non-essential features. He frequently makes reference to the fact that, in applying general principles in any particular case, other factors have to be considered. For example, in discussing the 'general rate of surplus value' he remarks:

> "Such a general rate of surplus-value - viewed as a tendency, like all other economics laws - has been assumed by us for the sake of theoretical simplification. But in reality it is an actual premise of the capitalist mode of production, although it is more or less obstructed by practical frictions causing more or less considerable local differences, such as the settlement laws for farm labourers in Britain. But in theory it is assumed that the laws of capitalist production operate in their pure form". (Cap Vol 3 p 175).

In evaluating his work on the 'new intermediate strata' it is very important to appreciate this methodological position. Nevertheless, there are real problems. On the basis of a model which seeks to show that the crucial struggles in society are between capitalists and proletarians we should expect the 'new intermediate strata' to be assimilated to either of the two great classes; to the former by incorporation and to the latter by proletarianisation. However, Marx's own analysis identifies at least two powerful forces which actually generate new intermediate positions in the occupational structure. Firstly, the increasing scale of production and secondly, the rise of the joint-stock company. The first increases the need for co-ordination and, as has already been argued by Marx, this necessarily implies labour control in capitalist societies. Secondly, the joint stock company, which had begun to appear by the time Marx was writing Volume 3 of Capital, creates both managers and commercial wage workers. Managers who increase in number because

"Stock companies in general, ... have an increasing tendency to separate this work of management as a function from the ownership of capital." (Capital Vol 3 p 387-8).

Also, commercial agents employed to operate the increasing scale of operations and to account for the activities of realization. This tension between a dynamic thrust towards class polarisation and a tendency to generate new intermediate strata is never resolved in Marx's own writings. It does not follow from this, however, that the analysis of 'pure capitalism' must fall, as suggested by some more recent writers (Goldthorpe 1982). The model intended to show that the basic conflict in modern societies is between proletarian and capitalist classes; that they are the condition of each others existence; and that the objective conditions of capitalist production produce its demise. It is by the truth or falsity of these propositions that we must judge the model.

Nevertheless, subsequent Marxist writers are left with an embarrassing problem. A growing strata of individuals who seem to stand between capital and labour, obscuring any conflicts between capital and wage labour. Further, at the level of class formation they inhibit the growth of class consciousness by providing a social mobility route out of the proletariat for some. There seems to be a number of possible logical ways out of this problem. It can be argued that this group have been effectively assimilated into the bourgeoisie. Or that they are either, or are in the process of joining the proletariat via proletarianisation. Alternatively, they can be seen as forming a genuine new class, though this poses further very significant problems for Marxism. Finally, and most recently, structuralist Marxists have sought to resolve the problem (Carchedi 1975, Poulantzas 1975, Wright 1976). This 'solution' itself has a number of variants. Poulantzas (1975) attempts to argue that, although social classes are principally defined by their place in the production process, they are also defined by political and ideological relations. Thus, intermediate strata with "an objectively proletarian polarization" never become fully proletarian because of "their place in the politico-ideological relations of the enterprise" (Poulantzas 1975 p 54). A different position is taken by authors who argue that professionals, administrators and managers occupy genuinely 'contradictory' or 'ambiguous' class locations. These positions arise because these employees are engaged in

performing the functions of capital, for example the control of labour and the functions of the 'collective labourer', namely the task of coordination. There are difficulties with both of these formulations. Firstly, Poulantzas' position does not help us to make connections between class position and class actions. We are left with the contingent analysis of specific political, and ideological conjunctures. Secondly, turning to Carchedi and Wright, it is clear that the ambiguous position so defined could be either temporary or permanent. If it is the former then their position collapses into one of the two logical possibilities described above. If it is the latter then managers are left dangling in a limbo land of contradictory class locations.

Nevertheless, the claim to identify structurally ambiguous positions does relate to an empirical difficulty already mentioned and recognised by Marx. Namely, that the labour functions of co-ordination and the capital functions of labour control occur together. In addition, and perhaps most importantly for our purposes, it points to an area of difficulty with class boundaries (Crompton and Jones 1984 pp223 - 224), with unproblematically identifying the proletarian, the 'new intermedia strata' and the bourgeois. In terms of employment we may be presented with a none too smooth continuum between relatively deskilled clerical work and authoritative senior managerial work (Hunt 1977, Nichols 1980, Walker 1979). Our subjects sit somewhat uneasily in between.

I will return to this problem towards the end of this chapter where an assessment of the general utility of Marx's analysis of managers will be attempted.

It is logical to move from Marx and the neo-Marxists to Durkheim since both have the division of labour as central elements of their model of society. In order to construct a Durkheimian perspective on the social location of the manager, three aspects of his work need to be drawn on. First his extensive treatment of the division of labour (Durkheim 1933). Second, his arguments for the role of occupational groups in supplying moral regulation in societies characterised by an

extensive division of labour (Durkheim 1957). Finally, his comments on and criticism of socialism. (Durkheim 1962).

It is not my intention here to provide an elaborate discussion of Durkheim's works on the division of labour. This has been done to great effect by others (notably Lukes 1967; Lukes 1973; Giddens 1971; Thompson 1982). However, since we need to draw on both Durkheim's conceptions of the anomic and forced division of labour, we do require a statement of his general position. His aim, as in much of his writing, was highly ambitious. He sought to demonstrate the essential motor of social development and he claims to have found this in the division of labour. It is the level and extensiveness of the division of labour which differentiates simple societies from modern ones and this itself is brought about by an increase in the degree of concentration of the society. For example, higher levels of social interaction are produced by population growth, urbanization, and improved communications. The increase of the division of labour in turn generates moral and cultural changes in society. At the most abstract level this involves the increasing generality of moral ideas, such that increasing discretion is left to the individual. It is through this discretion that an extensive division of labour adds to human freedom. Increasingly, legal and moral systems are based not on tradition but on rationality.

Thus, in general terms Durkheim approves of the division of labour. It has the possibility of increasing both human mastery of nature and human freedom. It does, of course, produce the necessity to co-ordinate activities that have been divided. The labour of co-ordination then is a necessary product of the division of labour but not one which carries with it the negative control functions described by Marx. However, the positive effects of these changes only occur under certain conditions. Namely " .... the division of labour produces solidarity only if it is spontaneous and in proportion as it is spontaneous. But by spontaneity we must understand not simply the absence of all express violence, but also of everything that can even indirectly shackle the free unfolding of the social force that each carries in himself. It supposes, not only that individuals are not relegated to determinate functions by force, but also that no obstacle, of whatever nature,

prevents them from occupying the place in the social framework which is compatible with their faculties. In short, labour is divided spontaneously only if society is constituted in such a way that social inequalities exactly express natural inequalities. But, for that, it is necessary and sufficient that the latter be neither enhanced nor lowered by some external cause. Perfect spontaneity is, then, only a consequence and another form of this other fact - absolute equality in the conditions of the conflict". (Durkheim 1933 p 377).

Under these conditions managers would be 'naturally' fitted for their role of co-ordinating. Undoubtedly too, if the conditions of the spontaneous division of labour are to be met, then managers would owe their position to meritocratic criteria. Furthermore, the presence of individual workers at the workplace must be produced not by coercion but by just and well- regulated contracts.

However, this move from mechanical solidarity, "a solidarity sui geneis which, born of resemblances, directly links the individual with society" (Durkheim 1933 p 106) to organic solidarity, based on a plurality of beliefs, values and practices reflecting differences between individuals, arising from their position in the division of labour, carries its own dangers and these have ramifications for the role of the manger. Durkheim discusses these as the abnormal forms of the division of labour. These are the anomic and forced forms. The former applies to a situation where the rate of change of the division of labour has outstripped the development of congruent norms and values in society, such that the individual becomes disconnected from society. The latter occurs whenever tasks in society are divided in the presence of large and persistent social inequalities. At this point Durkheim's analysis has strong similarities to Marx's.

> "If one class of society is obliged, in order to live, to take any price for its services, while another can abstain from such action thanks to resources at its disposal which, however, are not necessarily due to any social superiority, the second has an unjust advantage over the first at law" (Durkheim 1933 p 384).

It is not just the presence of a forced division of labour which fundamentally compromises the managerial function. The various consequences of the anomic form also take their toll. Following Gilbert (Gilbert 1978) I identify three usages of the theory of anomie in the discussion of economic relationships. Firstly, the loss of meaning brought about by the division of labour within the workplace. The individual loses sight of their contribution to the social whole and becomes increasingly isolated. Secondly, Durkheim uses the term to describe the lack of regulation between enterprises.

> "Accordingly, production becomes unbridled and unregulated. It can only trust to chance, and in the course of these gropings, it is inevitable that proportions will be abused ... From this come the *crises which periodically disturb economic functions*" (Durkheim 1964 pp357-8).

Thirdly, Durkheim applies his general concern with 'excessive individualism' directly to economic life. The consequences of this are ever-increasing demands both on the individual employer and on the economic system generally. The remedy for this particular example of the 'malady of infinite aspiration' is what Gilbert refers to as the "moralization of economic relationships" (Gilbert 1978 p372). Durkheim describes it thus:

> "What is needed if social order is to reign is that the mass of men be content with their lot. But what is needed for them to be content, is not that they have more or less but that they be convinced that they have *no right to* any more. *And for this, it is absolutely essential* that there be an authority whose superiority they acknowledge and which tells them what is right ...." (Durkheim 1962 pp242-243)

Managers, therefore, find themselves in a highly problematic location. While in general their role is a progressive one in social terms, they find themselves facing major problems in an industrial society not exhibiting a spontaneous divison of labour. Firstly, the external conditions of labour

contract will be unequal. They thus face workers coerced into their occupations. In addition, they must struggle to introduce meaning into a work-place where the division of labour is so extensive that work becomes meaningless and inhumane. Even if they could solve their problems at the level of the enterprise, they face the anarchy of the market, which itself introduces anomie into economic life. Finally, they may be called on to act as a moral authority at work, judging what is equitable both in the division of task and the distribution of product.

Durkheim himself offers some suggestions as to how these problems can be overcome. At the societal level he advocates a number of radical reforms aimed at curtailing the forced division of labour. These include limits on inheritance, meritocratic forms of occupational recruitment and the legal regulation of employment contracts. (Durkheim 1933, 1962). Two other levels of analysis can be identified, the level of the enterprise and the relation between enterprises. For the latter, Durkheim recommends some form of rational centralized planning, though he does not have in mind a democratic form of planning. This would be unnecessary if the 'appropriate' individuals produced the plan. For the former, he advocates a powerful role for professional associations to provide moral regulation harmonising ecomomic relationships. This, of course, has implications for managers. As co-ordinators, they have a special role in explaining the advantages of the division of labour, of acting as moral authority by articulating what is just and possible in terms of distribution within the workplace and, at an inter-enterprise level, they are well-placed to know whether competition or regulation should be chosen in the best interests of all. As professionals, with an appropriate set of professional ethics, they can mediate between competing interests in economic relations.

We are probably right to be sceptical about Durkheim's suggested solutions (Bottomore 1984). On the one hand they seem Utopian. One can hardly imagine the rich surrendering their right to pass on their wealth to their heirs in the interests of removing anomie. On the other, they are not radical enough, treating the particular form that the division of labour takes as immune from the mode of production. Nevertheless, his analysis provides insights into the role of the manager; a

necessary and important element of both co-ordination and social cohesion but trapped by the consequences of the abnormal forms of the division of labour.

Moving from Marx and Durkeim to Weber is to move from the classic analyses of industralizing societies to the first theorist of distinctively modern society. In addition, the concept of the division of labour is less important to Weber then to either Marx or Weber. While industrialization and the social, material and ideological conditions for the growth of capitalism are central to Weber's work, he identifies the crucial characteristics of the modern world in the drive towards secularization, rationalization and bureaucratisation (Bendix 1966, Eldridge 1971). It is in his discussion of these latter two processes that we will find discussion of the social position of the manager. However, it should be added that Weber's writing is markedly diffuse and it is often in the work of subsequent Weberian sociologists that the full implications of his thought is expressed. Therefore, in discussion of the organisational form of the economic enterprise, reference will be made to the work of Bendix (1956) and Dahrendorf (1959).

Weber's thesis of the progressive rationalization of the world is highly complex. It embraces art, music, religion and law as well as the rise of particular forms of administration. In addition, it is not co-terminous with the rise of industrial society but predates it. Nevertheless, it finds its clearest expression in economic life, with the development of societies based upon the rational calculation of profit and loss and by a 'free' market in labour liberated from 'non-rational' ties of religion or kin. There are many aspects of rationalization which Weber admires. Most generally, that it offers the possibility of increasing mastery over Nature and emancipation from Magic.

> "One need no longer have recourse to magical means in order to master or implore the spirits, as did the savage, for which such mysterious powers existed. Technical means and calculations perform the service" (Weber in Gerth and Mills 1948 p139).

However, there are elements of this process which cause him disquiet. The most important of these is the extent to which technical rationality may come to dominate the ethical choice of ends in society. If this happens the increased control over Nature, far from contributing to human emancipation, would limit freedom as individuals became dominated by apparently 'neutral' techniques (for elaboration of this view see Marcuse (1968) and Leiss (1974)).

For Weber, the most likely vehicle for producing this domination of technical rationality was the bureaucracy. A form of organisation he both feared and admired. It was capable of high levels of technical competence because it adhered strictly to rationally formulated procedures and was driven by scientific rationality. Yet, at the same time it threatened to substitute technical rationality for the democratically arrived at ethical choices of society. Weber's writings on these dangers have a fervour not frequent in his work. For example,

> "This passion of bureaucracy is enough to drive one to despair. It is as if .... we were deliberately to become men who need 'order' and nothing but order, become nervous and cowardly if for one moment this order wavers, ... That the world should know no men but these: it is in such an evolution that we are already caught up, and the great question is therefore, not how can promote and hasten it but, what can we oppose to this machinery in order to keep a portion of mankind free from this parcelling - out of the soul, from this supreme mastery of the bureacratic way of life" (Weber in J.P. Mayer 1943, pp 127-8)

However, it is in the bureaucracy that we find the manager. Here arises our first major problem, for the bulk of Weber's writing on bureaucracy concerns not the functions of the industrial enterprise but of the State. We have to proceed to construct an argument by extending Weber's analysis of the Governmental official into the sphere of the economic enterprise (see Bendix p1956 p245 and Weber 1947). To be sure, we have some licence from Weber for such a move for he claims that the trained official or bureaucrat "is the pillar of both the modern state and of the economic life of the West" (Weber 1930 p16). Thus the bureaucracy is presented as an

indispensable institution of modern industrial society and yet contains within it the capacity to nullify the progressive aspects of rationalization.

The crucial feature of the bureaucratic economic organisation for our purposes is that it is composed of positions finely graded in terms of power and authority. It depends for its powers on defined rights and duties, and on authority relations between positions which are ordered systematically (Gerth and Mills 1948 p196-198). The consequences of this are developed by Dahrendorf thus;

> "Bureaucratic roles in the enterprise must be described as differentiated management roles. The total process of the exercise of authority appears, in the modern enterprise, subdivided into a multitude of positions co- ordinated by a peculiar type of organisation. In the analysis of bureaucratic roles below we shall see that this subdivision and co- ordination bears striking similarities to the division of labour in technical production. In both cases, differentiation has the effect of splitting up a totality into a multitude of elements to the extent of almost alienating each of the elements from the totality of which it is a part" (Dahrendorf 1959 p256).

In organisations such as this, managers will be inevitably located in structures of authority and power (Clawson 1980). A feature of these structures will be their hierarchical nature. Indeed, if this is the case, we should positively expect managers to be located in 'intermediate' positions in imperatively co-ordinated associations. It is not even clear that they will 'intermediate' between clearly defined entities. Weber is equivocal about which particular interest will dominate modern society, but he argues that whatever group it is will be bearers of rationalization. For the wage workers, he offers a picture of social fragmentation based upon differences in labour market position, rather than solidarism arising from shared experiences of the relations of production.

We need to recognise, of course, that in this picture managers too are employees exposed to the labour market. Nevertheless, employment in a bureaucracy offers some solace. It offers the possibility - indeed probability of advancement through career structure. (We shall see later that this notion of career is of importance to managers in constructing their occupational identity and that this is fragile). It offers protection in the form of mastery of a body of technical knowledge or administrative procedure, though this too will be threatened by technological and organisational change. In relation to these sources of uncertainties managers are not simply recipients of outside forces; they will act to maxmise their labour market advantages and may indeed attempt this by resisting bureaucratisation.

Weber's view of the managers presents them as distinctly modern, and crucial to the future growth and productivity of industrial societies. They are the staff of the bureaucracy and the bureaucracies are destined to dominate ever increasing areas of social life.

> "The dependence of the material fate of the masses on the permanently correct functioning of ever more bureaucratically co-ordinated private- capitalist organisations steadily grows, and the very thought of the possiblity of eliminating them becomes ever more Utopian." (Gerth and Mills 1948 p 229).

Typically for Weber, however, these 'powerful' bearers of rationalization and bureaucratisation are in danger of becoming the creatures of the organisation. They may fall under the aegis of an entirely technical rationality, threatened themselves by the very rationalization and bureaucratisation of which they are also the agents.

It is clear, therefore, that Marx, Durkheim and Weber offer differing accounts of the role and function of the manager. How can their analyses be used to socially locate the manager, thereby aiding our understanding of their work and employment? Perhaps, the most important point of all is drawn from Marx and Durkheim. This is that it is essential to locate managers and then work

in a structural setting. Understanding their activities depends upon the nature of the constraints upon them. Some of these will be formed within the enterprise and others outside it in economic relations between organisations. On this Marx and Durkheim are in considerable agreement. Indeed, as we have seen, even though Durkheim diagnoses the central problems of industrial society in a rather different way from Marx, their language has similarities. They both stress the intra-organisational consequences of external features of economic life. For Durkheim, this is primarily the unfair division of production and the effect this has upon contractual relations. For Marx, it is the conflict of interest between capital and wage labour. Both insist that, in consequence of these features of society, the co-ordination of tasks inside the enterprise takes on a particular form. In Durkheimian language, the necessary tasks of co-ordination, properly the activity of the manager, are constrained by the abnormal forms of the division of labour. Only under the conditions of the spontaneous division of labour is the task of co-ordination free of the effects of coercion, acting through the labour market, or anomie, produced by an absence of moral regulation.

For Marx, the activity of managing is always constrained by the nature of the exchange between capital and wage labour. The consequences of this cannot be willed away by presenting managing as an entirely 'technical', 'professional' value-neutral activity. The manager in a capitalist enterprise is ultimately constrained in his or her activity by the need to make adequate profit. Further, the precise nature of the exchange between capital and wage labour, in particular that the capitalist purchases a capacity to labour rather than labour itself, necessitates the presence of control functions. This is the element of the relationship observed by Baldamus and Lupton (Baldamus 1961 and Lupton 1963). Namely, that the terms of the exchange are constantly being re-negotiated and it is primarily managers who represent capital in this relationship. To put this argument succinctly, is to suggest that the nature of managing is constrained by the form of the employment relationship, the modern analogue of the capital/labour exchange (Allcorn and Marsh undated). To ignore this, as some industrial society theorists have done, is profoundly misleading.

However, to claim that managing is constrained by aspects of a mode of production is not to claim that it is determined by it. I take this to be the import of Marx's remarks towards the end of his life about the necessity of co-ordination:-

> "Whenever the direct process of production assumes the form of a combined social process" (Marx Cap Vol 3 p383)

In other words, there are important elements of the managerial task which arise when the division of labour is practised in production. This at least leaves the manager with the labour of co-ordination and, as we shall see later, if this co-ordination is of productive activity itself it will often be associated with a knowledge of and interest in the process of production. On the question of control, an agnostic position is taken. While Marx is persuasive that control is widespread in the capitalist organisation of production, it does not follow that control functions disappear under changed conditions of the ownership of productive property. We might speculate that the form that control takes would be different under alternative relations of production but there are no persuasive sociological grounds for its disappearance (Gorz 1976, Kumar 1978, Zimbalist 1979). Indeed, Marx's own comment is that it is the antagonistic nature of supervision which disappears in the co-operative factory (Marx Vol 3 p387).

It is, therefore, vital to situate managers structurally, but is it useful to regard them as occupying 'ambiguous,' 'contradictory' and inherently unstable positions? The answer to this depends on your purpose; if you are concerned with either describing fundamental cleavages of capitalist societies it may be correct to treat managers as occupying intermediate positions. If however, your task is to understand and explain the structure of economic organisations then their positions look far from being structural oddities. On the contrary, they appear to occupy perfectly 'normal' positions in hierarchically organised structures of authority. Almost by definition these kinds of structures will include a variety of individuals occupying 'intermediate' positions.

However, even on this account, important questions about whether the occupants of such positions have specifiable shared interests arise. It is of significance to ask whether their structural position is coherent enough to generate societal interests and group formation. For example, I take it that one of the claims of service class theory, both in Renner's formulation and Goldthorpe's reworking of the theme, is that there are coherent interests which demographically, politically and culturally produce a class (Renner 1978, Goldthorpe 1982). However, these questions are empirically open, and interestingly so, if we recognise the functional importance of the co-ordination of production.

An important area of inquiry in addressing this question of the coherence or not of managerial interests will be their labour market position. Marx's view is that the labour of superintendence, i.e. the work of the manager, is like other forms of labour, purchased in the market and therefore suffers the same competition, depreciation and cyclical employment.

> "These wages of supervision, like any other wage, found their definite level and definite market-price, on the one hand, with the development of a numerous class of industrial and commercial managers, and the more they fell, on the other, like all wages for skilled labour with the general development which reduces the cost of production of specially trained labour-power". (Capital, Vol 3, p 389).

Processes such as these contribute to the proletarianisation of the manager. It has to be conceded, however, that, arguing from a Weberian perspective, managers are unlikely to passively accept this deterioration of their market position but will seek to use, in Parkin's terms, (Parkin 1979) a 'strategy of social closure' in order to protect their position. By this he means that they will seek to restrict access to their occupation: most notably via an attempt to establish credentials for entry into their privileged positions in the division of labour (Parkin 1979). For managers this strategy has taken the form of attempts at professionalisation - "a strategy designed amongst other things, to limit and control the supply of entrants to an occupation in order to safeguard or enhance its market value" (Parkin 1979 p54). So far as the UK is concerned this process has

generally been rather unsuccessful (Child, Fores, Glover and Lawrence 1983, McCormick 1985). However, what we need to recognise from this analysis is that managers are not simply passive bearers of structural changes but actors, or to use the currently fashionable term, agents, witting and knowledgeable. Therefore, questions about the possiblility of their forming social groups with shared interests depends not just on an analysis of their structural location but on their responses, individual or collective, to this.

This last point requires further elaboration, for, while it has been my general argument that managers and their work must be located within a particular mode of production this has led some (perhaps Braverman is the best example) to treat managers as entirely the unwitting functionaries of capital. This view is at the root of several both theoretical and empirical problems. The empirical problems have already been referred to. Namely, that within a position which identifies managerial functions with capitalist interests there is no room to examine processes of differentiation within management. Secondly, there are endemic boundary problems. How do we know when management has begun? Or to put the question in terms of class formation when and how do shared positions in a hierarchy of authority cohere into definable class interests? As Salaman has noted there are shades here of the persistent problem of Weberian class theory (Salaman 1982), since, at least in principle, organisational position could produce a myriad of interest groups. These empirical problems arise because managers are placed in a functionalist and evolutionary model. For example, in Braverman there is an internal (and apparently irrestistible) logic to capitalism such that certain forms of work organisation have to be imposed. Management, therefore, "simply represents a stage in the argument, a step in the unfolding of the historically necessary." (Salaman 1982 p50). Such a model can only be rendered internally coherent where individuals are treated as passive recipients of external forces, of which they need not themselves be conscious. Empirical investigation of managers does not confirm this picture but stresses their activity in shaping their social world in the context of both external forces and their perceptions of them. We have to understand for example, managerial differentiation within the enterprise and

their social closure attempts in the labour market, as evidence of their social creativity. Our attempt to socially locate the manager must not forget that managers are agents too.

On the basis of this analysis then three concluding comments can be made. Firstly, the general context of managerial work conditions it. This structural location both constrains some activities and enables others. However, the intermediate position of managers is not some abnormal, or inherently unstable location but a predictable one within structures of control and authority. Finally, they are active individually and collectively in creating and reproducing their social world; they construct and theorise their activities in the context of their social location.

NOTES

1. It would, however, be mistaken to imagine that we cannot speak of a managerial function prior to the emergence of industrial society. Marx makes reference to early forms of labour management. More recently Anthony (1977) and Rueschemeyer (1986) elaborate some of the historical evidence.

CHAPTER FOUR

Managers and Their Social Imagery

In Chapter Three it was argued that in order to understand the activities of managers we need to locate them within the social division of labour. At the same time, it was suggested that we should not forget that they are active in constructing and reproducing their social world; that they theorise their activities in a context given by their structural position. Such a view of managers encourages a supplementary approach to the whole question of their social location. We could simply ask 'What do they say about their role at work and in society generally?'. Their answers to these questions could then be interpreted in the light of the theoretical position described in the last chapter.

However, we should not underestimate the complexity of this task. Asking people questions and interpreting their replies has kept an army of anthropologists, market researchers, oral historians, psephologists, psychologists and sociologists very busy for a long time. Part of their problem has been that the terms and concepts used by actors are unlikely to match neatly the terms and concepts used in the explanatory frameworks of social researchers (Allcorn and Marsh).

In sociology, investigation of this problem has centred around the concept of ideology. A notion which fundamentally suggests a relation between social location (which could, itself be conceived of in a large variety of ways) and view of the world. This putative relation is not the exclusive domain of Marxian theory, both the Weberian and Durkheimian tradition imply a relationship between social location and ideology. However, a crucial set of empirical problems have revolved around how one collects and examines 'views of the world'. Of course, as suggested earlier, one way is simply to ask people, but the evidence suggests that particular individuals say different sorts

of things at different times about different experiences and that people from the same social group say contrasting things about the same experiences. (see Bulmer 1975, Goldthorpe & Bevan 1975 and Davis 1979). This puzzling complexity has led to theoretical refinement. The notion that social location is causally connected to world view has been restated. In particular, the Marxian distinction between individual and social consciousness has been pushed to the fore, such that we become interested in ideas, attitudes and values expressive of social location and not the idiosyncratic views of particular individuals. Marx argues for this distinction by asking us to distinguish the greed of the capitalist from the greed of the miser. The capitalist is greedy by virtue of social location, the miser by individual choice (Hyppolite 1969).

Despite the apparent attraction of this position there are clear problems. Firstly, the distinction really only disguises the original problem, for we now have to decide which ideas, attitudes and values are expressive of social location and which not. Secondly, it represents a dichotomy between socially determined ideas and individually chosen ones. A more plausible sociological position might argue that ideas are subject to several determinations, some of which are social. For example, occupation, community, gender, race and class may all operate as social determinations but in a variety of combinations and in addition to other, highly individualised, social experiences. That is to suggest that we are dealing with individual representations of social experiences. Such a view would accommodate the range of empirical findings. In particular that the ideologies of social groups are complex and contradictory and that this is not because social experiences make no sustained impact on their ideas but because social experiences are themselves usually complex and contradictory.

It is this line of investigation which is developed in the sociological study of social imagery. The origins of the concept in modern sociology were undeniably functionalist, with an emphasis on members of a society having a shared image of that society (see Madge 1964). Subsequently, it developed into an atttempt to link the social situation of particular populations, for example, communities or occupations, with their collective actions.

A crucial mediating variable it was claimed, would be the images of society held by members of these groups. Most of the empirical work has focussed on working class imagery (Bulmer 1975) and while Lockwood's famous paper (Lockwood 1966) crystallised the crucial theoretical questions, subsequent research has encountered considerable theoretical and practical difficulties. Part of the problem has concerned quite how one turns Lockwood's elegant statement of the problem, namely the relationship between specific ideologies and the 'practical consciousness of everyday life,' into an empirical research programme. In particular, it has proved difficult to disentangle social imagery from attitudes and opinions related to specific social and political concerns. Nevertheless, Davis, drawing on the social theories of Popitz, Touraine and Willener (Popitz et al 1969, Touraine 1974, Willener 1970), seeks to elaborate the concept and 're-apply it sociologically' (Davis 1979 p 11). From Touraine he takes the notions of identity, opposition and totality; these refer to a consciousness of self, a consciousness of the adversary and a consciousness of the domain of social conflict. For Touraine, these notions are located in the context of Marxian social class analysis but it is at least possible that they have applications in other areas of social life. In any event, Davis combines this with Popitz' conception of an image as a "bricolage of symbols, concepts and expressions which may be governed by personal experience, hearsay, knowledge, an ideology or (as is most likely) by a combination of all four" (Davis 1979 p31). This certainly proves fertile in analysing Davis's empirical material concerned with the social imagery of three occupational groups - maintenance fitters, steel workers and clerks - and in what follows these general principles are used.

However, implied by this usage is a recognition that social imagery may well be itself inconsistent. Firstly, because social experiences themselves may be inconsistent. Secondly, because images are invariably built up from a variety of sources. Further, they may not, in the normal course of events, be subject to any totalising or synthesising force. We need therefore to pay careful attention to language-use in establishing the generality of particular social images. Particular, apparently inconsistent, images may be linked by a similar generative mechanism. There is here a possibility that the duality established between structure and agency may be transcended. It may

be possible to derive models which generate social images, models which are themselves subject to change in response to external, social and technological developments. However our aims here are rather more modest. Managers' social images are simply placed within the theoretical framework developed earlier in the previous chapter.

We can begin by looking at the way in which two managers talk about the enterprise and use this as a source of imagery about their role in society. These two respondents are in a direct hierarchical relation to each other; indeed one is the direct boss of the other. Let's start by looking at the subordinate. Mr Gordon is aged 37 and has been with this large manufacturing multinational for eight years. His previous job experience begins with work in the Accounts Department of a large petrol company, followed by work as a Progress Chaser in a small engineering company. Both of these jobs were in the same geographical area as his present employment, a relatively affluent area of the South. He was educated at Grammar School and since leaving school has become a member of the Institute of Works Managers, which he obtained with the help of a day- release from his current employer. In addition to this he has studied at night school courses in works study. His formal job title is 'Section Leader: Planning,' This title is quite important to him.

I.Q: How would you describe your present job here?

R.A: As a planner, looking after the transistors and diodes. Just, just I'm a Section Leader.

I: Yes

R: So I could co-ordinate the planning activities of everything to do with .....(trails off)

I: And, what, how big is the section?

R: I've got five people working for me and we go from the material to the delivery of these devices - so we plan both short and long term.

Mr Gordon is classically located in the middle of a hierarchy, experiencing some pressure from above and trying to distance himself from below. As we shall see, this will produce some interestingly inconsistent ways of talking about both his role in the enterprise and, generalising from this, his conception of his place in society.

I: Where would you place yourself in this organisational hierarchy?

R: Here - here in Southcoast ... Um, I think the lateral aspects of the hierarchy are very important, so I put myself higher in that. That one tries - in the service area - I think its very important that you integrate with the people who actually make it, and so you try and be a part of the team. I think that's very important, and I put myself fairly highly in that team, up with the Technical Product manager, the higher management, but of course in a line situation, fairly low down obviously."

Even within this extract there are interesting tensions. The over-riding image is of the team, and indeed of actually being in that team. However, at the same time, membership of this team needs to be assessed hierarchically. It is his important role in the team which allows him to 'equate' himself with others like the Technical Product manager who are above him in the formal hierachy. Nevertheless, there is a powerful 'team' theme in this way of talking about the organisational structure. Compare this with an extract slightly later in the interview where the interviewer is probing for particular aspects of work:

I: Is your job at all concerned with control?

R: Not very much. Um, I think I recognise that, if you like, there's managing and managing. That you don't need to crack the whip - I think it would be wrong as I say. I've described the structure in our department - they're adults, they're men. I think there is a difference between managing men and a crowd of operators. But no, I don't get a lot of management discipline problems.

It is clear from this that the team imagery referred to earlier does not include everyone. Using categories of exclusion, operators hardly count as either adults or men. (In reality, they are mainly young women).

This may also be the beginning of an image of the operator as adversary. However, we see later a more complex image of the operator offered, although it does relate to this notion of managers as 'adults'. It concerns a discussion of the company's 'progressive' image and in particular their attempts to re-organise assembly line work.

R: The company were one of the first to try and do something with the assembly line. You know, there's been alot of problems in the car industry, of being an extension to a machine and we tried this "Let A go make a fan heater" or whatever it was, complete, rather than see the thing go past - We did it so they could identify. I think they recognised the need not to use people as machines, that people are people, and they deserve something better than coming in at 8 o'clock in the morning and going home and turning into a vegetable.

Perhaps the most powerful impression of these remarks is of the passivity of the operators and the 'benign' authority of management. It is interesting to note, however, that even though this respondent usually defines himself as part of management, indicated through the use of the 'we' pronoun, on occasions he refers to a powerful 'they.' Nevertheless, there is strong identification on his part with the organisation's authoritative attitude, concerned with doing something about the

problem, and there is a 'taking on' of a passive view of operators. There is at the same time however, a recognition of powerful groups of which he is not either in reality or ideology a part. He is clear that the organisation's interest in changing the assembly line method of production is motivated by financial criteria. In expressing this view we can sense a deliberate attempt to present a 'hard' managerial view:

I: Why were these changes tried? Do you think it's a moral decision or a financial one?

R: Must be financial - must be. You know you could imagine that the thing that highlights the decision is absenteeism or high turnover, or poor work and so on and the need to do something. So that must be the first consideration. We're making, say, fan- heaters, they want to make good ones so they can sell them and get a profit; and if people will work better sitting round a table making one each, rather than in a big long line and making a bit of it, they will achieve their objective and that is selling and getting a return. But again it's not as black and white as that. It would be too easy to be cynical and say that's the only reason, but it would be too naive to say that all they were doing was thinking of the work people.

It is worth noting again here the switching between 'we' and 'they.' Of course, the reality is that decisions about major changes in either human resources management or production technology would not be taken even at senior management level within the plant but at a rather distant head office.

Before contrasting this respondent with his boss, one final extract reveals some interesting tensions within management. In particular between various kinds of incumbent of managerial positions. As suggested earlier, it is mistaken to view management as an homogenous, passive occupational group. The following extract introduces another possible rival in the shape of the educationally

successful manager. A conflict arising as much from credentialism as from anything else. The context of the remarks is the variety of plants and establishments that this company has within the U.K. but the respondent elaborates thus:

R: It's important too, to look at the different kinds of people. More and more its becoming increasingly difficult to achieve high management status without qualifications. That you get the classic conflict of the old stager if you like, years of experience, being managed by somebody from University. There's terrible conflict there - there's this what is knowledge? - that one has just demonstrated that he is capable of taking in knowledge and has the brain and capacity to do it; the other one has demonstrated that, after years of experience, he knows the business end - it's a terrible conflict there it seems to me.

I: Are you aware of that yourself?

R: Um - aware of it yes

I: I mean, does it happen to you, do you feel it?

R: Oh I think I will do inevitably. I don't think I resent it. I think it's important not to. I think that you could say, well I didn't have the opportunity, you know; its the old problem of when I was young I didn't have the opportunity you know .... It's a fact of life that say you can't become a technical product manager nowadays, unless you've been to university and, at the same time, gained a bit of experience of the company. I think it would be wrong otherwise.

It is hard in typeface to convey the anxiety that expressing these comments involved. It was close to this respondent's central worries at work that he was threatened by individuals with better

qualifications and that his own experience was undervalued. Indeed as the interview continued he became increasingly willing to talk about his doubts and worries about his own position. This becomes very clear when the interviewer attempts to close:

I: Well, thanks very much for your time.

R: You're going to see Mr Bart now - I don't suppose you need to answer but why, what are you going to do now that you need to relate my experiences with his experiences?

The interviewer, namely me, does his best to explain the purpose of the subsequent interview. This appears to work but the respondent continues:

R: What you're doing is fine. Maybe it's an indictment that Mr Bart hasn't taken time out to tell me whether I've changed [following training course] Maybe he should or shouldn't do but one could say that you can come in as a total stranger and arrange a meeting so that you can sit there and know my remarks and get his remarks, but I haven't had any feedback.

I: No, well, um .....

There are some quite open and heart-felt expressions of both anger and anxiety here. After all, the interviewer is rather like the well-educated 'adversary' referred to in the earlier extract. However, note how criticism is linked by the 'one' form. This is often used to distance speakers from their own remarks. The way in which the respondent moves between work-place imagery and societal imagery will be returned to but, first, we need to look at the interview with his boss.

Mr Bart has been with the company for twenty years; first as a technical assistant, then production manager for a section of the factory, then the same function for the whole factory; subsequently, as the factory diversified, technical product manager for one particular product and finally, as Head of Management Services. He describes that job as follows:

R: (Mr Bart) That's rather difficult. I've just spent four hours with somebody trying to do just that, but basically I'm responsible for the planning of all the resources that the factory uses - materials, labour and equipment. I'm also responsible for the cost improvement activity across the whole plant - covering again materials, the organisation, the use of people and I also have the people who can assist that. In other words, I have the Operations Research people, the O & M people, the Behavioural Scientists, that we have, and also I'm in charge of the computer.

It's clear from Mr Bart's description that his is a wide-ranging and important job. Indeed, he is one of a group of about ten, who, under the Chairmanship of the Plant Director, constitute the Plant Management Committee, which takes decisions locally in the light of central instructions. If we compare his account with the earlier one of Mr Gordon there are some interesting differences. In Mr Bart's description 'I' often occurs in conjunction with 'responsible for' or 'in charge of'. The only occasions Mr Gordon uses 'I' is in association with the conditional form 'could'. When 'we' is used it refers to activities like 'planning' and not to authority relations like 'responsible for' or 'in charge of'. Mr Bart makes no reference to his job title. However, in common with Mr Gordon, he uses team imagery to describe the work-place. The comments arise in the context of a general discussion of the role of management training.

R: ... One of the things that for example we do, we've tried this a bit on this plant, but I never find anyone in the training would ever think about it, and the example that I give is this: to run a factory it's a total team effort between everybody but we set out when when we train people, rather as though were training a football team,

where you take all the goal keepers and train them to be goalkeepers, and all the centre forwards to be centre forwards, and all the strikers to be strikers and then out of that whole mass you pick eleven of them and say you're the England team. Well they're never trained as a team. You know we take managers and we train them to be managers, we take operators and train them to be operators - we on this plant take union people and train them in certain techniques - you know work study and so on. But nobody as far as I know, takes a vertical slice through an organisation and trains that. And that's what I think needs to be done, if we're going to get into this concept of training as a team and working as a team.

This extract is full of interest. Perhaps, one of the instructive contrasts with Mr Gordon is Mr Bart's use of 'we'; there is no unspecified 'they' in his description. He knows just where he stands. The team image is one he returns to again later, and to use his own imagery, it becomes clear that he sees himself very much as a team manager. We must not let this detract from the power of the image and its congruence with Mr Bart's general view of business. Later in the interview he returns several times to this theme. For example, he criticises a leading representative of the Employers Federation for their view of the economic ills of the country:

R: I was a bit horrified at the bowler hat gold watch-chain approach ... he said he'd outline the things that were wrong with the country - like nobody wants to work anymore and so on. He said what we need to do is to let the managers manage and tell the Trades Unions where they belong and that's the answer - what a load of rubbish but this was a man who has a very high position in industry, a director of a large company, now at least you don't hear people talking like that in this organisation.

However, lest you think we may have discovered a 'radical' manager, we should look at the reasons why 'you don't hear people talking like that in this organisation'. The explanation is to be found

in the strong family atmosphere. Mr Bart describes the visits he has witnessed from one of the family who still have substantial ownership interests in the business. The owner explained to Mr Bart why he continued in business:

R: What I like to think I'm doing is - I'm enabling the people who are working for me to have a higher standard of living than if I hadn't got any factories and that's what he really saw as his job, just to give all his workers a better standard of living than they would otherwise have and I think that he really meant that you know.

This was a topic Mr Bart returned to when the interviewer took the notion of the organisation as having a reputation for being 'humane' and 'progressive'.

I: It seems to me that this organisation has got a reputation for this humane attitude and yet they are almost classically - in fact almost anachronistically - a capitalist organisation par excellence.

R: That's right yes.

I: The family firm.

R: That's right, yes it is, oh it's the real Poppa approach there's no doubt about that. But then I mean, you know, people talk about autocratic and democratic styles of management and of course they all merge in and in actual fact there's nothing that's too radically wrong with a benevolent sort of autocrat - it can work quite well - yes I know the unions frequently criticise because they say well you're saying what's good for us and we want to say what's good for us - but it works well you know.

So if this is a family it's very much one where 'Poppa' knows best. There is an affinity in this family imagery with Mr Gordon's stress on the manager as 'adult'. Here again we have a view of managers as knowing, helpful adults. It is, however, difficult to know who adults are opposed to. In fact, Mr Bart's adverserial imagery is rather close to Mr Gordon. It concerns the University educated, younger manager. This becomes clearest when discussing the difference between his and his predecessor's recruitment strategy:

> R: I felt when I took over that they'd recruited the wrong sort of person in the past. My predecessor had gone for more sort of academic qualification and rather less for somebody who'd had a bit of worldly knowledge if I can put it like that ... one or two of the chaps we'd had previously just didn't get on. Oh they were excellent people. But not for industry. In my opinion anyway. You know, I mean they would no doubt pursue things to a very high academic standard and maybe find out very useful stuff but they didn't really slot into an industrial environment because they couldn't make use of it when they'd done it and, unless you can explain to a production man how to use it, you know it's just a case of paper which is no use to anybody.

However, there is an important difference in Mr Bart's view. He is after all a University graduate, a fact he 'drops' in later in the interview - "when I spoke to my organic chemistry professor before I left University" - so he is not threatened in the same way as his subordinate, but there is the same problem of the balance between experience and qualifications. Mr Bart's position, however, allows him to have an impact on this issue; he has been important in establishing a local training scheme which places management services specialists in production positions as part of their induction process into the organisation. In general terms, this is a much more secure view of his place in the enterprise. One consequence of this is that he is much more prepared to express his views on the relation between the enterprise and society. For example, he complains that managers are

undervalued because the overall cultural emphasis is, in his opinion, anti-industry. He reports the response of his professor to the news that he was going into industry.

R: 'You're not really going into industry are you?' So I said 'Yes', so he said 'Oh dear - I'll tell you quite bluntly, I believe I have failed if my students go into industry'.

Mr Bart's image of society strongly rests upon his image of the work- place. Society is a team and within the team people have specialized functions. One of the functions is to 'manage' the rest of the players. This can be juxtaposed to Mr Gordon's views. He also generalises the team analogy but is concerned about whether he is really in the team - the management team. He is more concerned to stress his distance from 'operators' and his importance in the 'lateral' structures of management.

To close this brief discussion of work-place and social imagery we can look at more extensive extracts from another interview.

The respondent is a Production Manager at a factory in Scotland. Mr Crompton is in his mid-thirties, has been with the Company eleven years. His previous job experience was in a dockyard as a Marine Engineer, but he began in the present factory as an Assistant Foreman. He has an HNC in electrical engineering. The factory assembles electrical components and employs about 650 'Operators'; many of the production workers are female.

0 I: Just another point, I went around the factory this afternoon with Mr Emerson, and I was looking at some of the jobs the operators do, and I thought 'My God I'm, glad I don't have to do that kind of thing, and I think I live too much of a cloistered life you know.

R: Yeah, you say that, and yet we've got one of the hardest jobs to fill in the factory.

It's what we call a Spare Operator, and this is a fellow who can do a number of jobs at a reasonable pace, not the highest efficiency but at a reasonable pace. People don't want to do that. Some of them just want to sit there and do a monotonous job so that they can think of what they're going to get for their night's supper. So they've got no worries, it's just a job, and they're getting money at the end of the week for peanuts and that's their opinion. So it's funny, their attitude, and yet other people get bored and want changes in their job.

I: But it's kind of bad that people should feel that about their work; they just want to sit there.

R: And it may not be a criticism of work. It may be a criticism of the whole society.

I: Oh Yeah, I think so.

R: Because I think there's no doubt about it, there are people who will do nothing else. You give them a change of job, and they're liable to do one of two things. They're liable to go sick or they want to leave, and it's not because the job you've given them is any worse or any better necessarily, but it's a change and they just don't want the re-learning period and it does happen.

I: Oh, I'm sure you're right. I mean some of the jobs are fairly, you know, just monotonous and they don't look as if they require a great deal of dexterity, some of them, and I looked at some of them working on the small circuits, they look very complicated. Well, there's obviously a routine, but I shouldn't think you can let up a great deal or you mess it up.

R: Surprising, it really is surprising how much the human body can learn and they can do without even thinking. I mean I never cease to be amazed at some of the things these Operators can achieve by constant practice. Really doing the job day in and day out. I mean I've known a number of Operators who can sing the whole time they're working. Now that's not an easy task to do when you're trying to concentrate, and I've known other ones that can talk incessantly. Every Operator around the place can still do their work. It's just amazing how they just get these skills that their arms can do without their minds thinking. Well, that's the whole way they get efficient. If they had to think with every move they made, they would never be efficient. I suppose bonus systems are a means to an end, but it does make people work like machines. But in this society it's needed. You just can't begin to 'peak', unless you're efficient, but a lot of them like it, let's face it. All right - they don't know anything different and you say and a lot of people say "Oh, it's a shame. They shouldn't have to sit there and do these routine, monotonous jobs. They should be out in the world getting all the worries that we have". But in fact they may be, you know. I don't know if you've got a tape on this, but I'll comment on it. But, well, I'm just saying it's like pigs in shit, let's put it that way. I've been like that and, there's no doubt about it, if you put a pig herd in mucky ground they're as happy as life. Put them in a clean place and they'll walk around it and moan and groan. And that's what happens down there. If you were to give these people jobs that were way out of their depth, they would just not be happy."

Perhaps the first point to be made about this extract is its temporal position in the interview. It's very near the end; I have previously used a phrase to signal the end of the interview.

However, as has happened on many occasions during the course of the field work, the conversations ran on, sometimes revealing very interesting opinions. The extract has much less the 'form' of an interview. There are, for example, fewer question and answer sequences, and more occasions when the interviewer is prepared to elaborate his views.

More generally significant is the view of 'Operators' which emerges from the discussion of the problem of obtaining 'Spare Operators'. In this factory, about fifteen different types of electrical equipment might be being assembled at any one time and, given certain supply conditions, it might be necessary to cover for the absence of any particular Operator. Hence the importance of a pool of Spare Operators who could meet certain minimum piece-work targets for a number of different components. Crompton's point is that the difficulty of obtaining 'Spare Operators' indicates something about the operators' attitudes to their work. Insufficient information about recruitment, the piece work rates or the bonus system was collected to enable us to argue in detail about the significance of the 'Spare Operator' problem. The problem is used here to indicate something about Crompton's view of the shop floor.

Lines 6 - 10 indicate that Crompton believes operators to have an entirely 'instrumental' orientation to their job; concerned only with 'what they're going to get for their night's supper' (line 8). However, he does not condemn such an attitude, except in so far as it creates the managerial problem of Spare Operator shortage. Rather, he offers two or possibly three explanations. Firstly, in Lines 35-38 he indicates that their attitudes may be a product of a bonus system which 'does make people work like machines'. 'If they had to think with every move they made they would never be efficient' (Line 34-35). Secondly, in Lines 38-41 he suggests that perhaps their attitudes are as they are because they have never experienced any real fulfillment from work, 'All right, they don't know any different'. (Line 38). (cf Braverman's discussion of "The Habituation of the Worker to the Capitalist mode of Production". Chapter 6 of Labour and Monopoly Capital Braverman 1974). He does not pursue this argument very far however, distancing himself from it by stating it in the reported speech (Line 39). Instead he asserts that their attitude to their work may arise

from a 'natural' condition, just as does the pigs' liking for a messy environment. (It is interesting that this 'natural' argument utilises analogies from nature). This argument is justified by evidence which undermines its very foundations: Line 43 supplies supporting evidence, 'I've been like that'. This however, undermines the 'natural' basis of the argument. If Crompton has been 'like that' and no longer is, then it cannot be that workers' attitudes to their jobs are as fixed as pigs' attitudes to mess. However, Crompton is convinced that 'if you were to give these people jobs that were way out of their depth, they would just not be happy'.

This extract not only contains a particular view of the shop floor and of some operators, but also through this, gives some indication of what it is to be away from the shop floor. Through the characterisation of work on the shop floor we can gain an idea of what work in contrast to this is like. Crucial here is a radical distinction between mental and manual work. Thus in Lines 26 - 27 Crompton expresses his surprise at just what the operators can do without thinking. Again in Lines 32 - 33, 'It's just amazing how they just get these skills that their arms can do without their minds thinking'. In this expression the operator is even robbed of the mental task of acquiring and utilising skills; rather, they 'get' skills, not that they use, but that their arms 'can do'. All this is contrasted with a mental act 'worrying' in Lines 9 and 40. It is noted that either operators' work leaves them with no worries, or that those who condemn monotonous, boring jobs are asking that operators 'should be out in the world getting all the worries we have' (Lines 40 and 41). It's not clear just who this 'we' refers to. It could signify some identity between respondent and interviewer or, it may identify a category separate from operators of which Crompton is a member, namely, the category 'Manager' (See Cicourel 1973 p 54 - 55).

However, Crompton's assessment of operators and their attitudes to their work does not arise from 'prejudice' but from 'experience'. He knows that operators are like this; he has the problem of finding spare operators and his own previous experience convinces him of the limited nature of operators' aspirations and abilities. Indeed, in this section, as discussed previously, he theorises about the origins or causes of particular attitudes to work. Further, he is prepared to relate these

comments to a wider view of the nature of society in which production is so organised. In Lines 14 and 35 - 38 he offers the specific nature of society as an explanation of a 'bonus system', which makes people work like machines and he replies to my 'moral' statement (Lines 12 and 13) about instrumental attitudes to work by generalising to criticism of society as a whole.

These are, therefore, internally complex views of the relations between the work place and the social context of managing. They are, as we shall see later, related to Mr Crompton's particular view of himself as a manager, and of his own work.

Like Mr Crompton, other respondents move between their image of the organisation and their model of society. Consider the following extract from an interview with a senior manager on a plant management committee at a large South Coast factory. The extract is taken from a section where the interviewer has raised the issue of the ownership and control of the organisation:

I: But this is par excellence a capitalistic organisation.

R: Define your terms.

I: Well, in the sense that it's almost an old-fashioned family firm - ownership is in very few hands.

R: No, well, in terms of shareholding, yes, but in terms of the way in which the organisation functions, I don't think that ever really crosses people's minds. Certainly not in this country and definitely not in this division. Um, the fact that a family in Europe have ultimate control in the shareholder sense doesn't enter management deliberation at all. I mean it could be a public utility in that sense. I can think of other companies where that's not true, Tate and Lyle for instance. The Tate family really impose themselves on the management of Tate & Lyle and

impose policy, but this is not true of us. You don't even sense this in the division either. We regard the family behind this Company very much as an organisation in this country would regard say the Royal Family in relation to the RSPCA, where it looks like it's run by a Royal you know, it's that sort of relationship. He's a patron, you know, er, he has been to this factory, a member of the family, um, very much like entertaining the Duke of Kent when he came a few months ago. Same sort of things he wanted to look at and talk about - Do you look after your people well? - you know. Not enquiring into policy or strategy or looking at anything like that. It doesn't come into it.

Several interesting images emerge here. Most obviously, the analogy between the position of the owners of the business and the British Royal family. It is also worth noting the habit of power implied by the 'Define your terms' usage. Given the normal conventions of interviewing, where power resides with the interviewer (Fowler et al 1979), this imperative carries considerable weight.

The influence of the ownership structure is picked up in another interview where a manager from Central Personnel generalises from the ethos of the family to an image of society:

R: In this firm, there's also been a balance between the technical and the commercial - that's how it all started - the technical brother and commercial one. That's what gives us balance - we don't go round behaving badly as a firm 'cos we're balanced. There's a balance of interests. That's what's missing in our society, I believe, we need that balance.

This image of balance between technical and commercial interests is complex. It is not simply a plea that 'we should all pull together' but that arriving at consensus involves not the rejection of conflicting interests but the recognition that such interests need to be in equilibrium. This theme is developed in two further ways. Firstly, when managers talk about the inter-functional conflicts

which threaten the balance of the organisation. Secondly, when they talk of trades unions, their own experience of them and their role in the enterprise. The former reminds us that, just as shared images can create group boundaries, so also can they signal diversity. Later in this thesis, especially in Chapters Five and Six we will be examining processes which solidarise management. However, we should recognise that any such group cohesion encounters conflicts - between functions and between those who see themselves primarily as technical specialists rather than managers and those who resent the way specialists distance themselves from the activities of managing. This becomes clear in the following interview extracts:-

R: I know I can get extremely annoyed about the attitude of what I attempt to regard as spenders of wealth rather than creators of wealth. Production guys are notorious for this of course. We see ourselves as the guys who generate the bloody boat along with the development guys and the sales guys. They're the three prime functions of industry, devolop, make and sell. Everything else is there to help back our process, and you get the feeling at times that these guys form their own objectives. Information systems people have always given me that feeling - their objective is to play with bigger and better pieces of hardware, and bugger what it does for the organisation. If they can con the organisation into buying them a bigger machine, they will do. That's overstated a bit, but not too much. Some of these guys really did feel that they were the hub of the organisation. Now I know I'm the hub (laughter) of the bloody organisation. So you get a bit cross over the importance ....

I: People like who, MIS, who else?

R: Well the one that really had me sort of grinding my teeth in horror was one morning on the commercial thing, we had the economic market researcher, Jo Brown he was called, and he was a little far-back and obviously pseudy, you know

talking about the 'workers', and then he insisted that he was a 'worker' himself, and one of the blokes who knew him passed a piece of paper down the table that he lived on a private income and worked just to get out of the house. And another guy called Whitehead who was, um, he was sort of in charge of advertising and public relations, I don't think much of advertising anyway. I think it's a very parasitic sort of operation, and he wouldn't tell us what his budget was at first. So we screwed him down and screwed him down and he coughed up in the end, the budget was three- quarters of a million quid. So then we asked him, or I asked him, how much profit he generated. He didn't know, not only did he not know, he thought it was an improper question, and I wouldn't let him get away with it like that, "Look", I said, "If someone gives me three-quarters of a million quid a year to invest, they want to know what kind of a return I'm going to get on it" and it's all monitored in very great detail, you know, as long as I make a return I can do what I want but if I don't make a return, then every bugger in the organisation will be down on me like hell. And we gave quite a battering to this bloke, and in the bar afterwards, he was sort of chatting to this rich friend, and he didn't know I was right behind him and he said "It's surprising how much vitality some of the chaps from the factories have got". Well I saw red, you know, I nearly banged their heads together, but I had a pint in the other room and didn't like to waste it. (Laughter). That sort of attitude gets me extremely cross.

(Production Manager)

Production departments are frequent sources of views like this but the social imagery of the extract is full, not just of functional conflict as between production and advertising but is also overlain with cultural differences. For example, the distaste for the 'farback and pseudy' market researcher, who insists he is a worker. The desire to 'bang their heads together' is resisted because 'there's a pint in the other room'. All of this is flavoured with cultural differentiation. Interestingly too, this production manager is located in the traditional industrial North West whereas the representatives

of the central functions, market research and advertising are located in London. Other production managers, however, will voice similar views of other 'service' departments.

R: Trouble is here in production we pick up the dirt from all the other departments. Last year marketing told us there'd be a down-turn in demand. We'd to lay off the evening shift. We said no way - we've only just taken them on and that's that. The plant manager backed us and sure enough six months later they were complaining there were stock shortages. If we'd listened to them there wouldn't have been any stock.

Other recurring conflicts are reported between planning and supplies, where the desire for advanced planning conflicts with supplies' desire for ensuring low cost and quality. Therefore, while planning managers constantly seek to ensure that advance supplies are available, supplies managers refuse to give such assurances until they feel sure that they have combed the market for the best products at the lowest cost. However, the imagery of the conflict is always sharpest between production and central 'service' departments.

Nevertheless, despite these possible sources of differentiation, their image of trades unions helps to unify them as managers. Though even here, biographical differences ensure that managers do not present an entirely uniform view of unions. For example, images of unionism will be affected by the individual manager's own experience of them. Managers promoted from skilled manual work in the organisation will almost certainly have been trades union members. Others entering management either as graduate trainees or from white-collar work are less likely to have been members. However, in some 'new' functions like computing the growth of managerial unionism is viewed with dismay by many senior managers, not simply because of a fear of trades unions but because it may threaten to break-up the unity of management. However, in this organisation there was a generally negative image of unions. For example:-

R: Unions - they're stubborn and lack common sense. I've no time for them. Here we've sorted them out and they're OK 'cos they're educated to see it our way.
(Senior Development Manager)

R: They are bloody-minded and competitive between themselves - they aren't even capable of acting in their own long term interests.
(Divisional Manager)

Neither of these managers had ever been in a union and both had long service with the organisation after graduate recruitment. For others, joining management meant leaving their union.

R: I was in when I was on the tools but when I joined management being in a union was incompatible with my status.
(Head of Production Control)

R: I left when I became a chargehand.

I: When you became a chargehand. Are many of your chareghands members of a union?

R: All, and the foremen.

I: But ...

R: I don't believe you can do both. I don't think you can be a member of the union and at the same time be amanager, because you're always in conflict. That's why when I became a chargehand I stopped being a union member.
(Metal Works Manager)

It's clear then that, for these managers, union membership and managerial status are incompatible. It may be plausible then to think of being in a union as denying a managerial identity and thus trades unionists constitute the image of an adversary. This is, however, too simple a view. Managers are not usually confronted with their subordinates as trades unionists. Indeed, encountering the collective actions of trades union members may be a rare occurrence. In these circumstances other dimensions of their social relations with subordinates become more important than membership or non-membership of a trades union. In the main it is relations structured around the work tasks which provide the primary source of identity for managers (cf Child and Partridge 1982). It is to managers and their work that we turn in the next chapter.

In summary, then, examining the social imagery of managers does aid our understanding of their social location. On the one hand, we can see the shared images which draw them together. For example, their image of the operative, the movement between their experience of the organisation and their model of society. On the other, we can identify the experiences which differentiate them. For example, their differential experience of hierarchy which alters their self-image, and the functional differences which feed into their image of the enterprise. How does this analysis relate to the conceptual framework previously established? It had been argued that it was not possible to understand the manager's social position without recognising the wider economic system in which they operate. That managers occupy not inherently unstable ambiguous social positions but should be considered within relatively stable structures of hierarchy. Furthermore, that they are not passive recipients of wider social or organisational forces but are active in creating and reproducing their social world in a context of particular, but dynamic, conditions. Their imagery is concerned with these parameters. They present a picture of the enterprise in which their 'technical' and 'managerial' expertise is largely insulated from the wider structures of economic life. The position in a hierarchy generates a rich vein of imagery which is explored further in the next two chapters. However, we can already see that managers represent themselves in hierarchical terms and attempt to insert 'breaks' into that hierarchy which differentiate them as managers from other employees. As we shall see in the next chapter, these efforts to differentiate themselves turn

on what they see as crucial aspects of 'managing' work. In all of this they display creativity, even imagination, in theorising their social position. However, a problem in using this social imagery in explanatory models arises. Images are rarely static representations of structures, rather they are part of a process of social construction. They are not, in the main images which can be read but are an activity in which individual experiences are coalesced into a social representation.

CHAPTER FIVE

Managers and their Work

This chapter will be concerned with three objectives. It begins by briefly examining the existing research literature on managerial work. It moves on to discuss the way in which my respondents described their work, and compares this with accounts offerred by their peers, superiors and subordinates, and to a lesser extent with direct observations. Finally, it suggests and illustrates the forces which are re-shaping managerial work.

Much of Chapter 3 (The Social Location of the Manager) was concerned to generally locate managerial work within the division of labour. Here we will be much more concerned with the nature of the work. In particular, with those parts of it which respondents see as distinctly 'managerial'. This is an area where the actor's definition of the situation is of great importance (Hughes 1958). Since one of our central concerns is with the development of a managerial identity, then the focus is upon those activities which seem to confer this identity and by implication those activities which threaten to undermine it. However, as the latter part of this chapter will show, this is not an entirely 'idealist' exercise because the process of constructing a particular occupational identity takes place within a context of organisational and structural change. Managers may possess agency and be active in the social production and reproduction of their social world, but they do not make it exactly as they please. Changes in the content of their work and in the nature of their employment relationship impinge upon their occupational identity.

Research on managerial work is surprisingly meagre given the theoretical attention given to managers in a number of important social scientific debates (see Introduction). However, such work as exists is reviewed extensively and critically by Hales (1980, 1986) and by Stewart (1983).

Their approaches to the literature are rather different but they do point to a number of conceptual and empirical difficulties with the existing work. It is to these that some attention will be devoted rather than to an extended summary of the last thirty years of research. (In any event summaries of this are available in Campbell et al, Langford and rather more usefully in Hales (Campbell et al 1970, Langford 1979, Hales 1980). Hales argues that three problems emerge when examining the evidence. Firstly, there is inconsistency in the research findings. For example, in the description of the typical activities of managers. This is produced partly by diversity in the activities themselves. Findings will therefore depend on which particular managerial jobs were examined. Further influences are the choice of different analytic categories by researchers and the use of different research methods. Thus, as Hales notes, "diary studies inevitably focused upon contacts and time allocation, structured questionnaires generated work elements, whilst participant observation studies made much of 'informal' behaviour" (Hales 1986 p 105). Secondly, there is a problem of relating managers' behaviour with their tasks, responsibilities and functions. To use Stewart's terminology, insufficient attention has been paid to the relation between choice and constraint in understanding managerial work. That is to say, between the activities which are clearly required by the organisation and those activities arrising from discretion. This discretion itself may be organisationally granted or 'carved out' by the manager. There exists a shifting boundary between what is required and what is chosen. Finally, Hales suggests that a third area of difficulty has been the extent to which exclusively managerial work has been identified. This is itself a highly complex problem. It revolves around the extent to which we recognise the occupational title 'manager' as an organisational and social creation, or as referring to some 'real' sort of activity. However, there is not only a methodological dimension to this problem. It also relates to the issue of whether 'managing' always takes the form of a particular occupation, whether it is a feature of all occupations, or whether it should be conceived of as a status label. These three problems are linked and Hales concludes that much of the empirical work is vitiated by a "general reluctance on the part of many of the studies to locate managerial work practices carefully within the broader context of the function of management in work organizations" (Hales 1986 p 104). It was precisely this task which was begun in Chapter 3.

Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, it is possible to draw some commonalities from the empirical research. The weight which can be attached to such apparently shared findings is, of course, vitiated by the theoretical and methodological problems sketched above. However, we have some grounds for concluding that the following constitute widely reported features of managerial work. Firstly, managers seem to be involved in complex flows of information. This involves them in various liaison activities and the monitoring, filtering and dispersal of information (Mintzberg 1973, Kotter 1982, Horne and Lupton 1965, Stewart 1967, 1976, 1982). Secondly, there is some evidence for their involvement in the 'classical' managerial activities of allocating resources, planning and the direct control of subordinates (Hemphill 1959, Mintzberg 1973, Sayles 1964). Thirdly, an image of the manager as 'troubleshooter' can be sustained. Here, the manager is concerned with maintaining work-flows, negotiating around difficulties and defusing conflicts (Pheysey 1972, Carlson 1951, Stewart op cit, Kotter op cit, Nichols and Beynon 1977, Edwards 1987). In addition to these activities, studies report the significance of leadership and of innovation as important elements of managing (Mintzberg 1973, Sayles op cit).

Interpreting these findings however, is not straightforward, for if we ask how managers' time is allocated between these activities, the evidence is diverse (Copeman, Luijk and Hanika 1963, Stewart 1982). Partly this depends on the extent to which managers carry out specialist technical tasks as well as managerial activity (Child and Ellis 1973). Of course, the ratio of one activity to another will vary with function and level in the hierarchy (Jamous and Peloille 1970, Horne and Lupton 1965, Brewer and Tomlinson 1964, Kelly 1964). Indeed, this relationship between the technical and managerial may prove to be of great significance.

Certainly when we examine the relations between different management functions, for example, between production and marketing, the extent to which their authority arises from either a technical or managerial basis may help to explain the relatively frequent conflicts between them. In addition, promotion within a technical specialism may cause problems for individuals who are seen as moving away from the detailed knowledge which gives them authority. Such problems are

increasingly common in 'hi-tech' businesses where detailed knowledge of rapidly changing technology is difficult for managers who have to devote themselves increasingly to the 'managing' of activity. All of this reinforces the heterogeneity of management. Nevertheless, as we shall see, concern with these issues is highlighted by my respondents. It may even be the case that a common feature of managerial jobs is that their holders exercise some control over the boundary between the technical and managerial basis of their authority (Stewart 1982, Silverman and Jones 1976). Such that a key managerial activity is the delineation of their own activity.

Finally, there is another important theme of the existing literature referred to by Hales and by Stewart (Hales 1986, Stewart 1983). This is the extent to which management in practice is rather different from management theory (Drucker 1974). Findings supporting this claim are reported in Mintzberg, Sayles and Stewart (Mintzberg 1973 and 1975, Sayles 1964, Fores and Glover 1976, Stewart 1983). As Hales remarks "two distinct, if inter-related, sets of ideas about management form the target here: first, published theories of management (especially those glossed as the 'classical' school) and second, the 'practical theories' or beliefs of managers themselves about what they and other managers do. Clearly, the former ... can become part of the latter ..." (Hales 1986 p 103). In the empirical material which follows, the view is taken that managers' accounts of their activities are importantly constitutive of their activity itself. That it is not as simple as contrasting what they say they do from what they actually do. We need to recognise that what they choose to report as an account of their activities as managers is itself revealing (Marshall and Stewart 1981). In summary then, the view taken here is that it matters how actors see the social world but they do not always see it as it is. (This view should be clearly differentiated from a position which claims that all social life, at the work-place or elsewhere is made-up of 'accounts'. In the context of the managerial worker Gowler and Legge (1983) come close to taking this view). So we begin by examining respondents' attempts to describe their work. On some occasions this will involve the use of lengthy extracts, on others I will try to illustrate points by using short quotations from several interviews. As we shall see, the description of work often merges into a discussion of what it is to be a manager. Let us begin with what we might expect to be a 'classic' managerial

function, Deputy Head of Production Control at a factory employing around 2,000 people located in the South East of England. The respondent, Mr Corbett, is 56 years old. He has been with the company for 13 years and was previously employed in the production planning function of a small specialist engineering firm in the aeronautics sector. The interview was initially characterised by a fair degree of tension. One way in which this tension was conveyed was in conspicuous displays of bluster from the respondent; on several occasions he describes himself as a 'hard- nosed bastard' and 'things don't affect me much' but by the time we talk in detail about his current work, some of the tension has lessened. However, as we shall see later when we return to examine in detail his own use of the category 'manager', he does feel quite insecure about his position in the hierarchy at work. For the moment, let us examine his description of his own work:

I: And how would you describe your position here? (NB In the context of this section of the transcripted interview 'position' has come to mean 'job').

R: How would I describe it ... Well I'm - officially it's entitled Production Controller. Um. Pat has delegated me as Deputy Manager, and that's as I see my r- from the things I do, the decisions I take that Pat is not aware of, but affected, that is it then as I see me operating. You know, he can't do the day to day things, he just can't, he can't have day-to-day contact with all the assembly divisions. And yet his most vital role in this factory is to - is to satisfy the demands of those assembly divisions. I take work from them and negotiate with their managers and I deliver work back, either on time or - or late, or - sometimes early. But I take that responsibility for the department, and it's my arse that gets kicked, you know, and I suppose if you want a measure of that, Pat has not yet had his arse kicked and he's been with us for three years. My reaction to that is: alright, sometimes we fall down, but we don't fall down seriously enough for people to complain to the manager. That's as I see my role.

It is clear that even when asked about his own job, relations with others, especially his superior Pat, are very important. Indeed, part of his job seems to be to keep Pat insulated from potential problems. The measure of his success is Pat 'not getting his arse kicked'. Throughout the interview it's hard to pull out anything like a concise description of what his job is. However, he often illustrates it by reference to particular incidents. For example, he frequently makes reference to the support he offers his boss, he elaborates as follows.

I: Support over things like what?

R: Well, we're trying - currently, we just finished an exercise where we were trying to decide whether to order a couple of NC machines over and above what we've already got, you know. Now this is a capital investment of - I think it's about eighty thousand pounds each machine, which is a lot of money. And to do that you need to probe the business you're going to be doing over the next five years, now that's always bloody difficult, it's bad enough trying to find out from assembly divisions what the hell they're going to do over the next five years, they look at you a big blank and say I - I dunno, how the hell do I know? And when you begin to say things like, well how do you know I can give you the facilities you want, if you can't bloody well tell me what you want, they think again, you see - so I've been able to get from each - particularly the major division, some idea of what their business looks like for the next five years, um, and from the major division I've got quite a programme. I was then able to do some work on that. And from that we were able to justify easily the purchase of another two machines, and that - that was a case that was just brought in. Now that's been largely based on work that Pat and Bunny Armstrong have done, and their work has been largely based on figures that I've provided, forecasting figures. Now in order to find the time not only to get hold of the figures, but then to analyse them and see what they really mean, I had to delegate some of the work I was already doing.

Again, while there is much talk of activity, much of it to do with eliciting and transferring information, it's very hard to disentangle claims to status from description of activities. However, yet again, a powerful message is of Mr Corbett supporting the activities of his boss. One final extract will reinforce how difficult it is to discern just what this respondent does, mainly because his description of his work is couched in either 'status' terms or in the context of his particular slot of the hierarchy. Later in the interview we move on to a discussion of how much autonomy he has and how much his work is checked or controlled by his superiors.

I: How much autonomy do you feel that you've got in choosing the tasks that you do? I mean how much are you -

R: - Oh, I feel I've got a lot. I have got a lot. About - for instance, about nine months ago, I found that I was getting pretty bloody bored, you know, things were very mundane, so I looked around the place for the department that was in the most difficulty you see, and I went and attached myself to them for some time of each week. And I found I was able to make some contribution to what they were doing, in fact it got to be bloody difficult to disengage once I'd run out of problems, because they were always coming back to me.

I: What else do you do?

R: What else do I do? I find I get bored pretty easily, because I'm - we had a problem in administration some two or three years ago, because he didn't report to me - sorry, we didn't have a problem because he didn't report to me, but he didn't report to me and I knew there was a problem. Er, and when the division was re-organised and it - it came under my wing, um, I promptly re- organised it. The problem was that it employed lots and lots of young girls, who disappeared at three or four month intervals, you know and we had to take on new ones. Nobody was really

interested in what they were doing because it was deadly bloody dull. Um, and so we had to re-organise it and we did. We gradually filtered out the young girls and replaced them by - not by people who were older, but by people who were more responsible, and found them more responsible things to do. We changed the things they did and the way they did them, um, and we made - the biggest problem area was in our Flexowriter room where we have two Flexowriters which prepare the input into the computer, and it is a monotonous job. Um, and I didn't think either of the girls that were doing it were suitable for it anyway, and they took a lot of training , it takes about six months to train these - these girls. And when one left I took the opportunity of advertising internally, and one of the applicants I had was a very quiet girl clerk who could type from F Building. Wouldn't say boo to a goose - very quiet. And I had a few chats with her - and she joined us, and she's blossomed out ever since, you know. She's a woman about thirty-two I suppose, and she has quite firm opinions these days, and she expresses them. And I let her recruit and train the other girl as well, and then I made her the Senior Flexowriter Supervisor, you see. And no more problems in there. She has formally got repsonsibility delegated to her for the whole aspect of Flexowriting and curing problems that come out of it, you know, looking at each day, and the only criteria I give her is that we must have it running, and we must have it running the same day we put the input in. It's no good coming to me and saying I can't do this until tomorrow, it's got to be done today. How you do it, I don't mind, but it's got to be done to that sequency. She's got it organised so it ticks. I'd forgotten that one. The other problem was over Mick, who retired - solved that one, so I've forgotten that one. The other problem was the systems controller who upped and left out of the blue - solved that one. And so, you know, if I'm missing for a month, it can all tick over by itself. (Laughter). So I'm happy, and I then look for other problems to solve. And I'm lucky I suppose, in that I've got that opportunity, I can go and look - go and look for something that wants solving and get on with it.

There is much of significance in this extract. Perhaps, most obviously, in the context of our present concerns, it is still very difficult to ascertain the work that this respondent does. At the same time as this point is re-iterated, readers will no doubt be struck by the sexism deeply ingrained in this discussion of work problems. Of the powerless position the women employees he refers to are constantly placed in. This is signified in expressions like 'I let her recruit and train the other girl', or by the assumption that 'young girls' are not 'responsible'. Underneath these expressions of power, however, is a deep sense of insecurity. This respondent is looking for 'managerial' things to do because the requirements of his job offer little opportunity for him to have much effect on the way the work is organised and carried on. If we compare the way Mr Corbett speaks about his work with the way it is described by his boss the contrast is marked:

I: Could you tell me a bit about the work Mr Corbett does? I think I've got an idea about the general activities of the department.

R: Well, as I've already explained, the thing in this function is to know what's going on. Bob Corbett does his thing by passing on to me information on which I might have to act. He filters information really. He's been about and I rely on him not pass everything on but I do need to know if I've got to do anything. Mostly the whole thing runs very smoothly - we've got good systems in - that's the way they run.

I: What else does Mr Corbett do?

R: Well I think he takes quite an interest in what's going on on the clerical side but it's mainly to make sure things keep running.

Comparing Mr Corbett's description with that of his boss it is tempting to conclude that Bob Corbett does not do much at all. This is almost certainly an error. Some of the best observational

studies of managers (Mintzberg 1973, Stewart 1967, 1976 and 1982) stress that one of the most important activities for the manager is to keep in touch with what is happening at work around them. This is precisely the kind of thing Bob Corbett likes doing. In another section of the interview he describes how, in an earlier job, he took down the walls of his office so that he could keep in touch with what was going on and people had easier access to him. What is surprising about the way he talks about his work is his desire to increase its significance, to elaborate at great length these information gathering exercises. One can begin to hypothesise that managers attempt to inflate the importance of their work in relation to how unsure they are of their status. This is not to suggest that this insecurity is somehow a personal characteristic of certain individuals. The picture is more complex than that. Two points are of importance here. Firstly, as we shall see later in this chapter, there may be very good grounds for insecurity about position in the organisation. Technical, organisational and social change may produce real threats to managerial status. Secondly, however, there is undoubtedly a relationship between the characteristics of the individual and the meaning they derive from their occupation (Stewart, Prandy and Blackburn 1980). The collection of 'personal' characteristics that each individual carries with them - age, gender, race, educational background and so on - are likely to affect the way they respond to the opportunities and constraints offerred by their occupation. Bob Corbett is old enough to be included in an early retirement scheme, is relatively under-qualified (or more accurately under-credentialled), compared to those who work around him , and he has probably reached the peak of his career. These characteristics do interrelate with the nature of his occupation. We could, if the study had a different focus, go further and examine the impact of his early naval experiences for the way he sees managing now. All of these 'personal' characteristics operate in his social relations.

If we examine other managers talking about their work we will see that asked to say what they do, managers often produce answers concerned with where they are in organisational terms. There is much concern with location, less with task. Consider the following examples:

A thirty-four year old technical manager at a specialist medical technology division, 4 years with the company, begins his description of his work with:-

R: Well, I report straight to the Technical Director for the plant and there are a number of technical supervisors who report into me - then there's a bit of admin support that I suppose concerns me.

OR

A slightly younger management accountant with 12 years experience in the company.

R: It's quite hard to say what I do, it's easier to say who I do it with (laughter). I have people who prepare information for me - costs, stocks, that sort of thing and then I try to put it together and pass it on to my boss. We try to be fairly responsive but you can't get it right all the time. I work quite closely with my boss so that we get it right most of the time ....

This concern with location is affected by function. Typically, production managers will describe in some detail activities. For example, the production manager in the medical technology division offers both a functional and behavioural description.

I: How would you describe your present job then?

R: My present job I would describe as fundamentally and first and foremost ... it has many functions in the company unfortunately, certainly in this Company because it's a fairly small, one of the smaller divisions, so the job has to take on many roles. The prime role as I see it is to design the means to manufacture. That's the easiest nutshell I think I can put it in, that's the prime function, there are many offshoots

of this, which embrace aspects of production control because there is no production control/progress department as such, so many people have to, many departments of people have to play functions which I would put within a category of control in production: yes, which in larger companies you can justify specialists for this function but here you cannot. So part of the job is to perform some work associated with production control, but primarily it is a production engineering function, that is to design the means to manufacture the machine-tools, the jigs, the fixtures, to accept drawings for manufacture, which is what we do in essence, we don't desire to make the drawings for manufacture of course; that's a design function, but we accept the drawings for manufacture, which is a very important phase obviously. Yeah, that is basically the job.

This manager goes on to say, however, that people like him, - who really know the production process - are rare in management. He launches into quite an attack on other management functions:

R: It's just us really - making things - there's only designing, making, selling, what else is there? I sometimes wonder what half these departments do - I really do.

Nevertheless, one theme seems common to the way managers talk about their jobs. It is their concern with motivating other people. This discussion of motivation generally arises in two contexts. Either when outlining what they think their most important function is or where they have been asked to say 'who do you manage then?'. Sometimes managers speak about their prime function being to enable others to work well, or they speak as if their skill at motivating marked them out as 'managerial'. In their view, this comes close to a paradigm managerial activity. It is important to remember, however, that for some of the material which follows we are hearing from managers working in a 'progressive', 'soulful' corporation where the creation of a 'happy family' atmosphere is a crucial part of the organisational culture. Later this view is contrasted with

managers from a rather different type of organisation. Nevertheless, even in these instances, the emphasis on motivation is a powerful thread running through managers' description of the job.

First, a manager concerned essentially with the construction of price lists both for the products and for the wage and bonus schedule. In some respects a Taylorite stereotype, with responsiblity across a wide range of activities within the organisation. He has been with the company for fourteen years and is located in an industrial town in Scotland.

I: What would you say the most important thing that you do is?

R: The most important thing. I think the most important thing, correct pricing is very important. The other most important thing is trying to get a happy work force here - it's very important, I feel, because if all the operators feel they're working in a happy environment, I think you get less problems, you get better work from them and I think that's what I'm trying to achieve, this working together of operators, helping in every respect, informing them of anything they want to know, simply to try to get you know a sort of family affair, if it's possible I don't know but that's what we're aiming for.

The language of motivation is used even more clearly by a quite senior divisional manager responsible for six product divisions. He is fifty, grammar school and Cambridge educated with, 22 years experience in the organisation. Indeeed, throughout the interview he speaks very much as someone with a strong affection for the company and, in particular, for the technical aspects of its production. Throughout, the image of the manager he presents has two important elements: a profound interest in and knowledge of the technologies used in production, and, of equal importance, a concern with 'people' and their motivation at work.

I: What do you think is your most important function?

R: Difficult to define at the moment. I would say the motivation of the people that work for you. I've got past the stage of actually interfering on the shop floor to a great extent. All the other ideals, as far as this division is concerned ,is keeping in touch with what is going on, offering the right brand of encouragement or otherwise, when you feel it is appropriate, and let people get on with it.

This sort of concern is also reflected in the way he assesses his own success as a manager.

I: How would you measure your success as a manager?

R: Difficult. You can do it in a purely financial way with our rather sophisticated accounting system which takes care of everything from the great mass of material that we use, somewhere in the estimated region of a million pounds a year, down to the last pair of cotton gloves. We are accountable for each and every piece of material or equipment that comes in for each and every minute that is spent in this division. And this is certainly an important priority but it's not everything of course is it. I think, I would like to think that you can place some measure in how well, how, I can't think of one simple word but I'm just slowly conscious of it. Um, the enthusiasm with which people go about their work. You know, are we here um sort of happy at our work, are we, or are we you know fighting, knifing, back-biting. I think to a large degree we've got quite a good set-up out here in this respect, and I'm happy to see it that way. Now how this comes about, how this comes about, how you measure it, I don't know. I think it's a reflection, of you know, everybody's ... you know the characteristics of everybody who works in here, or success at picking the right sort of people or success of disposing of the wrong sort of people who don't fit here, they crop up every now and again, particularly in the supervisory side and ... I think we can do quite a lot in that respect as well as being as reasonable to our employees.

Of the 70 managers interviewed at length about their work 58 used expressions like 'motivation', 'creating the right atmosphere', 'making people feel they're doing something worthwhile', to describe either their most important task or the one after that. This can be contrasted with their use of expressions like 'controlling other work', 'supervising their work', 'disciplining', 'making sure everybody's doing the right thing', which were used by 27 managers in the general context of their description of managerial work. However, if we look at sets of interviews (ie where respondents and their direct supervisors were interviewed), we find an increased use of phrases like "checking that the work is done", "keeping him in line with company policy" when bosses are talking about their subordinates. No great weight should be placed on these figures but they may point to a general distinction between accounts of 'managing' in the abstract and the characteristic pattern of relations in a particular vertical section of the managerial hierarchy. Control and direct supervision within the managerial structure may be characteristic of individuals who are hierarchically close.

It was suggested earlier that this interest in motivating others as a crucial activity for managers may be a product of a particular organisational culture. Certainly, it could be argued that individuals who have spent a large part of their managerial career with one organisation do begin to take on a particular corporate view. However, if we examine managers talking about their jobs in rather different sectors and in more constrained economic situations, there is still this concern with motivating as a crucial activity. Take, for example, a general production \ manager aged 43 in a small engineering firm, mainly acting as subcontractors to the brewing industry. The business is in a tight financial situation and cost-cutting (mainly through reducing labour costs) is often on the agenda. There is, here, no cushion of the 'soulful' corporation. Nevertheless, this concern with managers as motivators is never far from the surface, even though the language has a rather harder edge compared to the 'happy family' metaphor running through the earlier extracts.

R: It's my job to get everyone pulling together - in this business if you don't do that you're finished - that's why I've no time for union chaps always looking for things

to cause trouble. My job is to see that everyone not only can but wants to get on with the work. I try to lead by example - I work hard and then we all work hard. My chaps won't take a slacker - but they look to me as their manager to keep them on their toes.

Perhaps, most revealingly, a bank manager discusses the value he places on motivating as a managerial activity:-

R: I got on quickly in the bank mainly 'cos I've always been technically very good - you know, passed my exams early and so on. When I got into management I started to see things a bit differently. My role now is more to create an environment where people want to do the work well, to make the customers happy. For me that's what being a manager is really about.

Clearly, a concern with the business of motivation comes closehere to achieving a managerial identity. This is a question that recurs later in this chapter.

At this stage, we can see that it is rather difficult to find out by asking managers what it is exactly that they do. They often answer questions about activities by reference to organisational location or by saying who they work with. Activities referred to are often concerned with the gathering and filtering of information; much of it of the 'soft' variety, so that expressions like 'keeping my finger on the pulse', 'ear to the ground', 'knowing what's going on' are commonly used. This of course, is an activity which both Stewart and Mintzberg suggest is a marked feature of managerial work (Stewart 1982, 1983; Mintzberg 1973). Managers do 'liaise', 'discuss', 'walkabout' as important parts of their work; important both in time and function. We can also conclude that, in comparison to their superiors, managers inflate the significance of their tasks, so that when we compare two competing accounts, the boss's account reads like an under-stated version of the manager's. Of course, interpreting this is not simple. Perhaps, the managers have greater

knowledge of their own jobs and therefore award it greater value. It may be that in understating their subordinates' work, the more senior managers are subtly increasing the importance of their own. The view taken here is that there may be a connection between the degree of security that individuals have in their occupational identity as managers and the way in which they describe this work. On this account, insecurity would lead to attempts to 'talk the work up'. My own experience of interviewing very senior managers is that they describe work in very simple and straightforward terms. A more subversive thought is that managing has more to do with 'being' than 'doing'. It is to managers' views of what it is to be a manager that we now turn.

This area itself is made up of two sorts of concerns; with the ways in which managers define being a manager or a part of management and the core personal qualities which they think attach to being a manager. In the interview material these topics arise in a number of related contexts. Respondents talk about their careers and use expressions like 'and that's when I really became a manager'. I also ask them how they would distinguish management in their own workplace by asking where 'management' begins in the hierarchy. As we shall see, the way the structure is perceived is related to a number of mediating factors. The most important of these are occupational history, level of educational achievement, function and changes to their own job. All of these reinforce the general point that while, for certain purposes, we may reasonably speak about changes to the structure of occupations, the meaning that these changes have is affected by the characteristics of particular incumbents of these occupations.

One of the most revealing aspects of this theme is to examine which particular sorts of activity are picked out as esssentially managerial. As discussed before, this includes 'motivating' and this activity is seen as part of the process of 'man-managing'. If we begin by looking again at Mr Gordon, discussed earlier in this thesis, we can see how important 'man- managing' is. The remarks arise in the context of a discussion on the purposes of management training (more of which in the next chapter).

I: I know this is quite a big question, but what do you think the purposes of management training are?

R: To make us better managers?

I: What does that mean - I mean what does that mean for you?

R: For me? I regard, even at my level of Section Leader, I regard the management part of it, in other words, looking after other people in my Section as very important. I think it's very difficult to do, to be, particularly at my level, to be a manager in a true sense, where you can really manage, manage people. Um you tend to be a working manager - you have certain tasks to do as well as look after the Section. I try and devote a lot of time to the management in the true sense of the word.

I: By the true sense you mean .....?

R: Of, of managing the activity and managing the people within the activity so that the job is done well, and those people doing that job are satisfied. Sound a bit pompous perhaps, but eh, I think it's important quite honestly.

These remarks suggest that 'looking after other people in my Section is very important', to really 'manage' is to manage other people. It is clear, however, even on his own account that Mr Gordon does not have legitimate access to enough of that sort of activity to be sure of his status as a manager. He classifies himself as a 'working manager' with 'certain tasks to do as well'. The work that he does is very similar to that of others in his section whom he nominally manages. This extract was followed by a revealing anecdote. I asked Mr Gordon to describe an example of 'really managing'. He recounted a recent incident concerning the 'late book'. As you arrived at work you

had to sign in a book and at nine- fifteen the section leader put a red line across the page. Signatures appearing under the line were deemed to be late. One week, he continued ...

R: I noticed one of my people was late three days out of five. Normally I don't say anything - I just glance at the book. I took the opportunity to have a quiet word with him. I tried to find out if there was anything at work or home which was worrying him, you know. But, of course, I had to say that lateness was not really on and he understood that. Now, that's really managing.

While recounting this incident Mr Gordon physically demonstrated how he had walked up to his subordinate, touched him on the shoulder and explained that he needed to talk to him. It was almost as if this exemplified being a manager. Perhaps the greatest irony was that during fieldwork the signing in system was replaced by flexi-time. Nevertheless, anecdotes and opinions were repeated many times by respondents which suggested that 'man-managing' was very important as an element of being a manager. Indeed, it can almost be claimed that control over people was more important for a managerial identity than control over resources. However, the term 'control' here does not quite capture the way in which respondents talked about managing. Rather they stressed the importance of the 'people element' of their jobs. Sometimes they use the language of checking, controlling, directly supervising, more often they speak of managing as mastery over social relationships, solving people problems. For example, a production manager claims that "production problems are usually people problems - most of my managerial time goes into sorting people out". Interestingly this view is reinforced by his own boss who describes the production manager's job as

R: Keeping an eye on the detail and again motivating people to do the right things, have the right attitudes. The more I think about this, you know making sure people have the right attitudes and this is important these days, not important to just keep

people happy but important in the sense of avoiding trouble and disputes, which of course if you can do that then you're quite a way towards keeping people happy.

Even Mr Crompton the production manager with the 'pigs in the shit' image of the operators stresses the importance of positive feedback from other people at work:

I: Yeah, how does a manager know if he's doing his job better?

R: Don't know, the smiles from the people below you, I don't know, it's difficult to know. I think that job satisfaction is one thing you get from it and you feel obviously the reaction of other people to you in your job is some sort of guide towards it.

This view of the importance of 'man managing', the direct, face-to-face, control of interpersonal relations is not a view restricted to production managers. A cost and management accountant, with responsiblity for a small department producing management information, describes doing a good job as follows:-

R: How does he know if he's doing a good job. Oh it's difficult. I think, simply, I think he knows it himself really by, he can sleep at night I think. He gets on reasonably well with his people when he says something to his people, they get on with the job, do the job and come back and, and give you the answer. I think a manager is doing a good job if he feels he's keeping his people involved in him as well and doesn't just give orders down the line.

Further, two of the personnel managers interviewed stressed that much of the managerial component of their job was concerned with managing people on a direct face-to-face basis. One personnel manager recognised that there may well be a manipulative element in this.

R: In a way I suppose I manage everybody who comes to see me in some way, because I'm telling them what they ought to do within certain circumstances, and that is managing, although they might be a bit hurt to know that I'm saying it.

Another, while recognising that much of his job was based on his knowledge of the 'nuts and bolts' of personnel, pensions, holiday-pay, regradings etc", stressed that "management is all about managing people ... you've got to organise the labour efficiently, you've got to utilise it effectively, you've got to motivate it I think and I don't just mean motivation in the sense of providing a target, but I think motivation in the sense of making people feel that they're doing something that is worthwhile and wanting to do that ".

This sense that the control of face-to-face contacts marks out the 'good' manager is re-inforced by listening to managers tell 'war-stories' - glamorised, almost mythologised accounts of managerial successes. However, here is revealed another sense of 'controlling' interpersonal contacts. The stories often contain accounts of how successful managers manipulated others through skilled social interaction. For example, in relations between departments the 'good' manager is the one who obtains what he requires from others and appears to have been even-handed, even generous. The 'skill' seems to be in knowing exactly the effect that your behaviour is having on others. In one account a senior manager is reported to have lost his temper and blustered at a meeting, but, as the war-story reveals, this was merely subterfuge designed to produce placatory offers from others; the subterfuge is only explained to his own 'team' of supporting managers. In another, the ploy is to re-iterate the external, constraining pressures upon oneself in order to justify a particular, usually unpleasant outcome. The outcome is that you get your way and others get the blame. The skill, however, is the same, the successful 'management' of the interpersonal interactions. Abilities in this area require certain personal characteristics and many respondents make reference to possession of particular attributes as part of being a manager (cf Harris 1987).

In discussing the attributes of the good manager, respondents talk about the 'natural' qualities of managing. Chief amongst these are maturity, confidence and rapport. It is noteworthy how these qualities are congruent with the image of the manager as 'adult' discussed earlier. For example, respondents use phrases like "you need a certain maturity to manage well in the long term', 'managers need to have confidence in themselves before they can manage others properly'. Or again, contrasting managers with operators, a planning manager argued that "managers need to be able to stand on their own, - operators will just stick together - to stand alone you've got to feel confident in yourself. I don't know where this comes from - it might be experience but sometimes I think some people have just got it".

Indeed some of the superiors commented that the absence of these characteristics might restrict the managerial careers of their subordinates. For example, discussing the future of a management services specialist with a high degree of technical expertise in operations research, his boss remarks:

> R: Sometimes I'm not sure Bill will ever really make it as a manager. I'm sure he knows enough - maybe too much but he never seems at ease - either with himself or the production people he mainly deals with. Perhaps it'll come with age but I'm not sure that it's really in him".

Or, again, a divisional production manager discusses how important it is to feel comfortable walking around the production areas:-

> R: You've got to be able to feel at home walking the line. Too many of these highly qualified university types are great up here in the office, you know, but get them down there and they're like cats on hot bricks and the men can sense it.

Some of the younger respondents speak of their natural desire to manage. The following extract comes from a thirty four year old Technical Efficiency Manager working in medical technology. He is basically a skilled engineer moving into management via the production engineering function.

I: Do you think of yourself as a manager?

R: Yes, to give a simple answer, yes.

I: Why?

R: I hope that you would agree, having observed me that there's quite a lot of material on the outside of the face. There's stuff coming out all the time. Now, if for no other reason, I think I am a manager because that's got to go somewhere. It's got to go further than a bloody bit of paper or a machine tool in front of me, it's got to go a bit more than that, and I feel this terrific need to do things at times, and so the only way you can achieve that or satisfy that need is in managerial functions where you can do something you know, your way as you see it, as I feel very often I am right, I have the confidence and with all those things added together, you need to do something with them. It's no good training a chap up who's a doctor and he's got a natural gift for surgery and not letting him go and cut people up. It's ridiculous. So if you have a need and ability you've got to use it, you want to use it if you've got a natural ability to play the violin, it's pointless, I mean not allowing you ever to do it or not giving you the opportunity to ever do it. If you're a natural actor you want to go out there and act, terrible not to be able to do it, even if it's just in an amateur dramatics theatre, you want to go out there and perform. There is a need to do it, you know.

So, equipped with these personal qualities, natural or acquired, the manager is seen as taking his place in a distinctly managerial position within the workplace. Following from this view of their abilities, managers go on to describe their perceived relative autonomy as an important element of being a manager. In particular, those respondents who had been promoted from craft jobs charted their movement into management partly in terms of the increased autonomy it seemed to afford them. For example, an ex-foreman, though interestingly a graduate, now in production planning:-

R: this is the first real management job that I've had whereas as a foreman you're pretty involved, you're down on the shop floor all the time or most of the time and you're involved with the operators and have a lot less free time. So this is the first job I've had where I've been in a position to really determine a lot more what I want to do and how I want to do it...

Managers with rather more experience of 'being in management' will still stress the importance of autonomy but recognise that it is itself circumscribed. Mr Bentley is a metal works manager, aged 48 he is a former tradesman with, by his own account, over 15 years experience as a manager. However, he is still not part of the plant management committee but is represented there by the Production Director.

I: At the kind of meetings the Management Committee takes, how closely do they define what your job will be?

R: They don't.

I: So you're more or less your own boss?

R: Yeah, within the confines of the production line, yes I am my own boss, and there are occasions when I refer to Mr Gold, but on a day to day basis here, I make the

decisions and the same with production. If there are occasions obviously when I would go to him because of the fact that I have difficulty in making them, (I did you know the other day) then I will discuss it with him.

I: What kind of things would you feel it necessary to pass on to him?

R: Mainly things which affect the plant, and by that I mean union negotiations where a decision which I may be taking may have some interaction across the plant or in other areas, mainly.

The prized autonomy may be quite small but it is important nevertheless. A personnel manager and former shop steward in a large Northern factory finds that the amount of discretion he has compares favourably with his days on the tools but recognises the limits of his autonomy:-

R: So I would say the autonomy purely arises in not choosing the sort of work you've got to do but choosing the order of priorities in which you've got to do the work. In that area I have a good deal of autonomy, and my priorities don't necessarily match those of my boss. I might say his priorities don't necessarily match mine either, so you know it's a two-way thing. On that particular question I would say the boss is not always right but the boss is always the boss, so you know one has got to go along with that.

As we have seen, managers then seem more able to talk about what it is to be a manager rather than to say what they, as managers, do. Their language is of being not doing. Three themes run through the description of manager. Firstly, a concern with managing people. This is manifest in a general focus on issues of motivation but even more powerfully in the way that being a manager is confirmed in the mastery of face-to-face social interactions. Secondly, managing, it is claimed, rests upon certain personal attributes like self-confidence, and the ability to establish interpersonal

rapport. To these attributes is attached the belief that they are somehow natural. This, of course, gives them a potentially powerful legitimatory role. Finally, being a manager allows and is established by increased discretion and autonomy, facilitating wider choice at the work-place.

However, in talking about these aspects of managing, managers may be describing their aspirations rather than the reality of their work situation. Indeed, the situation may be even more complex than this. They may be describing what they think the appropriate characteristics of managerial work should be. Or, as I think is indeed the case, some of these elements are present in their work and work situation but not to the extent they describe. It is precisely because they help to 'be' a manager that they feature in their talk of the work. Further, laying claim to them bolsters managers' own self-identity and, as we shall see later in this chapter, defends them against social and technological threats to their managerial status. However, location in the middle of extensive hierarchies may make their hold on this identity fragile and, as the next two extracts demonstrate, the categorical uncertainty they experience produces strain in their ideology of managing. The second of these extracts is subject to fairly close textual analaysis*(1)*.

The first extract comes from Mr Arkwright a personnel manager. The extract follows a jovial discussion of how he has won at cards while attending a management development course. The speech is characterised by such unusually long pauses that I have timed them.

I: Do you think of yourself as a manager?

R: (Long pause 11 seconds). No, I think of myself as part of management. I think there's a difference. (3 second pause). The difference may only be apparent to someone that exists inside this particular organisation, but I manage very few people. I'm more of a resource really to the people who manage.

I: Who are they? Where would you locate them?

R: All through the factory, at every level, not only to the people that manage, they're a resource to everyone, if they happen to manage, okay, but people would consult me on matters appertaining to management.

Within this extract, illustrations of confusion about function and location abound. Mr Arkwright is in the management team but doesn't manage. However, people who do manage are to be found throughout the factory - people "happen to manage". At the end of all this, however, we find that Mr Arkwright <u>is</u> consulted on "matters appertaining to management". Managers seem to be everywhere and nowhere.

In the second extract, we hear a manager's attempt to resolve this confusion. Mr Corbett, who we heard from at the start of this chapter, is Deputy Head of Production Control.

I: If I asked you to draw a line in this factory between managers and below-managers where would you draw the line?

R: How do you mean, where?

I: At what level, where, beneath you?

5 R: Oh, I think that would be difficult. I think that would be difficult because, really, if you look at the management of our own division, it consists, really, of several people with a figure head. That's as I see our management. It consists of people like myself, Frank Dyer, who is the Senior Planner, um Williams, - Frank Dyer the Senior Planner reports to Mike Williams, who is Chief of Progress reports to me, um, and Don Frankland I suppose, who reports to Mike and runs the shop, the workshop. But management, as such really consists of those people. How can - if you draw a line through the whole Company, it would be a pretty thick line, you

know, it would have two edges, and there would be a fair number of people in it, contained in it.

I: Where would you be - above the thick band, or ...

R: I don't think so, I'd be in the band - and there would be one or two figureheads on the outside - people like Mike, for instance, um and I suppose some of the other managers.

I: So what would you say is the kind of definition of a manager?

R: Well, our own definition is that he is a figurehead.

I: What do you mean by a figurehead?

R: Well, literally, he's the face that is nailed at the front of the ship, you know, but the ship is run by the group of people that's within it. Um, the people that fall outside the line will be Mike on the one side as a manager, because he's the figurehead, and all the direct operators at shop-floor, who are the crew. But um, it's officered, if you like, by people who form the management team; and most of Mike's management decisions are made amongst that team, you know. And you find that some will lead the team from the front, and they all agree, that's the way we're going to go, yeah, others will lead it from the back, but that's the way they go anyway. And Mike normally sounds everybody and takes a - a pretty close consensus of opinion before a decision is made, and the decision that's made is usually made amongst all of us, you know, we each of us decide. And I suppose that's one of the reasons why instead of now deciding this is what the division is

going to do, and we do it, I don't do that, I call for Frank Dyer, and Fred Williams, or somebody else, whoever's relevant to that, and we make it amongst us.

From a first and cursory reading we can see that the crucial area for Corbett is who is called what, and that the way this is established is by who does what. The two seem to be mutually interdependent, so that the kinds of activities that individuals perform are crucial, and the kinds of labels they carry determine both the actions they perform and how these actions are viewed by others in the factory. He uses a number of terms for the various roles: 'management', 'our management', 'other manager', 'manager', 'the management team', 'management decisions', 'Senior Planner', 'Chief of Progress'. The interviewer introduces one other term, which is obviously not a recognized label: 'below-manager'. *It is an interesting fact about English that there is no term* readily available to describe the negative of manager. The same is true of 'worker'; there is no term 'over-worker'. For our purposes, it is important to note that Corbett does not apply the label 'manager' to himself. He is part of 'our management' (line 7), and this category excludes on the one hand the operators at shop floor level and on the other, Mike, who is a manager. It seems clear even from this brief analysis that the term 'middle management' is ambiguous. Corbett is part of neither 'management' nor shop-floor: he is not a 'manager', indeed it appears that middle managers fall outside management. As far as the factory as a whole is concerned, 'middle managers' are in the middle between managers and the shop-floor. In this sense the term is as adequate a description as 'middle shop- floor'. Interestingly enough, the term lower management does not have as much currency as upper or senior management. There are managers (of whom Mike is one) and presumably, above him, upper or senior management.

We need, therefore, to take the distinction between 'management' and 'manager' seriously. On first appearance the words have a great deal in common. However, there are a number of important syntactic differences. 'Manager' is concrete and human. As such it has a plural form in common use and can be the subject of any verb which takes a human agent. 'Management', on the other hand, is an abstract form, usually in the singular, and can therefore only be the subject of a limited

class of verbs. To enable a clearer perception of this, it will help to look at the syntactic constructions in which the two terms are used. First a list of constructions involving 'management'. On the left of the page are the terms in their syntactic context, on the right an explanatory analysis.

Construction	Analysis
6 the management of our own division consists of several people ditto 7, and 11	(a) The phrase 'management of our own division' points to a proposition 'some people manage our division'. Here the syntactic agent would need to be named; and it is significant that Corbett uses a form which turns that proposition into a noun where specific names and relations are not recoverable. (b) 'Consist of': the verb associated with 'management' if purely definitional.
24 people who form the management team	(a) 'Management team' as above, conceals a proposition:either 'the team manages', or, 'someone manages with (by means of...) the team'. (b) 'People form the team'. 'People' appear syntactic agent as though they are doing something, though the action, as before, is constituting the team.

23-24 it's officered by people who form the management team	A passive; the active sentence would be 'people ...who officer the ship'. 'Officer', the active verb, can be paraphrased as 'provide the officers' or 'act as officers do'. The expression is therefore also about, position, role, but it is ambiguous, and again tells us nothing about actual management, who does what. It tells us 'who is what'.
24-25 Mike's management decisions are made amongst that team	(a) 'Mike's decisions' points clearly to 'Mike decides', (and implicitly 'Mike's management' to 'Mike manages'). (b) The construction is again passive, so that the agent can be deleted: 'are made by whom?' is the question that follows from that deletion. We can infer that it is actually 'Mike', but the preposition 'amongst' allows the complicating possibility that the 'team' plays some part.

Mr. Corbett is part of 'the management team', but his use of this term tells us little about his functions in the team. The term 'manager' is used in the following constructions.

16 ... Mike and some of the other managers ...I would be on the outside	Again this is a definitional statement, placing 'managers' in a location relative to 'management team', not attributing action

	to them.
22 Mike (as a manager) will fall outside	As above; the intrasitive 'fall' deserves notice: not 'was pushed' or 'jumped', but without ostensible cause he 'falls'.
22 he's the figurehead	Again definitional, a classification (still with a spatial metaphor).
26 some will lead the team from the front	Here at last we have an agent (this manager) and those affected by the action, the team.
27 Others will lead it from the back	Ditto.
27-28 Mike normally sounds everybody and takes a pretty close consensus	(a) Though both clauses are transitive with Mike/manager as agent, 'sounding someone' is not transitive in meaning. Someone who has been 'sounded' is not different after being 'sounded' to what he was unsounded. Nor does the sounder necessarily act any differently. (b) The second clause has an overt marker of the editing which Corbett performs: after 'takes a' there is a pause, and what has happened here is that a word Corbett has intended to use has been surpressed. (See

	Bernstein 1962 for general discussion of the signifance of hesitation). The resulting utterance is not well formed, for a consensus is 'established' (ie as the result of someone's action), or 'reached', not 'taken'. Here the suppression gives the appearance of the manager 'taking/receiving' what has been previously established amongst the group, lessening the effective power of Mike's action.
28-29 before a decision is made	A passive form containing a nominalization, and in both cases the agent is deleted; again ask of his decision and of 'made': 'by whom?'
29 the decision that's made is usually made amongst all of us	Passive; agent deleted; 'amongst all of us' is simply the location where the decision is made (by whom?)
30 we each of us decide	(a) As well as shifting the content of the discussion (he is presumably talking about different decisions now) 'decide is used without an object. The verb 'decide used intransitively carries a quite different meaning.

(b) Also note the switch from 'we decide', which is line with the management view; to 'each of us decides', which is the individually responsible 'manager' view.

The shift from 'we decide' to 'each of us decide' signals Mr Corbett's attempt to interpret his function in terms appropriate to Dyer'. the manager: 'I don't do that, I call for Frank Throughout this extract the oppositions between animate/inanimate and human/non-human recur. Interesting here is the use of 'figurehead' in the sentence 'he's the face that is nailed at the front of the ship'. The significance of this usage is related to a confusion of categories between animate and inanimate. In English, things take the pronouns 'it', 'which' and 'that', people take 'he', 'she' and 'who' or 'that'. It is ungrammatical to say 'the stone who came', or 'the man which came'. 'That' can refer to either animate or inanimate. The rules that are broken, then, concern 'he is a face' where 'he' refers to 'a figurehead' which is inanimate. If we think that 'he' refers to Mike as a human not a non-human figurehead, then we have to confront the difficulty of the expression 'nailed'.Generally, Corbett prefers the 'that' form, which blurs these distinctions. In contrast to these usages, he uses 'who' for the 'direct operators at shop-floor', and in the 'people who form the management team', that is people like himself.

If we wish to draw out the 'rules' which Mr Corbett applies in his use of linguistic forms, they can be stated as follows:

Management (team)

1. used in definitional utterances only;

2. used as a 'location' for activities by the manager, not as an activity itself;

3. real nature of activity concealed through the use of the noun formed from a full proposition;

4. is classified as an inanimate, non-human collective;

manager(s)

1. also used in 'definitional' utterances;

2. occurs as subject/actor in transitive sentences (both those transitive in meaning and those not);

3. 'occurs' frequently as the deleted subject(s)/actors(s) in passives;

4. classified ambiguously: 'the face that'; 'people like Mike'; 'he is the face'.

Taken together, these rules constitute an attempt to 'spatialize' (Kress and Hodge 1979) his ideological difficulties. In the examples above, it serves either to include or to exclude individuals in their role-capacity. Within the management team the concern is about the constitution of that unit. Whatever activity middle managers perform is concealed. Minor exceptions are Mr Corbett's attempt, towards the end of this extract, to indicate actions - 'decide', 'call', 'do'; and earlier, where he points out the lines and the directionality of communication - (9-10) 'Frank Dyer reports to Mike'; (10-11) 'Williams reports to me'. But this indication of communication is primarily about directionality, thus about a unit conceived in spatial terms.

The recoding of activity in spatial terms, in terms of directionality and location is effected through the syntax, and it is also a typical feature of the images and metaphors used. At the beginning of the extract I offer the image of a line, and with it a clear, two-dimensional view of management or shop-floor. The interviewee refuses to accept this metaphor, and significantly rejects it precisely in terms of his own difficulty: 'How do you mean, where?' If a line is to be drawn it will either

definitively confirm one analysis, consigning him to the shop-floor, or confirm another quite different one, classifying him as part of the group that Mike and other managers belong to. The latter, it seems, is not the case, and he wants to avoid the former. So 'line' is inappropriate for his needs. In response to this initial difficulty he uses the term 'management', which he defines in such a way that it includes precisely the people who are in his situation, and excludes both upward and downward. 'Management' is thus defined as a group of individuals, who stand in a spatial and hierarchical relation to each other: 'X reports to Y'. It is impossible to draw a line through a group without destroying the cohesion of that group. Further, because he has defined it in positional and functional terms he has given an identity to that group. His aborted 'How can' (you draw a line ...) is a covert negative: 'you cannot'. 'Can' is usefully ambiguous here, meaning either 'in the nature of things', or 'it is not permitted'. Once he has established the internal complexity of the group, he is able to move on to reflect this in an alteration of the metaphor: the line thickens (15: 'it would be a pretty thick line'), and becomes two-dimensional (15-16: 'it would have two edges'), and then three-dimensional (16-17: 'there would be a fair number of people ... contained in it'.

This is an illustration of the interaction of metaphor and language, in the service of a pressing ideological problem. From the problem posed by the dichotomizing 'line', one participant has expanded this into a three- dimensional 'thick line' which contains people. The interviewer now plays a part by supplying the new term which then sticks, 'band', though he still uses it in a two-dimensional way (my problems are less pressing!): (18: 'Where would you be - above that thick band , or ... '). The interviewer obviously has not quite understood the nature of the interviewee's problems at this stage; above or below a band, however thick, would be no better than above or below a line, however thin. Mr Corbett does not want to give up this new metaphor, though he realises that if his claims to middle management are to have credibility, then those outside will have to have their claims undermined. Hence, he reintroduces the image of the 'figurehead': they are on the outside, prominent, but not particularly functional. From here he moves easily to the image of the 'ship' composed of 'officers' and 'crew'. Here ideological and linguistic processes are at work, inextricably interacting, acting together, neither possible in isolation. The new metaphors, as they

are introduced, open up the possibility of new kinds of syntactic potential for the middle manager. So the 'band' allows the form 'people contained in it'; the 'ship' permits a more active role 'people form the management team'. From merely 'being' (either above or below a line), the syntactic potential has been extended to 'forming a team'. As we have already pointed out, the last passage in the extract is much more active as far as the syntactic role of Mr Corbett is concerned: 'deciding', 'calling', 'doing'.

Throughout the extract the respondent subtly uses pronouns to negotiate his way in this ideological minefield. Here are some examples: 'our own division' (what would the manager say? 'my division'); 'our management' conceals, as we have said, who does the managing; 'some of the other managers' refers to people like Mike, but is vague enough just possibly to include Corbett; 'our own definition' - here things become tricky, for it is rather important who 'our own' refers to. Presumably Mike would have a somewhat different view of things. The 'our' might be thought to include Mike, just as it might in 'our management', but as Mike is unlikely to agree, 'our' excludes him. The use of pronouns is trickiest in the passage that follows: *'some will lead the team from* the front, and they all agree, that's the way we're going to do it'. The progression is 'some' - 'they' - 'we'. 'Some' is clearly 'them', the figureheads who lead. 'They' is ambiguous: either the leaders all agree, or the leaders and the led agree. 'We' is clearly 'us', 'the people in the band', with the figureheads outside. Mr Corbett has shifted power from the managers/figureheads to the management team/officers. Again it is the nearly covert nature of this shift which is the most important aspect. Those certain of their power could simply assert it.

From the analysis of this extract a number of concerns emerge. First, and most significant, is the re-classifying of the work-place into 'managers/figureheads', 'management team/officers' and 'shop-floor/crew'. Within these classifications the respondent can locate himself in the management team. Secondly, when these new classifications have been created, a more active role can be claimed for the management team; where, initially, they simply <u>were</u>, or constituted something, after re- classification they begin to <u>do</u>. Conversely, the power of the manager is reduced. He

becomes merely a figurehead. These ideological adjustments are necessary because the realities of the work situation are significantly different from the socially-recognised 'recipes' for being a manager. The creation of this gap generates uncertainty about managerial status.

However, it would be a mistake to treat this status insecurity as springing from the psychology of particular individuals. Rather, as suggested earlier, managers create their sense of occupational identity out of the reality of their work situation. Certainly this is mediated by their individual perceptions and by any shared ideologies but it is affected by social and economic forces which either facilitate or hinder their sense of being a manager. Thus, an element of the argument developed here is that changes have occurred which have weakened the managerial identity of 'middle managers'. Partly, these changes are themselves ideological. In particular, the implication of 'neo-human relations' thinking is the removal of just those activities which seem important in conferring the status of manager. Other changes in the organisation of managerial work are real enough. They arise in the context of wider economic change, through technical change and in deliberate organisational restructuring. It is to a discussion of these that we now turn. However, it must be stressed that the following discussion of the social forces operating on managers is not to imply a reduction in their powers of agency nor to suggest a mechanical model in which 'social forces' simply produce consequences for consciousness and identity.

One of the advantages of the methods employed in this study is that some attempt can be made to examine managers and managerial work over time though, admittedly, in this case, the same managers are not followed through. Undoubtedly, there would be considerable advantage in such a longtitudinal study. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe changes over time withough focussing on the same respondents. It must also be recognised that in this area some of the most significant changes are to the wider socio-economic background which can be evaluated without the full rigour of a longitudinal study. For example, if we compare the 1960's, 70's and 80's a number of changes salient to managers and their work have occurred. In most Western economies the 1960's were periods of high growth and expanding opportunity. Many large UK companies were still expanding,

unemployment in general was low and particularly low amongst professional and executive occupations. In contrast, during the 1970's the UK experienced a series of major economic and social disturbances. The early years of the decade were characterised by frequent industrial disputes and the economy as a whole was adversely affected by the oil- price rise of 1973. These factors, together with a rate of inflation significantly higher than that of the UK's international competitors, forced organisations into policies of cost-cutting and re-trenchment which, as we shall see, had an impact on the organisation of managerial work. In the 1980's the election of successive Conservative governments has again changed the context of managing. Perhaps, most notably, the legal environment has become markedly less sympathetic to Trades Union activity. Indeed, the Prime Minister's own personal style has in some ways been adopted by managers who feel it necessary to vigorously display their 'right to manage'. However, processes of economic 'rationalisation' have accelerated in this period, such that there has been a very considerable increase in unemployment, the effects of which have not been restricted to non-managerial employees.

Undoubtedly, these macro-economic and socio-political changes have altered the context of managerial work. At the same time, changes inside organisations themselves have also had a powerful impact on managers. In the remainder of this chapter these will be discussed and illustrated. Speculation as to how managers will respond to these changes will be largely left to the final chapter.

A significant source of organisational change has been technological development. At this point in the argument current sociological wisdom would insist that a fulsomely-worded rejection of technological determinism be issued. While not wishing to reject the value of these arguments, it is suggested that the current orthodoxy is in need of modification. The orthodox position is exemplified in the writings of, amongst others Buchanan and Boddy (1983), Child (1984) and Wilkinson (1983). Examine for example,

"The changes to structure that accompany technological change reflect strongly and directly the expectations and objectives of management, and weakly and indirectly the characteristics of the technology" (Buchanan & Boddy 1983 p 24).

or Wilkinson

"Previous analyses have tended to treat new technology as if it had 'impacts' on work organisation ... which are inevitable in particular technical and economic circumstances. It is in opposition to this view that technical change is here treated as a matter for social choice and political negotiation, the various interested parties to the change being shown to attempt to incorporate their own interests into the technical and social organisation of work" (Wilkinson 1983, preface).

This insistence that 'technology' on it's own has negligible impact but is mediated through choices and negotiation between interest groups seems to rest upon a confusion. It is one thing to say that technology is not the determining variable; - it is quite another to deny that it is an important independent variable. The urgent desire to deny determinism has had the consequence of undervaluing the technological variable. This error is compounded, and repeated in this discussion I fear, by the failure to fully understand the technical elements of technological change. That is to say that, in order to understand the way in which technological change either constrains or enables particular structures of work relations, it is necessary to have some grasp of the technology itself(2).

It is not intended to argue for the re-instatement of technological determinism. Indeed, it is clear from recent empirical investigation that the impact of technological change is related to a number of mediating factors (Francis 1986, Willman 1986 both provide persuasive evidence of this). These include managerial strategy, trades union response, organisational culture and wider labour and

product market considerations. In the discussion which follows it is, therefore, assumed that the organisation of work is not epiphenomenal with respect to technology.

The increasing pace of technical and scientific change itself has implications for managers. For many managers part of their legitimacy rests upon a recognised claim to some form of technical expertise. Rapid changes in the scientific basis of such expertise threatens this, as it erodes part of their existing legitimation base while offering to others a base in the newly developed knowledge.

Engineers, scientists and technologists in middle level management are most exposed to this, since a substantial part of their current activity will rest upon claims to technical expertise. In this context it is not surprising that many managers seek to emphasise the 'managerial' rather than technical basis of their authority. This is partly explained by the indetermination/technicality ratio (Jamous and Peloille 1970). Skills may be described as technical to the extent that they rest on a codified body of knowledge which can be learnt. Skills are indeterminate in so far as they rest on the combination of technique with personal qualities as in, for example, the advocacy skills of the barrister. As we have already seen, managers place great emphasis on personal qualities like maturity, ability to build rapport and skill in interpersonal relations. Since, in general, occupations and professions that rest heavily on 'technique' are vulnerable to 'deskilling' and to general worsening of their labour market conditions under conditions of rapid technical change, this emphasis can be interpreted as an attempt to resist processes which threaten to undermine both their legitimacy and their advantaged labour market location.

A more specific technological development has ramifications for managers. This concerns the development and implementation of information technology. Analysing the effect of these changes has generated a literature of its own (Forester 1980, Buchanan and Boddy 1983, CCS 1981, Robey 1977, McLouglin et al 1985). Some have argued that information technology will enhance managerial jobs while others have seen it as a vehicle for deskilling or redundancy. The position

taken here is that while it would be foolhardy to suggest that determinate consequences for managers can be 'read off' from the application of information technology, it can be concluded that the sophisticated use of I.T. does have implications for managers as processors of information. Certainly, the development of elaborate management information systems offers the potential to aid decision-making, providing managers with relevant data, speedily, in a useful form. However, it must also be recognised that the very power of management information systems can lead to the by-passing of whole layers of management. Middle level managers whose jobs are frequently concerned with the collection, filtering and dissemination of information are especially vulnerable to these changes. For example, if we examine the introduction of CAM systems in the electrical goods industry, we can observe the impact on the Production Planning Managers. Their knowledge of production mixes and schedules can be developed into systems which can be reviewed and changed at more senior management levels. While in the early stages of CAM development the Production Planning Managers will be important in the building of the system, once the system is running, their role in the collection and filtering of information about production is reduced. As a consequence, they lose their close, frequent and personal involvement with the work process, much prized as the 'management part of the job'. In addition, their control of information flows upwards in the hierarchy is also curtailed. Another example, from a rather different business, may reinforce the potential I.T. has for changing managerial work. In the insurance business long experience of premium setting is almost essential for managing the underwriting activity. However, most of this process is now systematised using information technology developed out of the experience of managers. In this particular case as the system was being implemented one of the systems analysts remarked of a quite senior manager that 'We must de- programme him before he leaves. There are things he knows should be in the system'.

Another important aspect of managing is likely to be affected by I.T. As discussed earlier, managers attach great importance to the face-to-face exercise of personal control. This is threatened by building control into impersonal systems through the measurement and review of individual worker performance. For example, such systems are now widespread in the clearing banks and have had

the effect of centralising control, thereby removing it from middle level management within branches. The system works by entering the transactions of each counter clerk into a central data base: at the start of the next working day the system identifies errors and assigns them to particular individuals. The supervisory and disciplining role of middle managers, which afforded opportunities for face-to-face 'man- managing' are thereby removed.

Systems such as these may also contribute to the increasing measurement and review of managerial work itself (Buchanan and Boddy 1983). As organisations pursue greater 'efficiency' in the face of external threat, they use more precise target-setting and review as a way of improving managerial performance. Managers talking of their targets, reviews and appraisals seem very much under the microscope of their organisations (Scase and Goffee forthcoming). Weekly 'team meetings', ostensibly to do with the allocation of work and generation of team spirit, can easily become nervous occasions for performance review in the light of improved measurement systems. Viewed from this perspective the managerial work situation seems not to be characterised by the 'trust' and 'discretion' which is thought to distinguish it from other categories of employment (Goldthorpe 1982). Managers feel highly ambivalent about these changes. On the one hand, they strenuously advocate them because of a belief in their own worth - 'I've nothing to fear, I know I can get the job done' and because they wish to signal their commitment to overall organisational goals of greater efficiency. On the other, they complain about control systems emanating from the top of the organisation which threaten to remove or limit their discretion and which, in their view, 'don't know the real details - they just want a measure without really knowing what it means'. This increasingly quantitative assessment of managerial performance undervalues the skills of collecting and utilising 'soft' information which may help to identify work pressures, recognising potential bottlenecks before they become problems. It is activities like this is which are important to managers in their construction of a stable managerial identity.

Nevertheless, it is also clear that I.T. enriches the work of other managers. Two groups of beneficiaries may be identified here. There are those managers who are the recipients of enhanced

management information. They will usually be located in quite senior positions and be in relatively authoritative positions enabling rapid organisational response to change. For example, if we examine the marketing function of a large confectionery manufacturer we can see that, following I.T. application to the management information base, senior marketing managers will be enabled to make more rapid and sensitive changes to fluctuations in both consumer demand and retail performance. At the same time, of course, the middle management within the marketing function may well find that its role as suppliers of information upwards has been much reduced. If we compare this sector with elements of the brewing industry where the improvement of management information systems has been much slower, middle management retains an important role in collecting and aggregating information for more senior managers about market changes.

The other group of beneficiaries are the managers and specialists involved in the design and implementation of new information systems - 'the knowledge engineers'. They may come to occupy significant and powerful roles with the management structure as a whole. Even here, however, we must enter some reservations about the view that technological change has led to significant 'reskilling' or occupational up-grading for managers. Firstly, it is rather difficult to locate information technologists within the management hierarchy. In terms of grade they may be equivalent to quite senior managers but in terms of activity they look much more like 'staff' experts, unless they actually manage other I.T. specialists or lower-level data processing workers (Crompton and Jones 1984 pp 68-72). They may have high levels of discretion over the way in which their own work is carried out but their targets will be set by other functions within management. Secondly, some are threatened by deskilling through internal technological development like modular programming (Kraft 1977, Greenbaum 1976). Subsequent developments in high-level languages and personal computer technology may facilitate direct access to data-bases for many managers without the intermediary of the 'knowledge engineer'.

However, it is important not to ascribe 'juggernaut' power to information technology. Like many employees, managers will endeavour to keep control of their work and to maximize the

indeterminacy of their skills. While we have yet to discover what the managerial equivalents of 'quota- restriction' and 'gold-bricking' are (Roy 1952) we should certainly suspect their existence. Except, of course, that managers as the agents of organisational and technological change are often loath to see themselves as the objects of it. As avid adherents to organisational culture they may be inclined not to perceive the realities of their employment situation. This is a paradox to which we will return.

Finally, changes in organisational structure have also had implications for managers and their work. Corporate restructuring has been produced by several forces. Partly by a desire to reduce overhead costs in a competitive environment, partly to tighten strategic control at the top of the organisation and partly to improve organisational responsiveness. The latter two may seem in contradiction but as large organisations have apparently increased the autonomy of strategic business units they have also tightened control at the centre. The frequently posed dilemma between centralisation and decentralisation may be no dilemma at all - both processes can occur simultaneously. Thus, lower level and middle level managers may find themselves more accountable for organisational performance but express the feeling that they are not given sufficient real power to influence events. There is another layer of paradox here; just as the rhetoric of organisational change stresses autonomy and discretion at lower levels of the hierarchy, the reality increases central control and tightens target-setting and accountability. It is clear, however, that changes in organisation structure have removed layers of middle management, producing significant consequences for managers. There has been an intensification of managerial work. Scase and Goffee, in a recent extensive study of managers, report that 81% of 510 managers in their study work an average week in excess of fifty hours and most stated that this has increased significantly in recent years (Scase and Goffee forthcoming Chapter 2). My own observations suggest that in addition to real work pressure lengthening hours of work, there is also a competitive desire to work harder and longer than other managers at the same level, though there are marked inter-organisational differences here. One manager in a recently-privatised organisation told me that people were loath to take their cars from the car park before senior management had left, lest this was interpreted as a failure

to embrace the 'new culture'. This intensification of work can have deleterious consequences for domestic life (Scase and Goffee forthcoming). A forty year old commercial manager in a different recently-privatised organisation described his work day as follows

> "I get up at six and climb on the exercise bike for 1/2 an hour - coffee - leave for London - start work, sweat, worry - no lunch - leave work at 8.00 - home about 9.00 - eat - too late to see the kids - bed and so it goes on - all to read in the papers that the company's in chaos and my boss say we're not hitting the target. My wife thinks I'm mad"

We should perhaps be sceptical of claims to overwork, such claims have been reported by Cooper and Marshall (1978) and French and Caplan (1973). However, there are both a priori and empirical grounds for believing they have some foundation.

Whether or not the intensification of managerial work has been firmly established, we can see that much organisational re-structuring has produced fewer layers of management and therefore flatter structures. This has an effect on the number of slots available in the managerial hierarchy and therefore threatens that most cherished citadel of managerial employment - the career. Many of the classic studies of managers confirm the view that it is the prospect of a relatively predictable and secure move through a hierarchy of positions which is of crucial importance in supplying managers with meaning in their work. (Wilensky 1961, Sofer 1970, Pahl and Pahl 1971). Perhaps, the essential elements in this notion of careers for managers are that they promise relative insulation from the full rigours of the labour market and that they encourage the development of long term working life goals. In so far as these goals can be realized with one employer they produce organisational career plans. Both of these conditions have been threatened by the re-shaping of organisations. Nevertheless, as we shall see in the next chapter, many of my respondents were highly interested, almost obsessed, with the notion of career, and even though some of them recognised that structural changes would affect careers in general, most were reluctant to admit that their own careers were threatened. The prospect of a career may remain

important in tying an individual to a particular organisation even when the realities of organisational life increasingly deny that prospect.

Even though we might reasonably conclude that organisational change is likely to curtail the careers of managers, reading the sociological significance of this is complex. It is essential to recognise that at each managerial level of the organisation the individuals who fill these occupations are not homogenous. Some will have been promoted out of manual work into management and may feel that their careers have been successfully concluded, others may have been promoted out of clerical work, some will have been recruited as management trainees and may feel that they are destined for senior management or the Board; yet others may be professionals seeking to escape the limits of their professional expertise. The principle must be that, just as the meaning of an occupation varies depending on the occupant, so the significance of career is affected by the characteristics of the individual whose career it is (Stewart et al 1980). We need to distinguish between the analysis of the occupational structure and the analysis of the movement of individuals through it. Adding a further complicating factor, we have to concede that changes in the structure of managerial occupations are not instantly translated into the consciousness of individual managers. There are belief systems which are powerful in denying organisational realities; the faith in 'career' is an important part of such a belief system.

However, changes in organisational structure mesh with the increased monitoring of managerial performance and the emphasis on reaching measurable short-term targets, to threaten the nature of the relationship of an individual to the organisation. That is to say that the psychological contract is placed under stress. For example, if we examine the typical recruitment policies of the clearing banks, we will find that the bulk of their recruitment is amongst bright eighteen year olds with A levels. At this stage the message to both young men and women is that employment with the bank offers excellent career prospects; that good behaviour, plus acquiring relevant post-entry qualifications, will result in slow but secure promotion through the hierarchy, until some fifteen to twenty years later you become a branch manager. Of course, it becomes clear to many of the

women that this route is not for them. That they will be subtly discouraged from pursuing professional examinations and that the requirement for frequent geographical moves will be difficult for married women in households where the male career is perceived as dominant. In any event, breaks for child-rearing threaten the long service which is seen as so important for promotion (Crompton and Jones 1984). We are left with the men, who in exchange for loyal, if somewhat unexciting service, can predict a reasonably successful career. This psychological contract has been threatened by powerful forces. First, the market for financial services has changed; it has become harder to earn satisfactory profits in a market becoming increasingly competitive. Second, technological changes, especially concerned with information technology, have occurred throughout the sector. Taken together, these two have produced a flatter hierarchy, with fewer slots with which to build a career and a career 'destination' - bank-manager - which has been deskilled by technical change. For satellite banking really has concentrated skill and relative autonomy in a smaller number of branches. The occupational title 'branch manager' remains but the work has significantly altered. The reality of 'career' may be quite different from its prospect. Finally, managers have become increasingly exposed to the possibility of redundancy. As cost-cutting strategies, strategic divestment and mergers have become common responses to economic difficulties, managers are no longer immune from redundancy. While the total numbers of managers has been rising there is also some evidence that the rate of managerial redundancy (Thackray 1986) has been increasing. This has meant that as an occupational group managers have become more fluid (Nicholson and West 1988). Prospects for rapid re-employment vary between sectors. Where deep-seated structural causes have produced redundancy, lay-off time will be longer. The evidence of actual redundancy may under-represent the amount of enforced job moves made by managers. Recent evidence suggests that the average number of job moves in a male manager's career is increasing (Alban-Metcalfe & Nicholson 1984). The pattern of job moves is one of a peak of moves early in their career followed by a decline until late middle age when a secondary peak occurs. This secondary peak is associated with an increase in downward social mobility (Nicholson and West 1988 pp 57-58). The early changes may represent either exploratory career changes or a failure to fit with the cultures of particular organisations; the latter peak

suggests that some managers are effectively 'cooled out' without actually being made redundant; it may well be a question of 'Did he jump or was he pushed?'. However, even the threat of redundancy may not produce a mass psychology of discontent amongst middle managers. Too much of their status and identity is derived from upward identification to protest too much; to act like workers would be the final loss of managerial identity. Nevertheless, the spectre of redundancy may make deskilling and a curtailed career the least of a manager's worries.

In this chapter we have examined the ways in which managers talk about their work. We have found that managers find it difficult to talk about whay they do, rather they focus on what they are. Important to being a manager are being involved in 'man-managing', establishing control over interpersonal relations, and experiencing relative autonomy at work. However, we have also observed that changes both within and external to organisations have made it increasingly difficult to sustain this identity. They have been affected by technical change, by the increased monitoring and appraisal of their work, by organisational restructuring, and by threats to the stability of their careers and to the security of their employment. Taken together, these might bring about a collapse in managerial morale and the growth of disaffection. However, just as managers are the subject of pressures and changes which threaten their occupational identity, so also are they exposed to processes of occupational and organisational socialization which reinforce their managerial role. In the next chapter we will examine how management training acts as a vehicle for the creation and confirmation of managerial identity, at the same time as it nourishes notions of a 'special' employment relation and a secure career.

NOTES

1. A more detailed analysis of the extract is to be found in Fowler et al (1979) Jones and Kress (1981). The analysis which follows simplifies some of the linguistic analysis. The theory upon which such analysis rests is discussed in Kress and Hodge (Kress and Hodge 1979.)

2. This suggests that research in this area may benefit from the co- operation of social scientists and technologists.

CHAPTER SIX

Managers and Their Training

In this chapter we will be examining the management training process in terms of its contribution to occupational and organisational socialization. In particular, at the ways in which it bestows or affirms a stable self-identity as a manager. We have already argued that management theories form a repository of legitimatory ideas which provide conceptions of managers and their role. The training process is a mechanism through which these general notions are disseminated. As the last chapter has established, changes in the context and social organisation of managerial work make the attainment of a secure identity as a manager increasingly difficult.

We will begin with a general discussion of management education before moving on to an analysis of a week long management *training course viewed as a rite of passage*. It is suggested that a fruitful way of considering this course may be to examine the course as a ritual occasion, concerned either with the movement from one social status to another or with the confirmation of a status. Finally, we will examine the attitudes of managers to their training and the ways in which the experience is used to give meaning to their work, their career, and their employment relation.

Anthony (1986) has recently suggested that the education of managers has three related elements: management education, management training, and management development. Management education is concerned with the provision of theoretical, conceptual and analytic skills so that the potential manager is able to make full use of managerial experience. In the main this is provided through formal educational institutions. Management training is likely to be more concerned with skills and techniques deemed appropriate to particular levels of management. It is usually provided by the employer using either the in-house training department or, increasingly, external trainers.

Some training will be narrowly concerned with techniques like cash-flow analysis or critical path analysis, others with more general managerial skills. Again, the notion of the technicality/indeterminacy ratio is relevant here, with the general management programmes purporting to foster relatively indeterminate skills (Jamous and Peloille 1980). The course examined here is of the general management skills type. In contrast with training and education, management development is the general process of assessing managerial potential, arranging for the necessary work experiences in order to realize this potential and placing both these processes in relation to the organisation's needs. Providing this service may involve the use of in-house training and the more extended use of educational institutions via, for example, a return to full-time education in a business school. The management development process is now regarded by many large UK companies as an essential part of their strategy.

It needs to be recognised, however, that some organisations require a greater sense of common identity than others. In particular business environments loose collections of semi-autonomous individuals may be highly appropriate and they may not need to develop a strong commitment to the organisation per se. In others, strong emphasis on corporate identity may be regarded as central to business strategy (Lebas and Weigenstein 1986). We should also note that such organisational and occupational socialisation as does occur embraces more than training; social events organised around work relations, organisational ritual, and informal rules all contribute to the process. Nevertheless, training makes an important contribution to socialisation.

The course which we will be examining, (described in Chapter Two), falls somewhere between training and development. Like 'training' it is conducted in-house, though it does employ influential and well-respected external consultants, but in common with 'development' it is connected, or at least participants believe it to be connected, with the assessment of managerial potential and the development of careers. The claim made here is that the course has as much to do with the confirmation of managerial status as it has with the dissemination of knowledge or teaching of

skills. That despite its stated objectives its prime functions are a concern with occupational and organisational socialization.

In the case of managers there is an interesting tension between these two terms. Occupational socialization is concerned with the inculcation of appropriate norms and values, with the creation of shared symbols and thus with the formation of a common ideology between individuals having the same or similar occupations. Organizational socialisation is concerned with the same sort of processes but only as they bear upon individuals within the same organisation. Of course, in reality, most processes of organisational socialisation are arranged hierarchically so that they tend to be associated with individuals having similar occupations. At the same time processes of occupational socialization may occur within a single organisation, for example when engineers or accountants meet for training or the exchange of information. Examining any particular management training or development course we might find that both processes are occurring simultaneously. Indeed, both elements are present in the course we shall examine. Participants are learning the 'managerial' role, the sentiments and actions appropriate to being a manager but they are also being integrated into the organisation's view of that role (Greer 1972). As this happens they may become more closely tied to their organisation, to its goals and its definition of reality. However, this is not a smooth or entirely 'successful' process. In Chapter Three it was argued that managers possess agency and are not sponges passively absorbing the organisation line.

In any event, as we have already seen management is neither a monolothic entity nor obviously a single occupational role. It is organised hierarchically into strata and it is differentiated functionally. Indeed, viewed as a group, managers will display a wide variety of technical expertise and 'skills'. We may find highly qualified scientists, lawyers, accountants, personnel specialists, former craftsmen, ex-clerks and a variety of engineers and so - on all with the occupational title manager. It is clear therefore that processes of occupational socialization will have much to do with stressing the shared managerial components of these various occupations.

The Training Course Ritual

In this section, we will discuss a week long residential management training course, examining the ways in which it can be viewed as a ritual occasion. In so far as it is concerned with the movement from one social status to another it approximates to a rite of passage. Although, following Leach (1976), the view taken here is that many ritual processes are concerned with movement across social boundaries without possessing all the characteristics of a rite of passage. Van Gennep's (1908) classic analysis of rites of passage had argued that 'primitive' humans strived for categorical order; a social world that did not tolerate ambiguity. This order was maintained by the use of ritual to move individuals from one social position to another. He claimed that all rituals involving such a change in condition shared a similar structure composed of three separate elements. First, rites of separation as the individual moves out of the original role. This is followed by a stage of liminality, a period quite outside the normal everyday world, which is characterised by 'rites de marge'. Finally, the individual moves back to the everyday world but this time in a new role. These stages may be signalled in a variety of ways. For example, the separation phase may be marked by the physical movement of the individual, by special clothing or indeed by sacrifice (Leach 1976). The liminal phase, the rites de marge, are marked by physical separation from normal social contacts, by a confusion of roles and statuses and by behaviour which would not normally be tolerated. The re-entry phase is signalled by rites which incorporate the individual into their new role. Ostensibly, the subject of Van Gennep's analysis seems to be the individual as he or she acquires new roles, but his argument is more an attempt to address the question of how societies process their own internal changes. Indeed, with the preservation of the power of social categories against their individual manifestations. The claim made here is that, in applying these concepts to a management training course, we can see that the whole process has a great deal to do with social categories; in this case, with the role of the manager.

There is another dimension of this process which needs to be raised. Leach (1976, 1982) stresses that much ritual is concerned with the establishment of 'we/they' categories, with questions of who

is so like us as to be treated in the same category and who is so different as to constitute an excluded 'they'. Indeed, Leach goes so far as to argue that this 'boundary' problem is common to humanity, that boundaries of all kinds are social interventions into what is naturally continuous thus:-

> "When we use symbols (either verbal or non-verbal) to distinguish one class of things or actions from another we are creating artificial boundaries in a field which is 'naturally' continuous" (Leach 1976 p 33).

Because of this boundary areas become highly problematic both in social space and time, therefore:-

> "The crossing of frontiers and thresholds is always hedged about with ritual, so also is the transition from one social status to another" (ibid p 35).

Clearly, these issues relate to our current concerns, for we are concerned with the boundary of management, and with the complementary role and status of manager. Perhaps we shall find that the crossing of this frontier too is 'hedged about with ritual' (Cleverley 1971).

In analysing the ritual aspects of the training course, two sorts of data will be used, direct observation and the comments of participants. There are, however, theoretical and methodological problems which arise here, particularly in using the comments and observations of participants. Much turns on the degree of transparency or opaqueness of the ritual and on the mechanism through which the ritual is purported to function. Full discussion of these issues falls outside the scope of this thesis or the competence of its author but some evaluation of the weight to be placed on participants' comments must be made. The view taken here is that if the function of ritual becomes entirely transparent then its efficacy declines but, on the other hand, participants in ritual do have more or less access to the meaning both of the entire process and of elements within it. In addition, they do know how it feels to be taking part and our analysis needs to be concerned

with the sentiments of participants. We all take part in rituals, the general purpose of which may be quite clear, without knowing the meanings attached to each part of the process. Indeed, it is treated as axiomatic that particular ethnographic details, considered in isolation, are very unlikely to be rendered meaningful. Rather, they are part of a complex whole and it is this which demonstrates the function of the ritual.

Having raised the question of the function of the ritual it is hard to resist the question 'functional for who?'. This is a complex area in which there are at least two fertile lines of inquiry. Firstly, it is functional for the organisation in that it attempts to produce an occupational group who see the world through the eyes of their employers, who plan their careers with their organisation in mind and who see themselves as 'chosen' by the organisation. Thus, it aims to create a group who are prepared to control in the interests of the employer. This is part of the generation of a 'trust' relationship thought by service class theorists to be characteristic of the managers' employment relation. Secondly, for the manager it attempts to provide certainty in an uncertain world. While the experience of work, with its increased surveillance, targetting, appraisal and reorganisation produces anxiety, the confirmation of status provides psychological comfort. Of course, in so far as this sense of comfort insulates managers from the real changes in their work and employment relationship, it may actually weaken their abilities to mitigate the affects of these changes. All of these possibilities may coexist at the same time. Certainly, senior management development personnel at Head Office are aware of the extent to which certain sorts of management training have more to do with status then they do with learning. But they are also aware that training can function to dissipate discontent or at least to improve morale. It is also true, as we shall see, that individual managers do derive comfort from the training, and that it does increase their ease with managerial status. However, some also see training as a deflection from their real concerns at work. We need not commit ourselves to any of these possiblities in order to analyse the ritual of training.

We can begin by asking what preconceptions participants have of the training course. Many of them speak of it in terms of it being a 'strange course', 'having weird effects' on individuals. The following examples illustrate the kind of things people had heard about the course before attending it:

I: What had you heard about the course before you went on it?

R: Um, I had heard that it was a fairly traumatic experience for certain people depending on how well one could exist inside a group, and that there were certain people who had completely sort of broken down. The rumours, in fact the true stories, one hears about this manager that walked out of the hotel and got on the train and sort of never came back again; or in John's case, the case of the guy who walked around and sat in the hotel lounge for two days, or the girl that cried all night and wouldn't speak to anyone in the group the following day. I think those sort of rumours do permeate.

(Mr Arkwright, Personnel Manager)

I: Did you have any kind of prejudices about it; or informed guesses?

R: Er, I suppose I must have. The line I heard about it was that it was one of these very strange things, er, well there was little structure to it, and that through some mechanism or other it had strange effects on, on individuals. Er, so much so, that a certain few individuals were very shaken by it. I - of - I didn't really understand why, or what led to this

(Mr Booth, Head of Operations Research).

I: Had you heard anything about the course before you went?

R: Well I did go and see, well I spoke to Mr Crossland, I also spoke to Mr Becker. I probably got more information from Mr Becker than I got from Mr Crossland. There was a tendency for people to keep it a secret. Actually I don't think it was necessary, but I did get enough information from them to realise what sort of course it was, although I must say it was a bit misleading. I got the impression that people were under tremendous stress and strain on the course. You know people were reacting strongly, but I didn't find that. I found that, alright, there were reactions from people, but there wasn't something like they said, that it was mind-bending, and this was the feeling I had before I went.

(Mr Crompton, Production Manager).

I: When you were sent on the course, or when you were asked if you wanted to go, do you know what the people you work with thought? Were they surprised you were going on a course, or interested?

R: No, nobody seemed surprised. To be fair, I don't think many of them knew much about what the course was about. Alf Byerly did, and he sort of looked at me a bit quizzically and said, "Well that's the bloody course where they go sort of jittery and then they cart them off in straight-jackets" and I laughed, you see.

(Mr Corbett, Production Planner).

It is quite clear then that the course was widely believed to be 'strange' and to have the possibility of producing extremes of behaviour in some people. These anticipatory feelings may be highly functional for the efficacy of the ritual. By increasing anxiety they may prepare the participants for the course. There is also the possiblity that these prior conceptions of the course become self-fulfilling; that they generate an expectation that something strange will happen.

With these kind of prior feelings eighteen middle level managers, with a relatively wide range of functions and specialisms, arrive at a rather plush hotel with business conference facilities. This location is important to the ritual (Stimson 1986). Most obviously, being here breaks off the normal social relations which sustain their existing sense of self. This is true both of their work and domestic relations. In addition the new environment is not one they are wholly familiar with. While most have experience of holiday hotels this is, for many of the participants, the first time they have stayed at a hotel for the purpose of 'work' and as a work environment it is quite unfamiliar.

The course begins with drinks and introductions. This occasion produces a number of tensions. Firstly, there are uncertainties over dress. The preliminary course material says 'dress informal' but participants are unsure as to quite what this means. This is after all a 'work' occasion. Should they dress as they normally do when being 'informal' or is this an odd occasion which is really 'formal' but the dress rules are 'informal'? Occasionally participants get it 'wrong' by, for example, wearing a business suit - (too formal) or denim jeans (too informal). The appropriate dress has a rather studied air of casualness. Secondly, the consumption of alcohol poses a dilemma. Many are feeling quite tense and nervous and would welcome the relaxing effects of alcohol. However, in this situation it is not at all clear what the correct form of alcohol consumption should take, nor in what quantities. Thus, this introduction, no doubt thought of as a gentle and informal start to the course, produces tensions of its own. In talking about their memories of the course several months later, participants made comments like:

I: I'm interested in trying to get a picture of what you remember about it.

R: Yep, what do I remember about it? Well, it was a nice five star hotel, lots of nice food, very comfortable environment, I can remember feeling full up with food and bloated and under- exercised most of the time as a general physical thing. I can remember feeling at times extremely tense and in fact I can remember feeling as I

would imagine a suspect would feel in a box in court when he's pleading not guilty to something he's guilty of and he can feel the truth starting to come out. You know, hands are sweating, your temperature is going up, your heart rate going up, this sort of thing, and in fact while I was on this particular course, one chap went down, was in bed for a day, physically ill maybe with some sort of food infection, maybe through sheer nervous tenion. This is what I thought at the time. It was at a period when I was getting very nervous or feeling very agitated and it struck me at the time well this chap's been actually affected by it, you know.

(Mr Hill, Production Engineer).

I: What can you remember about the way it started?

R: Well it was a smashing hotel and it was funny being in a plush hotel - great food - all at the Company's expense. A lot of us felt we should get on with some work - to sort of justify it. But you're not quite sure what's what and that makes you feel on edge.

(Management Accountant)

I: I'm trying to get a picture of the course

R: Yeah, I remember the start - I was the idiot who thought dress informal meant informal so I felt really out of place. The whole thing made me feel nervous - sort of everyone watching each other.

(Senior Mechanical Designer).

These widespread feelings of tension and uncertainty may function to create a sense of group identity. This is suggested by Van Maanen:

> "When a group goes through a socialization program together, it almost always develops an 'in-the-same-boat' collective consciousness. Individual changes in perspective are built on an understanding of the problems faced by all the members of the group" (Van Maanen 1978 p 24).

Such a process is aided by the communal life that course participants have (Van Maanen 1975). They spend all day working in groups and have collective mealtimes. A strong group has usually formed by day three or four of the course. At this point participants feel that their groups are working well together:

> R: It took us three or four days to realise that we were a group, and not a series of individuals who wouldn't be able to speak their minds".

(Mr Crompton)

> R: I think the real nitty-gritty of the course, thinking about it in depth, was the last three days. I think the first two days were preparation for the last three days. (Personnel Manager).

However, there persists some doubt as to whether the activities they are collectively engaged in constitute proper 'work'. In the main, their work in groups is unstructured, and its overt content is much less important than the guided experience of group processes provided by the tutors. There are aspects of this part of the course which may have ritual significance. There is the continuing uncertainty that many participants feel in these expensive surroundings that they should be doing something of more use to the organisation:

R: Even though the group was going well a lot of us felt we could be tackling some real problem - something that would be of use to the company or maybe we could take somebody's problem at work and see if together we couldn't solve it. Even when you were used to it it seemed odd to be paid for watching your navel.

(Financial Accountant).

The role of the tutors also enhanced the strangeness of the course. The everyday model of education where 'teachers' tell you what it is that you should know was, in this experience, thrown into disarray. Tutors would refuse to answer questions, or to actively intervene in group discussions. This produced feelings of extreme frustration amongst course participants.

I: What was it like working in groups?

R: Interesting, especially when the group got going - but the tutor I couldn't understand exactly what he was doing. He just seemed to be staring out of the window - and when we asked his advice he'd just send it right back to us. It was bad enough us sitting around for days but this was supposed to be his job!!

(Manager, Management Services)

I: How did you find the tutors?

R: Tutors!! You must be joking - just sat and watched - wouldn't tell us anything in the groups. They were fine in the bar afterwards but if that's work, when can I start?

(Workshop Manager).

Even managers from personnel departments with some professional knowledge of the training process commented on the role of the tutors:

R: Well - with the tutor in our group it was like the blind leading the blind - he could've given us more feedback.

(Mr Arkwright, Personnel).

However, the week long course does generate considerable high-spots of its own. One of these is a visit from a professor in social psychology who has acted as an external consultant to the organisation for many years. He has a reputation as a man of great learning and and wisdom who has worked closely with very senior management in the company. His evening workshop is highly regarded by course participants and many mention it as one of the 'peaks' of the week.

R: I could've listened to him all week. You really felt you were getting the best - and he knew all about the company and what's going on.

(Mr Booth, Head of Operations Research).

R: When Baker came to talk to the course - that was good. Lots of relevance to work - he'd loads of examples of real man-managing - made the thing come to life - it was a shame we couldn't have had more of him but he was off to America I think.

(Production Manager)

R: I was very impressed that Professor Baker came to speak to us 'cos a lot of people had heard of him and know he's worked with the top people. I suppose you hope a bit of it will rub off on you.

(Manager, Central Information Systems)

The other 'high spot' of the week occurs on the fifth evening when the group give each other quite direct feedback on each other. This is often an emotionally draining experience, which requires skillful handling from the tutors. Most course participants cite this as an experience in which they learn a lot about themselves 'if not about managing'. The process involves stripping away layers of defence mechanisms so that individuals can receive information about the way they are perceived by others. This in itself might suggest that we are dealing with a process which has much to do with identity. This session often lasts until after midnight.

After this part of the course has been completed participants feel a bit low. This is partly produced by fatigue, but has much to do with a response to the emotional heights which precede it. This low period begins the process of return to the ordinary world of work and participants, guided by their tutors, begin to plan their return, sometimes with modest proposals for how they might change their behaviour at work. Participants describe their feelings at this point as being rather confused:

I: How did you feel when the course finished?

R: That's a good question and a difficult one for me because I had rather mixed feelings in going home. I felt the usual sort of regret that one has at leaving a group in that sort of situation, the realisation that that group at that particular time were unique and never again would that group re-assemble again ... Regret also at feeling there was some unfinished business which I would never finish. A feeling of relief that the course was over and that I was getting out of the rather artificial condition that I had been living in, which is a feeling you get on most courses, but on this one it was very pronounced because you had the feeling that you were looking at something under a microscope and that something was you, an image

of you, and you saw them looking at yourself as it were through a microscope; not all of what you see is good either. On the whole, I would say the overall impression was one of feeling pretty tired, wanting to go home, but feeling it had been rather a unique experience.

These mixed feelings of tiredness, regret and relief may run over into domestic life. Several course participants remarked that their wives had noticed strange behaviour on their return.

R: It was funny being home - it took me some time to settle in - even though I was pleased to be back. Wife said I was strange for a week.

R: I was quiet - very quiet for me - It took me a while to be my old self. People noticed it at work and at home.

However, this period of adjustment is eased by the pressure of the work that has accumulated in the managers absence. For some, the very return to routine was a relief, it marked quite clearly the return to normality. Finally, the return to normality is marked by jokes about the course made at work. For example, participants reported that their peers and subordinates 'joked' about their return from the course, saying things like 'Look out, Joe's been on the 'shrink' course' or 'Keep away from me if you've been on the mind-bending course'. These jokes signal both that some change has taken place and the pressure to return to normal working relations. Interestingly, no-one reported comments like these from their superiors.

Taking all these elements of the training course together, their ritual significance can be represented as follows:-

Rites of separation:-	Moving to unfamiliar location. The widespread 'rumours' about the course.

Uncertainty over the dress-code.

Rites de marge:-

Development of strong group consiousness via placing individuals in shared stressful situation.

Communal meals

Unusual food.

A number of normal social relations are disturbed:-

The teachers will not act like teachers. The distinction between work/non-work becomes blurred. Special visits from influential individuals.

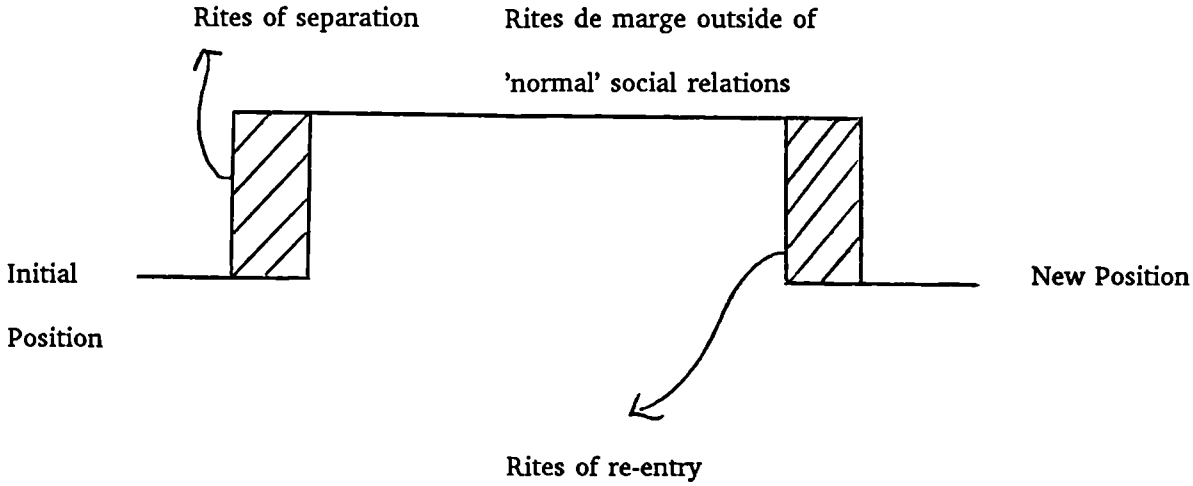
Rites of re-entry

Return to normality signalled by awaiting work.

Spill over from the course to domestic sphere.

Joking relations at work.

Diagramatically an ideal typical model of the process can be shown as follows



As we can see, then, there are elements of the management training course which can be viewed as a rite of passage. The purpose of this rite is the affirmation or confirmation of managerial identity. However, as we have previously argued, managers are not simply passive recipients of this or other organisational processes. They theorise their experience of training to give meaning to their work, career and employment relationship. In so doing, they expose some of the tensions and contradictions between the training course, with its implicit model of the managerial task, and their own conceptions of managing. In what follows, we will be examining course participants' responses to the training course. Our interests will focus on its supposed connections with appraisal, its significance for the development of a career, it impact on perceptions of the employment relation and finally on its contribution to managerial identity.

Many of the course participants believed that attendance on the course was connected with the organisation's appraisal of them. We have already discussed the extent to which managerial performance is increasingly subject to close monitoring and evaluation. In this context the widely shared view was that both selection for the course and performance on it were related to the organisation's assessment of individual managers. Interestingly, this perception of the selection process was shared bysome of the course participants' bosses, even though the view of the central training and personnel function was that selection and performance on this course were completely separate from the appraisal system. Indeed, they tried hard to convey this message but rumours and suspicions of connections between the course and assessment continued to flourish amongst middle managers. However, it should not be assumed that a link between course attendance and appraisal was necessarily perceived negatively. Some course participants believe that any connection could only work to their advantage.

I: Some people have said that there's a sort of connection between the course and the appraisal system ...

R: Well, I'd be very surprised if there wasn't some feedback, even though they say there isn't. There probably should be. I've got a clear conscience - I put something into the course and I got a lot out of it - so I don't mind if there's feedback.

This respondent in his early thirties had already experienced promotion from foreman level, and still had quite high career expectations. However, even those whose careers were probably stalled viewed selection for the course as evidence of their own further potential. For example Mr Gordon whose career, at least on his boss's account, seems to be stuck:

I: Did you have any idea as to why you were selected for this course?

R: Yes, some I think - we have this career appraisal system working here - so I'd had some feedback from that, that people thought I would benefit from this kind of course.

I: How did you feel about that?

R: Yes, well there were hopes, of course, that one doesn't go on a course without other people thinking that you have some kind of potential.

I: Yes.

R: So there's hopes and aspirations there obviously, - there's fears of course, that you can live up to those, not only your own hopes, but others.

However, as we can see even the idea that course attendance is an opportunity is tinged with fears of failure to come up to others' expectations. Some respondents express their doubts about the selection process quite overtly:

I: Why do you think you were selected to take the course?

R: I'll give you a true answer here, we discussed this on the course, and as far as I am concerned, it was felt I should go by Mr Woodland. He's the plant manager, and Mr McLeish said, "When are you going to go?" and I says "OK I'll go on the next one". The reason I went was that I felt, not that I was going to gain a lot out of it, but I felt that if I didn't go and somebody had seen I hadn't been, it could hold me back, and that's a true answer.

I: When you talked about this on the course, did most people feel like that?

R: Yeah, most people were sent, that's their opinion, they were sent and they thought "Well, we'll go because we're sent", "It must be an advantage to us" or "If we don't go it could be a disadvantage to us", and that's mainly my reason I felt "Well, I'll go".

OR

R: I suppose someone thought I needed to go - that it was an aspect of my performance that needed looking at. Of course, when you go on these things you've got to make the best of it. It's no good switching-off cos I'm sure it all comes back.

Managers attending this course therefore, feel a combination of aspiration and anxiety about their selection and its supposed connections with appraisal. This combination of sentiments seems congruent to their position in the organisation. They are striving to be fully a manager and this involves taking a positive attitude towards both training in itself and their future development through training. But, at the same time, they are aware of the increasing scrutiny of their performance.

Despite this ambivalence managers do use attendance on this course as evidence of career development. It was suggested in the last chapter that the notion of career was of crucial importance to middle level managers. This picture is certainly the one that emerges from the classic studies of managers. Sofer (1970), writing of middle managers in the oil, motor, manufacturing and chemical industries, writes that:

> "the men were preoccupied with promotion. This was true of the better educated men carrying out the more research centred and scientifically oriented work ... as well as the line executives" (p 309).

In the same vein Pahl and Pahl (1971), writing of middle managers in British industry, claim that "For them life is a hierarchy and success means moving up in it. Marking time and staying in the same position is interpreted as dropping out" (Pahl and Pahl p 259).

This concern with career is closely related to notions of identity. As Van Maanen and Schein (1978) argue "the career concept is central to an understanding of individual identity ... to develop an empathetic understanding of the individual we must have some idea of the person's experienced past and anticipated future" (p 34). Certainly for my respondents their future prospects are a major concern and course attendance is used both as a signal that they have reached a particular stage and as a promise that they have further to travel. These comments arise in a variety of contexts, sometimes in response to questions about selection for the course, sometimes as an overall assessment of it, but very few of the course participants failed to make some connection between the course and their careers. This seemed to hold across age and function. For example, a 28 year old production manager with a degree in mechanical engineering :

I: Do you know why you were sent?

R: No, not really, you know I couldn't write it down in little words, it's just a sort of general feeling you know. I've done fairly well since I came here ...

In this case there were strong rational grounds for believing that he was moving up the organisation. As he explains later in the interview, as a graduate under thirty he should expect to be moving on, but he does say that "the course seems to be for people who are moving up". However, a fifty year old production planner, relatively underqualified for his present position, still perceives the course as a sign of potential further career movement:

R: I've already seen my boss and said I'm ready for a move - I've got this job under control now - I can be pushed on - give me a problem to solve. Next thing I've been sent on this course so I suppose they're saying to me - you've still got places to go.

In this case it is almost as if there is a real desire to cling to the possibility of further career development, and in so far as this hope can be maintained, it is a powerful bond to the organisation (Evans and Gilbert 1984).

Some respondents make explicit reference to the course as a career marker. Mr Booth is, at 42, Head of Operations Research at a South coast factory and he observes that attendance at the course is itself organised hierarchically.

R: At the time this course was running it was seen as a bit of a status course, if one cares to call it that. The more senior managers had been on it; middle management of which I am a part were starting to go on it, it was seen somewhat status wise.

Thus, not only attendance on the course but the order in which you are sent provide information about your place in the organisation. Most explicitly of all a cost management accountant in his early 30's observed:

R: I felt I was in management after the course - only other managers had been on it. You felt it was like joining the club.

Clearly then, course attendance helps to maintain belief in the salience of career (Van Maanen 1977). Further, the notion of career is important in encouraging individuals to view their work experience as part of an ordered and meaningful process of development. Knowing where you are in the process gives coherence to the past and promise to the future. Certainly for participants on the training course, career remains highly important. However, a recent study of managers (Scase and Goffee, forthcoming) suggests that organisational change may be reducing the predictability of the career and that in response some managers have re- evaluated the significance of careers:-

> "Fewer would now seem to be committed to career success, at least in the ways in which it has been conventionally understood. Personal achievement and life satisfaction are probably less likely to be solely equated with promotion within organisational structures; instead career advancement is seen as a means of enhancing personal lifestyles which are separated from rather than subordinated to, work roles". (Scase and Goffee, forthcoming, Chap 4, p 5).

While the study of the management training course can give little support to this claim, more recent interview material does offer some evidence to suggest a changing perception of career. It may well be that, in response to a series of changes in the structure of organisations and in the context and content of managerial work managers are beginning to reshape their general attitudes to work and career (further supporting evidence for this can be found in Evans and Bartolome 1980). Nevertheless, it should be stressed that belief in the notion of career is powerful and it may well resist many 'falsifying' experiences. It need not as we have seen rest upon entirely rational assessment of future possibilities but it may be no less important as a source of meaning and identity for all that.

Just as attendance on the course acts as a career signal, so also does it convey a message about the organisation's concern for the individual manager. A senior manager, in general sceptical about the utility of this training course, nevertheless recognises another important function:

> R: Yep, um, I'd be doubtful about the direct value, that a person really learns a great deal from them which is directly applicable to his work. I think that the real value lies in, alright there is some learning, you do learn something inevitably, I think that the real value lies in the fact that the person feels he's involved, the company want to do something for him, are interested in him. And the second thing is that it does cause people to think a bit for themselves, they're made to work on these courses, they're made to think about what they're doing, which is undoubtedly an advantage. In terms of acquisition of knowledge, direct knowledge applicable to the job, I think this is a bit minimal. I'm not saying there's none at all, there's obviously some, but I think the main thing is that it makes a person feel you know that somebody cares about him. You get this reaction from people who don't go on courses, you know "Why haven't I gone on one, I'm not good enough, there's nobody bothering about me".

Course participants see it as an example of the organisation being concerned for their development. So that even managers who expressed uncertainty about selection, and the possible connections between course performance and appraisal nevertheless felt that it showed the company was interested in them. This is an example of where organisational socialization begins to dominate the training process. For what is important here is not that organisations in general care about you but that this particular organisation cares for its managers' personal development. The message is not just that 'the Company cares' but that 'the Company cares for you'.

Finally, the course is connected to how participants see themselves in their role as managers. This process is concerned with both occupational and organisational socialization. People come to see

themselves as managers, but essentially as managers within this particular organisation. This is achieved through two mechanisms. Most obviously, course attendance supplies participants with a shared language, partly derived from popularised social psychology, with which to conceptualise issues in a certain way. Managers refer to this as 'knowing the buzz words' but it does serve to distinguish them from others who have not attended the course. They are able, often half-mockingly, to say things like "the meeting was getting nowhere, so we took time out to look at process" or "I watch now to see who's making the bullets". It's almost as if their possession of this arcane knowledge admits entry to a different and shared world.

In addition, course participants meet and exchange ideas and information with others from different parts of the organisation. Thus, a production manager:

> "It was the first time I'd met, face to face, a commercial bloke. Usually it's shouting down the phone. I'm not saying we'll always see eye-to-eye from now on, but I've more idea what they're about."

Or a central personnel manager largely concerned with the creation of personnel systems to be used at operating establishments commented:

> "It's easy to get cut off from the coal face in my line - so it was good, very useful to chat to production guys who view me as a big bloody cost and that's about all. I think we all learn by meeting people from different functions".

In addition, this process facilitates the development of networks within the organisation. Managers cite these as highly useful in problem-solving when they return to work. They are able to utilise contacts made on the course to ease problems of communciation between different functions and divisions of the organisation.

Together with these contributions to organisational socialization, the course was also seen to bolster participants' confidence in their ability to play the managerial role. This was achieved by giving individuals increased confidence in their ability to handle interpersonal relations. As was shown in the last chapter, managers attach particular significance to their skills at motivating others and at handling 'man-managing'. Participants saw the course as helping them in both areas. Even those who expressed some scepticism about the 'weak' social scientific theories which underpin the course, claimed that they now possessed increased capability of how to manage people. They made claims like:

> "It gives you a better understanding of how people are motivated" (Operations Research Manager).

> "You know, it does give you a greater understanding of groups and how people react ... I'm more conscious now of how I talk to people and their reaction" (Crompton, Production Manager).

> "It's changed my behaviour at meetings - I allow others time to speak - and I try to listen" (Personnel Manager).

> "I've got techniques - you know, to direct and motivate others. To make people feel valued even when they're doing routine jobs" (Arkwright, Personnel Manager).

Another, a production engineer gives an extended example of how the course has changed his way of handling subordinates:

> "Certainly my attitude was predominantly, 'look this is the way I think we should do it, okay' you know, and take the bulldozer way. What I tend to do now is to say to people, question "Do you think we should do that in a milli fracture or should I put it in a lathe

first?". Now it's easy for me with my experience and knowledge especially to some of the subordinates, I mean I've got a lad down there, twenty or twenty-one years old, easy for me to say and being right "That's the way you do it, okay?" but I now steer him back to questions, you know, I say to the bloke "Look I can give you an answer to that very easily but I don't believe I should. What I will do I will help you build up an answer, what I think to be the right answer" and I lay down the conditions, ask questions. "Have you got enough meat to hold on there?". "I'm not sure". "Have you got a collet for it?". "No". "Okay, so you would need to buy a collet would you?". "Yes". "How much is that going to cost?". "Don't know". "How much do you think?". "About #20". "Yeah, you're not far out". "How many have you got to make?". "About twenty-five". "I see, do you think it's work it spending that sort of money for twenty-five?" . This is how I would answer the question. Now it's easy for me to say to a man "No, you do it that way and that way, okay?" and walk away, which is throwing your authority about, isn't it, and your knowledge at people; and I used to have the attitude of "Look, Christ, I've got the experience" when you're talking to somebody ten years younger than you. "I've got the experience, I've got the knowledge, I know" and I do as far I'm concerned, there's no doubt about that; but I think that I'm going to get a better result from these people by spending more time with them in that way because it's going to save me a lot of time to say to the bloke "Do <u>that</u>, <u>that</u>, <u>that</u>" it only takes only a few minutes, but to get <u>them</u> to give themselves the answers takes of my time a bit longer, but I believe that this is the right thing to do in the end because theoretically, that should save me time in the end.

It is clear therefore that many of the course participants were supported in the performance of their managerial role after attending the course. However, an examination of their superiors and peers accounts of their behaviour at work does not provide much evidence for the view that behaviour had really changed. Sometimes, the discrepancies between claimed changes and observed changes are far apart. For example, of the personnel manager who claims to listen to more at meetings , one of his peers remarks:

"He's not changed much - (laughter) - I still can't get a word in edgeways"

Or of the production engineer who claims to have changed his way of handling subordinates, his boss remarks:

"He's always thought he know the answers - and usually he does - he didn't suffer fools gladly then and he still doesn't now."

More often, there is general assent that the course has 'broadened' the manager without producing marked behavioural changes. This is not really very surprising, it would be hard to believe that a one week course could produce startling changes. However, it does highlight one of the most important features of course attendance which is the impact that it has on participants' perceptions of themselves. It is seen by them to reinforce their status in the organisation and to improve their performance at the distinctly 'managerial' elements of their jobs.

However, there are two important reservations to be inserted into this argument. The first concerns individuals who 'see through' the training course and who therefore present a picture of studied cynicism in discussing it. The second concerns the content of the course itself, which, if taken seriously, has important ramifications for middle managers and their work.

Observers of social interactions of all kinds are aware of the 'cynical' performance. This is a social performance which, at the same time as it follows the rules and conventions of the performance, is personally distanced from both the performance and the rules which produce it. This distance may or may not be visible to the audience. In any case, there is a continuum, with cynicism at one pole and complete belief in the performance at the other. Though, as Goffman observes, there may be a tendency to move towards the poles. Once doubts about the performance arise there is a tendency for cynicism to develop, on the other hand continuous positive feedback on the role

performance may move the initially 'distanced' performance all the way to self belief. (Goffman 1969).

It was suggested earlier that the training course contained within it elements which could be viewed as a rite of passage. However, not all participants experienced the early loss of identity and the taking on of the new associated with such processes. On the contrary, they remained steadfastly themselves throughout the process. However, they could not show openly that they were refusing to take a full part in the training course, that would be too risky. Rather, they needed to manage their performances such that they seemed to be fully involved, while at the same time keeping themselves isolated from the process. We should not be overly surprised by this, it has already been claimed that managers possess agency and this can be used to distance oneself from organisational process and ritual. An example of this response comes from Mr Bentley, an experienced metal-works manager with twenty-one years experience with the company. He left school at fifteen but has subsequently obtained a Higher National Certificate in Production Engineering. He took the opportunity of the interview to explain how he had gone through the motions of the course, while being highly critical of its content and intent. In the following extract he explains that he thinks it's an 'Emperor's Clothes ' phenomena:

R: If a chap was somebody who really didn't want to appear ignorant, he would tell you what a marvellous course it was because he's frightened to admit he didn't understand the purpose of it or anything. It was that sort of course you know; it's like having a conversation with somebody and you keep nodding but you haven't a clue what's going on, but you never admit that you never understand. I remember when going to evening classes, and the instructor would be giving you the lesson and you'd all be listening you see, and you didn't understand it, so you finally plucked up the courage and you stood up and you said "I don't understand that" and everyman Jack in the class would look round at you with a sort of air of contempt in their eyes saying blimey, he doesn't understand it. The easiest way to resolve that

one is as I once did, I looked at the bloke with the most accusing stare and I said "Well, you tell me what he's talking about", and it didn't take more than about thirty seconds but he didn't know either, and that's really what I felt about this course, that this is the reaction you get from people and I could have typified the answers I would have got from the people who made judgements of their own characters on the course and I knew that they would say what a good course it was ... 'made me think you know, it did make me think you know'. All I thought was the work I could be doing and that it was rubbish that I was trying to talk, because quite frankly I haven't got time to sit on a desert island, quite unrelated for four days, talking about inane things which bear no relationship to my life. I hadn't got time for it.

I: You don't feel that you understand social behaviour better now?

R: Well I understood it before I went on the course, I knew all people were different and that all people would react differently to certain circumstances but I don't think that the course would change the way that those people would act or react in another set of circumstances, those people were what they were based on thirty, forty, fifty years.

Others who claimed to have role-played their way through the course without 'being taken in by it' saw it as a manifestation of the 'training industry'

"The whole thing's self-perpetuating. Someone dreams up a course - then they've got to fill it so they ring up Bill who hasn't spent his training budget and he sends someone and then someone else says, 'if he's going I want to go too'.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that some course particpants view the course negatively, one could mount a persuasive argument that this management training course has several important ideological functions. It can be viewed as a device which disseminates a particular ideology for legitimising managerial activity. That it increases the unity of management by assuring middle level managers of their status and that it contributes to organisational socialization, presenting a company-specific model of the manager and confirming that the organisation really cares for its employees. There can be little doubt that, in many respects, the course does operate in this way, providing a shared language which influences both the occupational and organisational identity of the participants. It can also support the cherished notion of career by acting as a career-marker. However, its overt message tends to reduce the significance of middle management. For the content of neo-human relations ideology disseminated through the medium of management training emphasises the devolution of problem-solving to the operating core (Mintzberg 1983) and the truncation of the mid-line of the organisational structure staffed by middle managers. It suggests that many of the 'controlling' and 'man- managing' activities so valued by middle managers are largely unnecessary for organisational effectiveness (Manz and Sims 1987). Thus, in the very act of confirming managerial status it threatens its perceived foundation.

There are two further areas where the ideological functions of the training course run into contradictions. Firstly, as we have already seen, managers stress that being a manager rests upon personal qualities. For example, on maturity, and on the ability to build rapport. However, the course has an implicit message that managing can be taught. If this is true it can be taught to all kinds of people. Thus, the exclusivity which arises when 'being a manager' is defined in terms of personal qualities is lost. It is threatening to the view that being a manager is a natural quality to see it presented in terms of a skill which can be passed on through a training course.

The second difficulty is more important. It arises out of the relation between theory and practice and from the hierarchical and functional location of many middle managers. Most middle managers, find themselves having technical areas of responsibility, activities which they have

mastered through the acquisition of practical experience. Many of their subordinates will also have knowledge of these areas but respect the accumulated experience of their manager. Of course, there will be well- credentialled managers who perceive their current middle management position as a brief stop on a journey to senior management. However, it remains the case, that whether the middle manager has reached the peak of his career or is destined for higher things, practical knowledge gained through experience is highly valued. In any event, given their organisational and hierarchical location there remains significant technical, practical components to their work. The knowledge accumulated in this way is essentially pragmatic. The course threatens this pragmatic knowledge by stressing in its place that managing may rest not on experience but on theory (Davies and Easterby-Smith 1984).

Using Habermas' terms there is an incommensurability between 'instrumental action' and 'interaction' where instrumental action is defined as "governed by technical rules based on empirical knowledge. In every case they imply conditional predictions about observable events, physical or social. By 'interaction' Habermas means "communicative, symbolic interation. It is governed by binding consensual norms which define reciprocal expectations about behaviour and which must be understood and recognized by at least two acting subjects" (Habermas 1971 p 92). The nature of the difference between these two forms of action is summarised below:-

	Symbolic Interaction	Instrumental Action
action-orienting rules	social norms	technical rules
level of definition	intersubjectively shared ordinary language	context-free language

mechanisms of acquisition	role internalization	learning of skills and qualifications
'rationalization'	extension of communication free of domination	extension of power of technical control

[Adapted from Habermas 1971 p 93]

Using these concepts we can see that the training course seems overtly to be addressing itself to instrumental action. It attempts to supply theories of human behaviour based on which managers can improve their control of interpersonal relations. Thus, it supplies a context-free language via the mechanisms of skill acquisition. But at the same time its latent function is to facilitate role internalization. It therefore represents the intrusion of a knowledge system based on the extension of technical control into a manager's working 'reality' characterised by pragmatic knowledge and the generation of social relations based on normative consensus.

At the heart of this difficulty lies a paradox. Management training strives to present itself as 'practical' and 'relevant' to the real concerns of managers but its ideological function as a vehicle of occupational and organizational socialization pulls it away from the reality of managing. This is precisely Anthony's point when he argues that

> "A powerful explantion for the unreality and the unrigorous quality of management education is that it is concerned to protect status rather than to pursue effectiveness" (Anthony 1986 p 139).

Rather than concerning itself with the real political nature of managing, in its desire to create and maintain particular kinds of social relations, management training turns into the supply of 'facades

of legitimacy' (Earl 1983). In so doing it moves away from what are the important practical problems of control and coordination in any advanced industrial society, towards the creation and maintenance of a 'community' of managers. Thus, its primary concern is with the defence of boundaries, or as Anthony (1986) puts it

> "Management education is not, for the most part, concerned with objectivity, it is concerned with reinforcement" (p 138).

If we accept that the task of managing is of importance then this critique of management training is a matter of general public concern, for, far from contributing to the efficacy of management, it insulates managers from real questions about their authority.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, to restate, in summary form, the line of argument that has been developed. Secondly, to discuss the ways in which managers may respond to the changes in the organisational and working lives previously discussed. Finally, to suggest areas of empirical, conceptual and methodological enquiry pointed to by the arguments and evidence presented here.

At its most abstract the argument has been concerned with the relationship betweeen management training as a social process, its ideological content and the social creation and maintenance of the category manager as a salient feature of social relations at work. Central to this relationship is a sense of occupational identity as a manager. It has been argued that managers are the objects of forces which threaten to change and reshape managerial work making this sense of occupational identity more difficult to attain. Simultaneously, attempts are made to secure managers' continuing commitment to the values of the organisations, and, in particular to the interests of management. In this context, attendance at management training courses can serve to confer, or confirm managerial identity. It may clarify the boundary between managers and other employees, while at the same time increasing the internal solidarity of management by supplying shared experiences, and a common language through which to conceptualise problems in a 'managerial' way. Frequently, attendance at particular training courses will divide off crucial stages in career development, serving as distance markers with which to judge mobility in the hierarchy. From this perspective, management training can be viewed as a device which disseminates a particular ideology to legitimise managerial activities and to unify the management group. Managers draw upon the traditions of management thought discussed in Chapter 1 as they construct an appropriate ideology. Thus, scientific management, the human relations school and neo-human relations theories constitute a reservoir of ideas for managers. This is not to subscribe to a 'hypodermic' model of idealogy creation where managers are passive recipients of ideas developed by management theorists. Rather it is suggested that the practical, scientific and ideological aspects

of these management theories are combined with biographical and organisational experiences to produce sustainable ideologies. However, in the case of neo-human relations thinking, the content, with its seeming concern with the devolution of discretion and the creation of more meaningful jobs at the lower end of organisational hierarchies, threatens just those activities which sustained a managerial identity for middle managers.

If this argument is to be accepted we would need to be convinced that the following had occurred. First, that there have been changes in the organisation and content of managerial work, such that crucial elements of the employment relation between manager and employer were altered; for example, relative employment security and a predictable career. Second, that these changes made it harder to sustain a distinctly managerial identity. Thirdly, that management training acts as a rite of passage which is concerned with managerial identity. Finally, that neo-human relations thinking acts in two ways. On the one hand, it is presented as a form of privileged knowledge, access to which bolsters managerial identity. On the other, its implications for work threaten the very activities from which middle managers derive their sense of being a manager.

Evidence to establish the first claim rigorously requires a longitudinal data-set. Nevertheless, the evidence produced here, and in other studies of managers and their work presents a plausible case that significant change has taken place. Certainly, evidence of considerable organisational restructuring which has implications for managerial work is to be found in many, if not most, large UK organisations. The changes themselves have arisen in response to technical development, changed market situation and as a product of deliberate corporate policy. For the second claim, the analysis of interview material in Chapter Five sought to identify the activities which were most important to being a manager and those which most threatened this sense. It became clear that the kinds of changes taking place impinged upon the crucial identity building activities; the substance from which a managerial identity was created. Finally, in Chapter Six a management training course was analysed as a rite of passage. However, attention was drawn to the contradictions between its function as a social process and its implicit model of the manager. In particular, that it contradicted managers' own conception of managing as resting upon personal

attributes and practical knowledge by offering a spuriously technical knowledge base for the activity of managing. Taken together these lines of argument suggest that middle managers' sense of being a manager is fragile and affected by wider patterns of social change.

However, a number of caveats need to be inserted into this argument. The first of these has already been discussed. It is that we should be wary of making direct connections between changes in the structure of occupations and the social consciousness of the actors who hold them. Therefore, we should note that the particular characteristics of individual managers, or more importantly of categories of managers with similar social characteristics, mediate the efffects of changes at the occupational level. Secondly, we should resist a model which sees managers as entirely passive recipients of management thinking. Even though the claim is made that management thought serves as a general respository of legitimatory ideas, it is not suggested that all managers directly and consciously utilise the notions of Taylor, Mayo or Herzberg. Some managers are unaware of these authors, and even amongst those who know their work there is an attempt to blend abstract ideas about, for example, motivation, into their own pragmatic notions about social relations at work (Spybey 1984). Nevertheless, we should stress that via mechanisms like management journals and training the abstract ideas of 'management theory' provide recipes for being a manager. Thirdly, we should recognise that for the UK at least about 50% of managers have never had a single day off the job training (Handy 1987, Constable and McCormick 1987). If, therefore, it is correct that attendance at training courses helps to assure managers of their status why is it that more organisations do not use such a mechanism? A full answer to this questions falls outside the scope of this work but it may be that we can approach the issue conversely. That is to say that recent survey research reporting high levels of disaffection and low morale amongst managers (Scase and Goffee forthcoming) may be partially explained by the fragility of managerial identity.

Despite these caveats, if this argument has been at all persuasive then it suggests that we are moving to a situation where there is a gulf between the ideology of management and the real work

experience of managers. This gap may become so wide that it produces adjustments in terms of effort and involvement in work, undermining its position as a central life interest. To put the question simply, we need to ask 'how are managers responding to these changes in their work situation?'. What follows constitutes a speculative answer to this question, not a priori speculation, but based on frequent contact and involvement with managers in a variety of organisational settings. Nevertheless, it falls short of a systematic effort to provide evidence.

In any event, the first task is to make the question more specific by asking which managers have been most exposed to these changes? As we have seen, senior managers feel quite comfortable with their status and identity as managers; indeed, they may have benefitted from the concentration of control that has followed some organisational restructuring. In terms of hierarchy, most exposed have been the squeezed middle echelons, the middle managers. It is they who have borne the brunt of organisational restructuring, itself brought about by a variety of factors. It is here, therefore, that we might expect the managerial employment relationship to exhibit most indication of strain.

It may be possible to identify and illustrate a range of responses. The first is withdrawal from work. This response covers a continuum from physical removal from the work-place, through to varieties of psychological withdrawal, with consequent re-ordering of life interests. At its most extreme, this may take the form of the 'middle-class drop- out', so disenchanted with the organisational world of long hours, targets and appraisals that an entirely alternative life-style is sought (Palm 1977). Underpinning this response may be a vision of a more rewarding and meaningful life. (Abrams and McCulloch 1976, Pym 1986). We know relatively little about such people except perhaps as objects of fun in popular culture (eg The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin, The Good Life).

More common, and more thoroughly researched, are those managers who leave large organisations in order to start new businesses of their own (Scase and Goffee 1982 and 1986). They leave their

organisations because they feel stifled by the monitoring and control systems which they not only put into operation but which increasingly are applied to them (Smith 1988). Other factors which have been identified include a perception that their career prospects are limited, or that the organisation no longer offers complete security in exchange for total commitment. Of course, even in an environment which purports to support an 'enterprise culture', only a small minority actually leave to start new businesses. Even so, the number of self-employed has increased by almost 60% in the last twenty years (Bannock 1987). In addition, we should perhaps consider managers who become involved in 'buy-outs' as signalling disenchantment with their employment relation. There is also a sense in which it is not the 'leavers' who represent the most significant indication of a changed psychological contract. Rather it is those who seriously contemplate leaving to start their own businesses but who ultimately remain with their employer. A recent survey reports that 59% of male managers and 55% of women managers have comtemplated starting their own businesses (Scase and Goffee, forthcoming). The picture emerges of a disgruntled and frustrated group of managers who feel that their skills are under-utilised and under- recognised, who hanker for the seemingly attractive social world of the entrepreneur, but who remain, somewhat half-heartedly, in their jobs.

Of course, it is not implied that managers necessarily stay in this psychological 'limbo'. On the contrary, some may re-order their life interests in such a way that work is no longer a significant source of meaning and identity. For example, managers may redirect their efforts into leisure pursuits or pressure group activity. Consider the case of a 45 year old bank manager who had realised his long-standing ambition to run his own branch:

> "I've always wanted to have my own branch but now I'm here it doesn't seem that important. Most interesting things are done at regional head office - mostly I just follow the rules like I've always done ... but to my surprise I don't really mind. Over the years I've become very active in the Ramblers Association, that's the thing that really pleases me now - saving a footpath or something".

In some respects this comment encapsulates many of the changes to managerial work. The market position of the retail banks has changed, becoming increasingly competitive. In addition, technological developments have altered the content of managerial jobs, for example in the running of small branch operations. The emergence of satellite banking has concentrated skill and autonomy, either at regional centres or in a limited number of large branches. The occupation title 'branch manager' remains but the nature of the work has significantly altered. One response on the part of managers in this position may be a re-ordering of life interests so that outside activities compensate for the declining significance of work.

A similar response re-directs energies into domestic life. This occurs when the pressures of employment reach a point at which managers feel they need to exercise some choice over what is most important to them. A thirty eight year old personnel manager who had been heavily involved in a major phase of corporate re-structuring remarked:

> "This latest re-organisation has done it for me. It'd take every hour of the day if you let it. I've realised there are other things - family, friends, keeping sane, which are just more important to me. I'll do my bit but that's all".

Other managers have put it even more bluntly - "it was my marriage or the firm and I've chosen my family". Interestingly, this response may arise amongst both men and women managers for whom the demands of organisation no longer seem worth the offered rewards. The small but increasing presence of women in management means that the issue of striking a balance between the demands of the organisation and the obligations of the domestic is thrown into sharper focus, given that career interests of women have traditionally been subordinated to those of their partners (Crompton and Jones 1984).

When managers begin to make comments like "I'll do my bit but that's all" they indicate significant movement away from traditional stereotypes of managerial involvement in work exemplified in the

'Organization Man' (Whyte 1960). They also indicate another major form of response. We may call this the emergence of an instrumental attitude to work amongst managers. This may be manifested in a number of ways. Firstly, managers can exhibit an individualistic instrumentalism. This will involve making careful calculations about their own best interests rather than subsuming them to the interests of the organisation. For example, managers will 'job-hop' in pursuit of promotion, instead of pursuing long-term organisational careers (Brown 1982). Indeed, there is evidence that this is taking place both in the UK and America (Nicholson and West 1988, Work in America 1973). We must be careful here, however, not to present this instrumentalism in contrast to some supposed 'golden-age' when managers were fully socialized into organisational goals. Dalton's classic study presents the manager as a highly political creature, often scheming to further individual ends in contradiction to the goals of the organisation (Dalton 1959). Nevertheless, one important way in which managers can redefine their employment relationship is to see it increasingly in terms of individual ends. This view cannot be sustained by either human or neo-human relations thinking though it is in some respects the application of the narrow self-interested economism, recommended by Taylor for workers, to managers themselves.

Another manifestation of this instrumentalism may be distinguished. It concerns the manager who seems fully committed to the organisation, its products, its values and its culture but who is merely 'presenting' an appearance of commitment. This display gives the impression of total involvement with the organisation but is based on careful calculation as to how long this impression should be sustained. In a sense, penetrating this 'front' is much easier for people outside the organisation, for it is in informal conversation with safe outsiders that managers will confide the limited nature of their involvement. A similar deception is practised by managers who cultivate an air of worldly cynicism, for example, sitting through training courses with a knowing smile 'I've heard it all before'. This apparently tough exterior often hides real doubts about the meaning of work, about career proposects and ultimately about job security.

Alternatively, managers can pursue a strategy of instrumental collectivism by joining trades unions or staff associations. This is the route taken by increasing numbers of clerical workers (Crompton and Jones 1984) and there is some evidence that middle managers could form a fertile recruitment base for some unions (Prandy, Stewart and Blackburn 1983). However, the extent to which this option is taken up will be affected by factors external to the organisation; by labour market conditions and the legislative framework for collective organisation. Current conditions are generally unfavourable for a significant growth in managerial unionism. Despite this, it may be significant that employers are still wary of the possibility of such developments, making it clear to their managerial employees that union membership is incompatible with full integration into the organisation's culture.

Of course, some managers may decide that a managerial identity is unimportant to them. They still feel, however, very much a part of organisational life. In so far as this is the case they may attempt to develop an alternative identity which is organisationally legitimate. For example, by rejecting the managerial role and embracing the role of professional. This can provide a space 'above' the contested ground of managing which still gives access to a relatively privileged organisational position. The extent to which this option can be pursued depends on the individual being fully credentialled as a professional. Thus, we might expect it to be found amongst accountants, lawyers, and perhaps, engineers (Armstrong 1987). Once again, the traditional recipes of managerial idealogy have little to offer in sustaining this response. Instead managers, may turn to a 'value-neutral' technocratic stance which excludes them from conflicts of interest at the workplace.

Finally, a response recently observed has been to passionately re-assert the central tenets of the work ethic. This group, the 'new goodies', believe in the importance of their work, in the rights of the organisation to use them as it sees fit, and in the personal benefits to be gained from 'hard work' in the organisation's interest. These, often younger, managers are willing disciples to the pleas for stronger and more pervasive organisational cultures and keen mouthpieces for the company line. For example, a 33 year old commercial manager in a recently privatised company felt utterly committed to the organisation:

"I believe in what's happening here - and I'll do all I can to make it happen ... There's pressure but if you're good enough you'll get things done - too many hide, blaming other people. I like the way things are changing, I'd like to be part of it. We could be the best".

This response may be brought about by the organisational changes produced, perhaps temporarily, by privatisation but another example comes from a traditional, rather sleepy, brewing company. Thus, a 35 year distribution manager claims:

"It matters to me - to me personally, that we run the best outfit in the business. I don't like leaving the depot 'cos this is where it all happens. My wife understands, the job has to come first. I wish there were more people like me here - but it's coming - the culture is changing".

Predictably, associated with this view comes a firm belief in career. The 'new goodies' are organisationally ambitious. The same commercial manager remarked:

"I'd like to make it to the Board - it's possible and I'll go for it - anyone can make it if they're good and work for it".

Explaining this apparent enthusiasm for organisational life is difficult. One element may be the impact of Thatcherism. However, such a connection would be paradoxical. We would need to believe that a philosophy of self-help and pursuit of individual interest may have invigorated a form of corporate collectivism. Perhaps, a more plausible line of explanation is to suggest that this proclamation of the centrality of work, and the significance of career is precisely a reaction to the changes in managerial work and the threats to its traditional certainties. It is almost as if managers need to assert that which is most uncertain. It is hard to tell whether their future experiences of organisational life will modify their beliefs or whether the ideology is not so powerful that it may defy falsifying experiences.

Having outlined a range of responses by managers to their changed work situation, it is incumbent to make some attempt at explaining which of these is adopted by whom. As suggested earlier, a full answer to this question would require a research method which controlled for a large number of variables. However, it is possible to consider which of these are likely to be significant, though it is openly conceded that discussing this area constitutes a plea for further research.

Firstly, attention should be paid to differences between manageement functions. The extent to which they have been exposed to social change varies. For example, in finance and accounting we have seen both the routinisation of some work and the emergence of new powerful occupations concerned with the introduction of computer systems into the accounting function. In production management the introduction of CAM has begun to re-shape managerial activities, particularly in the area of production planning. Consideration of this variable will reinforce the general point that management is not monolithic by function but, to some extent internally differentiated. There exists one tendency for management to differentiate around inter-departmental conflicts another to solidify around shared interests as 'managers' of the organisation. The interplay between these tendencies requires careful empirical analysis.

Secondly, the organisational type will affect both the extent of change in the managerial work situation and the likely response of managers to these changes. There may well be significant differences between the public and private sectors. In some public sector organisations a general commitment to the common good and a highly developed public service ethos may help to maintain a belief in the significance of work. Even the relatively long- term public expenditure cuts may have helped to heighten esprit de corps (Crompton and Jones 1984).

In addition, the existing form of organisation structure mediates changes. For example, the effect of change on well-established extensive bureaucratic structures may well be different from those in organisations with organic structures. It should be stressed, however, that this is a matter for investigation rather than deduction. Most of the managers referred to in this thesis have been

located in large, relatively bureaucratic organisations. The social world of the manager in small and medium-sized businesses without bureaucratic control mechanisms might be quite different. The view taken here, however, is that, even though the form of the changes in work situation might differ, the consequences will be quite similar.

Thirdly, it is clear that rates of market and technical change vary between sectors of economic activity. In consequence, some organisations will remain relatively insulated from change. In these situations the predictable world of the middle manager may remain intact. For others, the pace of recent market and technological development has forced some drastic restructuring. Even here however, we should distinguish between those organisations which are still growing, in dynamic environments, and those where reacting to change has entailed labour force reductions, producing redundancies or blocked careers.

Finally, a range of biographical characteristics may help to explain the response individual managers make. These might include age, life cycle, gender, educational qualifications, and social origins. Underlying the operation of these variables is a recognition of the complex relationship between occupations and the social meanings they engender. As has been argued previously, the social characteristics of the incumbent impinge upon the social significance of an occupation. This general point can be illustrated. For example, it has been claimed that organisational restructuring has had an impact on the careers of middle managers. However, the ways in which particular individuals respond to such changes are likely to be related to biographical factors. The young graduate entrant with additional 'professional' post-entry qualifications will view such curtailment of career in a different way from a middle-aged, former skilled manual worker who will already have experienced considerable career mobility by reaching middle management. A further example might be concerned with the relationship between life cycle and employment security, such that, during particular periods like the early stages of child-rearing, the so-called 'nesting' phase, employment security becomes highly salient. However, it must be stressed that in recognising the problematic relationship between occupation and incumbent it is not suggested that either

occupations or occupational structures cannot form objects of study in their own right (cf Stewart et al 1980). Indeed, they can be the subject of general processes of social change, the consequences of which will be mediated by the characteristics of individual occupation-holders.

Having outlined a range of managerial responses and presented a list of variables which may help to explain the patterning of responses, it has to be conceded that the resolution of questions thus raised will need to be the subject of further research. However, there may be issues which have arisen in this work which could be utilised in subsequent research in this area.

Further research should reject the assumption that management is monolithic. It is clear that we need to make both functional and hierarchical distinctions in order to understand the social significance of managerial occupations. In addition, we should recognise that managers possess agency, but an agency bounded by their structural location. If we adopt this position we will avoid treating them either as the puppet of the capitalist or as an all-powerful interest group in their own right. The recognition of this may have methodological implications. To put it simply, we should listen to what they say about their work, their careers and their employment relations. It matters how actors see the social world, even if we are prepared to allow for the possibility that they do not always see it as it is. Further, it may be that the development of analytic techniques derived from systemic linguistics would enhance our access to the social consciousness of particular categories of actors. Some analysis based on this view of the relation between language and social consciousness has been attempted in Chapter Five. Clearly these techniques require development if they are to make a major contribution to sociological methodology.

In any event, arguing for a connection between language and social consciousness does not amount to a suggestion that the social is constituted by the actors' definition of it. On the contrary, it is fundamental to the argument developed here that theorising the structural location of managers is central to the analysis of their social significance. That understanding their activities, functions, norms and values must rest upon a view of their position in the social division of labour, and in

the wider social structures of advanced capitalist societies (Clegg and Dunkerley 1977, 1980, Salaman 1981, Wilmott 1987). Our final remarks are addressed to issues in this area.

Much of the argument in this thesis has focussed upon the ways in which managers construct a particular occupational identity for themselves. However, in order to appreciate the wider sociological significance of this process we need to turn again to questions of social location and class discussed in Chapter Three. Indeed, the general intention of the following discussion is to demonstrate the fertile connections to be made between the sociology of occupations, the sociology of organisations and the structures of social stratification. The nature of these connections can be examined by exploring the position of the manager in recent debates concerning 'service class' theory.

The re-invigoration of this concept, mainly through the work of J. Goldthorpe (Goldthorpe 1982, 1988, see also Abercombe and Urry 1983)) has been of considerable importance in analysing the position of the intermediate strata in advanced capitalist societies. Goldthorpe acknowledges that the idea of the service class originates with the work Karl Renner (see Bottomore and Goode 1978), who was concerned to theorise the ways in which state officials, and managers and administrators in private business were differentiated from the working class. Renner's argument was that even though these employees do not own the means of production their labour is unproductive, that is they are not a source of surplus value but are paid out of it. More importantly for current sociological concerns, Renner attempts to show that they are involved in a different kind of employment relation. They have relative security of employment and access to a stable and predictable career structure. Underlying these advantaged employment conditions is a labour contract which rests upon a large measure of trust. Goldthorpe regards this last element as having considerable relevance to the question of the intermediate strata in advanced capitalist societies. In particular, he argues that we can use it to describe the class position of professional, administrative and managerial employees. His argument is summarised as follows:-

"These employees, in being typically engaged in the exercise of delegated authority or in the application of specialist knowledge and expertise, operate in their work tasks and roles with a distinctive degree of autonomy and discretion, and in direct consequence of the element of trust that is necessarily involved in their relationship with their employing organisation, they are accorded conditions of employment which are also distinctive in both the level and kind of rewards that are involved" (Goldthorpe 1982 p 169).

The need for trust arises from the necessity to delegate authority and from the utility of specialised knowledge and expertise. To translate these requirements into the conventional terms of the sociology of organisations, they refer to managers and professionals. Our current concern is with the former. However, it should be noted that Goldthorpe goes on to claim that a service class composed of managers, administrators and professionals can be distinguished as a class grouping. It is differentiated on the one hand from the 'higher agency' (op cit p 170) it serves, though this may not be another class, and on the other from "routine clerical and sales workers, technicians, foremen and other supervisory personnel" (op cit 170).

Within the class framework thus proposed managers may be located in one of two groups; either the service class proper or what Goldthorpe calls the 'subaltern or cadet levels of the service class' (Goldthorpe et al 1980, pp 39-40). These positions are themselves located in a seven-fold class schema produced by collapsing the thirty six category version of the Hope- Goldthorpe scale (Goldthorpe and Hope 1974). Into Class 1 go 'managers in large industrial establishments'; in Class 2 go 'lower-grade administrators and officials; managers in small business and industrial establishments and in services ...' (Goldthorpe et al 1980 p 40). It is clear then that the managers discussed in this thesis fall in either Class 1 or 2. We should also note that Goldthorpe groups classes 1 and 2 together, indeed speaking only of upward mobility when it concerns movement into these classes and only of downward mobility when it concerns movement out of them. They are distinguished from an 'intermediate' class (composed of Class 3, 4 and 5 of the collapsed H-G scale) and the working class (composed of Class 6 and 7).

We need to be quite clear as to why managers fall into these categories and what it is that distinguishes them from the 'intermediate' class. Treating Goldthorpe's writing on the issue as a whole, four factors seem to be identified which ensure service class membership for managers. Firstly, it is claimed that they enjoy security of employment. Secondly, that they have access to a career structure. Thirdly, that they exercise delegated authority at the work-place. Finally, that their work is characterised by high levels of discretion. The evidence and argument presented here suggest that for middle managers all of these are threatened.

Thus, they are increasingly exposed to the possiblity of redundancy. It is important here to recognise that the absolute amounts of managerial redundancy are not as important as the symbolic significance of even relatively small numbers of redundancy. The damage is to the 'trust' thought to characterise their employment relation (cf Fox 1974). Further, their careers are threatened by organisational restructuring. While it was noted earlier that belief in 'career' may be remarkably resistant to experiences which demystify it, there are grounds for thinking that safe and stable careers are no longer a characteristic of managerial employment. Finally, the delegated authority and discretion claimed to characterise the work of managers is itself being undermined. Organisational and technical change may limit discretion and centralise control while, at the same time, middle managers are subject to increased monitoring, measurement and appraisal. On this basis, we would suggest that middle managers cannot be unambiguously located in the service class by virtue of their employment relation. Their identity as managers, and the advantaged nature of or their employment situation are being eroded, despite processes of occupational and organisational socialisation.

Of course, it has to be conceded that the material presented here offers only suggestive evidence for these changes. However, it should be stressed that models of the stratification system offered by, for example, Goldthorpe must rest upon case studies of particular occupations. They can only be built from detailed studies of individuals engaged in occupations at certain times (Crompton and Jones 1988). Such studies will always offer suggestive rather than definitive data; but it is only on the basis of these that macro-sociological discussion can take place at all.

This thesis has argued that changes in the social organisation of managerial work have impinged upon the occupational identity of middle managers. It has become clear that such a process is of relevance to wider questions concerning the social structure of advanced capitalist societies. In particular, it is suggested that the creation and maintenance of the category manager as a salient feature of social relations at work is connected to the processes which produce, reproduce and change systems of social stratification. Thus our concern with the occupational identities of middle managers is ultimately concerned with questions of class structure and reproduction.

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APPENDIX

This appendix supplies more information about the seventy respondents interviewed during the course of the investigation of the management training scheme. Within the text the responses of some managers are drawn upon extensively. They are identified by a name or by job description and location; for these managers a detailed profile follows. Other respondents, who figure less prominently in the text, are introduced more briefly.

MR ARKWRIGHT - PERSONNEL MANAGER

Mr. Arkwright, aged 42, is a Personnel Manager in an electronics factory. He has been with the Company for 11 years, having a varied and extensive experience of manufacturing industry prior to joining.

Mr. Arkwright describes himself as having had no formal education in the academic sense. He left school at 14 with no qualifications and had to study for two years at a local evening class before he could go on to do a technical course at College. He did not complete the course because he had become more interested in youth work, outside of College. This is an interest which Mr. Arkwright has pursued for some 20 years and with which he is still involved.

Mr. Arkwright then did 2 years as an apprentice electrical engineer, leaving before completing his apprenticeship to join an electrical installation firm. After 2 years National Service in the RAF, he went on to work as a foreman in a company in the aeronautics business, including work for defence contracts. Mr. Arkwright was with this firm for 6 years, after which he joined a small electrical installation manufacturing concern. From there he came to his present company as a Production Supervisor. During his time in this job Mr. Arkwright was an ASTMS steward, representing Production Supervisors. He had previously been a shop steward in the E.T.U.

Mr. Arkwright moved into Personnel after 6 years on the production side of the factory. He began studying for the Institute of Personnel Managament exams on a day-release basis but found it too much to cope with along with work commitments. Mr. Arkwright runs a small personnel department in tandem with another Personnel Manager.

MR. HARPER - STAFFING ADVISOR PERSONNEL DEPT.

Mr. Harper, aged 41, is Staffing Advisor in the Central Personnel Department of a multi-national company with many factories in the U.K.. The company manufactures a range of electrical and electronic equipment. Mr. Harper is responsible for recruitment and training of staff right across the group. He is based in the South of England. Mr. Harper has been with the company for 5 years. His educational background is a degree in Geography and a Masters degree in Human Geography. After completing these courses, Mr. Harper continued his studies in the States, gaining an American qualification of M.A. is Sociology. Mr. Harper returned to the U.K. to do his military service.

Mr. Harper's next move was into the Training Department of a large restaurant and hotel chain. He was with this company for 10 or 11 years, working as training Manager at one of their manufacturing divisions and then in central training.

Mr. Harper joined his present company as Personnel Manager of their central information office. He has been in his present job for less than a year.

MR. BECKER - HEAD OF TECHNICAL EFFICIENCY OFFICE

Mr. Becker, aged 46, is Head of the Technical Efficiency office in a factory making electrical and electronic goods. The factory is located in Scotland. Mr. Becker has been with the company for

14 years. His present job involves responsibility for the costing of production materials, wages and bonuses.

Mr. Becker was educated in Germany, describing his background as practical rather than academic. Mr. Becker served an apprenticeship and studied at evening classes to obtain the German equivalent of a Higher National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering. Mr. Becker's working career has been in the U.K., initially with a firm manufacturing business machinery - typewriters etc. and then with his present company.

Mr. Becker joined the company as a technical estimator, costing products from scratch. He has never been a member of a Trade Union though he explains that the closed shop is widespread in Germany. Mr. Becker is a member of the Management Plant Committee.

MR. HEADING - DIVISIONAL MANAGER

Mr. Heading, aged 50, is Divisional Manager in a factory making a range of electrical and electronic equipment. The factory is in the North of England. There are six Product Divisions in the factory and, as Division Head, Mr. Heading describes himself as nominally responsible for everything that goes on in the Division. He is a member of the Plant Management Committee.

Mr. Heading had a grammar school education, going on to obtain a degree in natural sciences at Oxbridge. He has been with his present company for 22 years.

MR. CORBETT - PRODUCTION CONTROLLER

Mr. Corbett, aged 56, is Deputy Head of Production Control at a factory in the South of England manufacturing electrical and electronic equipment. Mr. Corbett has been with the company for 13 years.

Mr. Corbett had a Secondary School education. His engineering apprenticeship was interrupted by the outbreak of war but he was able to complete his apprenticeship when he joined the Royal Navy a couple of years later. Mr. Corbett left the Navy as a Petty Officer. He went on to obtain his City and Guilds qualification in Mechanical Engineering through study at evening classes. Five years ago, Mr. Corbett completed an Institute of Works Managers' course.

Mr. Corbett was previously with a company making flight simulator equipment. He started in the firms' planning office as a job controller, rising to become Chief of Planning. The former Chief of Planning had left under a cloud and Corbett had taken the job on the understanding that his position would be made permanent after a six month trial period. According to Mr. Corbett, though he performed satisfactorily in the post, he was told that financial contingencies made it impossible for the company to pay him for doing the job. Corbett resigned and came in to his present firm as a job controller, which was a step down for him.

Mr. Corbett has now reached a higher position than he had with his former company. Mr. Corbett was a member of a trades union but let his membership lapse when he attained the level of Chief of Planning with his previous firm, seeing union membership as incompatible with his management status.

MR. HILL - PRODUCTION ENGINEER

Mr. Hill, aged 34, is a Production Engineer in a factory making technically sophisticated equipment. The factory is in the South East of England. Mr. Hill has been with the Company for 5 years.

He began his working life as an engineering apprentice, going on to work for an aeronautical company then for a small engineering company. He moved to a company making domestic appliances before joining his present firm. Since joining Mr. Hill has been involved in machine

tool development and drawing, going on to become workshop Manager, then Section Leader on the production engineering side. From there he came into his present position in the Technical Efficiency office of the factory.

Mr. Hill attended secondary modern school, doing a special course for engineering up to age 16. He then studied for 7 years at technical college, on a part-time day release basis, where he obtained the Higher National Certificate for Production Engineering.

Mr. Hill is not currently a member of a Trade Union. He was formerly in the A.U.E.W. but did not renew his membership after his previous Company closed down.

He is very interested in the technical problems of producing sophisticated medical equipment with an assurance of high-quality and is enthusiastic about achieving this with the company.

MR. GORDON - SECTION LEADER

Mr. Gordon, aged 37, is Section Leader in a factory making electrical and electronic equipment for consumer goods. The factory is in the South of England. Mr. Gordon has been with the Company for 8 years.

Mr. Gordon was educated at grammar school. He went on to become a qualified member of the Institute of Works Managers, and to obtain a qualification in Works Study. He had part-time day release from his firm to study Works Management but obtained his Works Study qualification entirely independently, by dint of studying at evening classes 3 nights a week for 2 years.

Mr. Gordon previously worked for various manufacturing companies in London and the South East, including a spell in the Accounts Department of a multinational oil company. His last job before

joining the Company was progress chaser in a small engineering company. He feels that not having a degree will hold back his career in the organisation.

MR. MCLEISH - PERSONNEL MANAGER

Mr. McLeish, aged 48, is Personnel Manager in a factory in Scotland which manufactures electrical and electronic equipment. Mr. McLeish has been with the firm for 6 years.

Mr. McLeish was educated in Scotland to the level of Scottish Higher. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1943 to 1946 and found it difficult to settle into a job after that. Eventually he joined a large food manufacturing company as an assistant buyer, moving into personnel after 3 or 4 years. After 3 years there, Mr. McLeish transferred to a factory in the North of England where he spent eight years, still in the personnel division. He was then offered a promotion which would have meant moving to London. McLeish was not prepared to do this and left the company with the view to returning to Scotland.

Mr. McLeish took a job with an electrical equipment manufacturer but was subsequently made redundant. After a brief spell as Personnel Manager with a watch manufacturing firm, he joined his present company, located in his home town.

Mr. McLeish has never been a member of a Trade Union. He sits on the Management Plant Committee along with five other Departmental heads and the Plant Manager.

MR. CROMPTON - PRODUCTION MANAGER

Mr. Crompton, aged 36, is Production Manager in an electrical assembly factory in Scotland.

Mr. Crompton attended grammar school in Northern Ireland then joined the Royal Navy where he studied marine engineering. He went on to study at night school for 10 years, obtaining Higher National Certificates in Chemical Engineering and subsequently in Electrical and Electronic Engineering. He obtained a further qualification in Work Study Engineering, also by means of study at evening classes. In addition to his experience in the field of marine engineering, Mr. Crompton has also worked in a Drawing Office where he was responsible for checking tool design.

Mr. Crompton has been with his present company for 11 years, initially as an assistant foreman and rising to become head of production. As Production Manager, he sits on the Plant Management Committee along with five other Departmental Heads and the Plant Manager.

Mr. Crompton was a member of an Engineering Union during the four and a half years he worked in the naval dockyards but says he was never an active member.

MR. MEREDITH - PERSONNEL MANAGER

Mr. Meredith, aged 37, is Personnel Manager in a factory making electrical and electronic goods in the North of England. He has been with the company for 5 years, including a period working at a new plant in the North-East.

Mr. Meredith was educated at grammar school then at University where he initially studied Theology. After deciding that a career in the Church was not for him, he went on to gain a degree in Law. His first job after college was with a pharmaceutical company. From there, Mr. Meredith joined an engineering firm, moving on to spend 7 years with a large manufacturing company. During this time Mr. Meredith attended evening classes, sponsored by his employer, and obtained a Diploma in Management Studies.

MR. BENTLEY - WORKS MANAGER

Mr. Bentley, aged 48, is Works Manager of a Metal Works located in the South of England. The factory makes components for televisions and other equipment which it supplies to its parent company and to associated companies. Mr. Bentley has been with the company for 21 years.

Mr. Bentley left school at 15. His working life began during the War years when he was employed at the Ministry of Food, going on to serve in the Royal Air Force then in the Royal Navy. In the intervening period of his service hs became interested in engineering. For a short time after his military service, Mr. Bentley worked as an insurance agent. Finding this career neither enjoyable nor profitable, Mr. Bentley joined a marine engineering company where he stayed for six years, while acquiring a trade.

During his time with this firm, Mr. Bentley began studying at evening classes to obtain a Higher National Certificate in Production Engineering. This took five or six years to achieve. By this time Mr. Bentley had left his job as a supervisor and had joined his present company as a Work Study Trainee.

After a 4 year training period he went on to become a Technical Efficiency Officer then Works Manager of a radio assembly plant. From there he moved to the metal working side of production where he is Works Manager. Mr. Bentley does not sit on the Plant Management Committee.

MR. SYKES - PRODUCTION MANAGER

Mr. Sykes, aged 34, is Production Manager in a Factory in the North of England making electrical and electronic goods. Mr. Sykes has been with the company for five years.

Mr. Sykes is a graduate with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He previously worked for a computer manufacturer for four and a half years, joining his present firm as a production engineer. He says he soon discovered there was no such job in the plant and that in effect he was a foreman (he had unsuccessfully applied for a Technical Efficiency Office job with the company). When the Production Manager left to go to another plant, Sykes got the job. He is not a member of the Plant Management Committee.

MR. BART - HEAD OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Mr. Bart, aged 49, is Head of Management Services in a large factory in the South of England. He has been with the company for twenty years, including a three year spell at another factory in the South-East.

Mr. Bart had a grammar school education, leaving school at 16 to train in industry as a chemical analyst, then in the Royal Air Force as a radio mechanic. He went on to obtain a University degree in Chemistry and Mathematics.

Mr. Bart joined the company as a technical assistant, going on to become a Unit Production Manager then Works Production. After expansion of the factory, Mr. Bart became Technical Product Manager, moving from there to the Management Service Division which he currently heads. In this capacity he sits on the Plant Management Committee, along with eleven other functional heads.

Since joining the company Mr. Bart has completed courses in Solid State Physics at a London Polytechnic, as well as receiving regular management training.

MR. BOOTH - HEAD OF OPERATIONS RESEARCH

Mr. Booth, aged 42, is Head of the Operations Research Department in a factory which makes and assembles consumer electrical goods and electronic appliances. The factory is in the South of England.

Mr. Booth joined the company as a Trainee Statistician 18 years ago, having gained a degree in Economics. During his training he was based at various plants in Scotland and was subsequently transferred to his current workplace. Mr. Booth has never worked elsewhere, the company having been his sole employer. He was recruited very much as a technical 'expert' and has found the transition in to an increasingly managerial position somewhat difficult.

Personnel Manager - Headquarters

A 47 year old personnel manager concerned with developing personnel practices. He has been with the company for 15 years, previously employed in a number of small light engineering firms. He has Institute of Personnel Management qualifications obtained through part-time study.

Senior Development Manager

This 50 year old manager is concerned with the development of production techniques involved in the mass production of electrical consumer durable goods. Essentially, a graduate engineer by training, he has acquired further qualifications in Production Technology obtained with support from his current employer. He has been with the company for 17 years after previous experience in a domestic appliance business. His job involves him in close contact both with production managers and first line supervisors. He functions to improve production methods in a proactive way but is also used as a trouble shooter for urgent 'technical' problems. He has never been a trades union member.

Divisional Manager

A senior manager, aged 52, based in the North West of England. He has 24 years service with the company. He is an Oxbridge natural sciences graduate and joined the organisation more or less straight from university. His current job involves reponsibility for a number of production units manufacturing a range of components from simple devices used in consumer goods to sophisticated components used in advanced medical technology. His company career has involved relatively frequent geographical moves as he made his way up the production, engineering and research hierarchies. He has never been a union member.

Head of Production Control

Mr. Corbett's boss is 44 years old. He is a science graduate who has been with the company for six years. His previous work experience includes periods both in large public and private sector organisations. Most of his work is, and has been concerned with the use of planning techniques to improve production flows, reducing costs and improving quality, though the relation between these goals has varied between organisations. Currently based in the South of England he expects that career development for him will require geographical mobility. Early on in his career he was briefly a member of a technicians trade union.

Management Accountant

A 32 year old who has been with the company for 12 years. He has in a sense acquired his occupational credentials entirely in this organisation.

He has worked in a variety of management accounting roles and his current job involves him in preparing regular management accounts in close collaboration with his own boss.

Cost Management Accountant

This 38 year old has responsibility for producing management information. He has 8 years experience with the organisation after qualifying in a competitor firm. He is a graduate with no trades union membership. Changes in the management information systems of the organisation offer possibilities for this manager provided he can master the technical changes which are their vehicle.

Planning Manager

A 35 year old located in the production planning department of a large assembling plant in Southern England. He joined the organisation as an A-level technical entrant and has been there ever since. He has never been in a union even though his own promotion into 'management' has been relatively recent.

Manager, Management Services

A 48 year old manager with 12 years company experience. His current job involves supplying operational research data to production managers and engineers throughout a large southern manufacturing plant producing a range of electrical products. He is a graduate in Statistics with a Masters Degree in Operations Research. He manages a small team of technical specialist all of whom are graduates. He has been a trade union member with his previous employer but felt it inappropriate in this organisation.

Divisional Production Manager

This 52 year old has responsibility for one production line in a factory operating six lines. He has been with the company for 23 years. He is a former tradesman who has been promoted steadily

up the hierarchy of production management. He was a union member until he became a supervisor.

Management Accountant

A 36 year old with 4 years company service. He graduated in Accounting and acquired professional qualification in another organisation before joining his current employer. He has a small number of clerical and part-qualified accountants reporting to him.

Senior Mechanical Designer

A 40 year old, with only 3 years experience in the company, he has an engineering degree and previous employment in several hi-tech organisations. He has found this company rather hierarchical and feels this has hampered his effectiveness.

Personnel Manager

This former tradesman in a Northern factory has worked for the company for 12 years, the last 8 in the personnel function. He is 40 years old and has previous employment experience in several small engineering companies. His move into personnel followed an industrial accident and he has subsequently gained I.P.M. qualifications with company support. As a tradesman he was a union member but found this impossible to sustain when he moved into personnel.

Financial Accountant

This 43 year old manager was resonsible for the flow of financial information from a large Scottish manufacturing site into the Headquarters finance function. He had been with the company for four years and had been employed in several manufacturing and service organisations.

Management Services Officer

A 42 year old manager responsible for the collation of production information for the planning department and for production managers. He was based in a factory in the North West of England. He did not have a degree but had collected some vocational qualifications through part-time study, sometimes with employer support. He had worked in a variety of manufacturing organisations before joining this company 8 years ago. Previous employers had operated closed-shop agreements and in these circumstances he had been a union member.

Workshop Manager

Aged 52, this manager was a former tradesman with 20 years company service. His experience within the organisation had moved him around various kinds of production activities but never far away from the production process itself. He had always been based in the South of England. His union membership had ended when he moved into management though he expressed some regret that membership no longer seemed appropriate. His current job involved much 'hands-on' managing with a strong reliance on his technical skills and experience and on 'man-managing'.

Production Manager

Aged 40 and a graduate engineer, this manager was responsible for high quality, technologically advanced medical equipment. His job required detailed technical involvement in production processes. He had worked for the company for six years and had previously been employed in research and in production for a competitor. His small workforce were mostly highly trained technicians.

Production Planner

Aged 50, this manager had been with the company for eight years after a varied employment history including clerical work, selling, progress chasing and a variety of supervisory occupations. His current position involved liaising between production and marketing functions. He was rather under-qualified for his job but this had not discouraged him from a belief in the possibilities of further promotion.

Manager, Central Information Systems

This manager was a former system analyst and programmer whose current job involved supplying information technology 'solutions' to various departments, both production and commercial. Aged 36 he had worked in several organisations where he had developed information systems. He was a graduate of philosophy and had been unionised intermittently earlier in his career.

Product Development Manager

This manager aged 34 was an ex-foreman who had experienced quite substantial promotion into a product development position concerned with speciality valves. He had high expectations of his own further promotion prospects despite the absence of extensive formal qualifications.

Senior Production Manager

This manager had responsibility for production in several Midlands plants. He was aged 54, and had nearly 30 years company experience. His natural science degree form Cambridge had pushed him towards the technical aspects of production but he had had periods in the marketing function. His long service had given him a mildly skeptical view of management training but his involvement in organisational culture kept him generally committed to company values.

Production Manager

A young manager aged 28. He had a degree in Mechanical Engineering and both expected, and was expected to make rapid progress in the company. His strong technical expertise was accompanied by a strong desire to enter senior management.

Personnel Manager, Central Personnel

A 'career' personnel manager this 43 year old was currently responsible for harmonising some personnel practices across divisions within the U.K.. In particular, with the upgrading of personnel records in order to facilitate manpower planning. He was a social science graduate with further I.P.M. qualifications.

Operations Research Manager

A 34 year old specialist manager in charge of a small unit located in a larger Management Services function. He had a postgraduate degree and had previously been employed as an academic researcher. In this previous employment he had been unionised but had left the union when he joined this organisation 5 years previously.

Personnel Manager

A 40 year old manager who had been with the company for 12 years, initially as a production supervisor. He had entered personnel 4 years previously and was studying for I.P.M. examinations. His previous work experience covered a range of jobs involved with light engineering, including clerical and sales work.

Distribution Manager

A 45 year old distribution manager with 22 years experience with the company. He had been recruited as a clerk in the distribution function and had moved to this department and purchasing as he made his way up the organisation. His current job involved the distribution of components to plants throughout the U.K. for further assembly. He felt that he had experienced considerable career mobility with the organisation and identified with it strongly.

Production Manager

Mr. Hill's immediate superior, a 51 year old production manager. He had been with the organisation for 12 years after experience in several technically advanced engineering businesses. A graduate engineer he was attracted to the organisation by its reputation for technical excellence. His role involved participating in the plant level senior management team.

Manager, Export Department

A 39 year old graduate in modern languages who had worked both in the U.K. and in Europe for this organisation. He had 10 years company experience and had previously worked as a civil servant. He expressed cynicism about the training process, regarding it as a self-perpetuating part of the business which contributed little to its overall effectiveness. He had never been a trades union member even though he had been active in his Students Union.

Product Manager

A 42 year old non-graduate with 8 years company experience. His previous work had been in sales and marketing departments in several manufacturing businesses. His current job involved

responsibility for the marketing of a small range of domestic products. He was overtly ambitious and yet quite distanced from the organisational culture.

Audit Manager

A 36 year old accountant who had joined the organisation as a graduate trainee, gaining his accounting qualifications with help from the organisation. His current job entailed the supervision of internal audit for a complete manufacturing plant. He had six direct reports, though more were involved in the audit operation. He was a keen advocate of training, claiming it gave him greater insight into the operation of the whole business.

Senior Valuation Surveyor

A 44 year old 'specialist' who managed a small team of professional surveyors in a central function. He had joined the organisation from a County Council fourteen years previously. His initial reason for moving was higher salary but he had found the industrial environment increasingly challenging, though his own activities were threatened by fear of contracting operations in the U.K.

Computer Systems Manager

A 34 year old graduate manager, located at Head Office. He had been with the company for four years after varied experience as a systems analyst. Like many staff in information technology he had a comparatively low attachment to this organisation, though his four years service made it the longest time with any one employer. His current role was largely consultative. He acted as an expert resource for other parts of the business attempting information technology development. This involved building compatibility into overall systems.

Management Accountant

A 40 year old fully qualified Cost and Management accountant managing a small team of management accountants located at a manufacturing plant in Southern England. He had 21 years service, joining the organisation with A-levels. His post-entry qualifications had been acquired with the help of the company. He had never joined a trades union. Despite his long service he was just beginning to consider whether movement to a smaller organisation would advance his career.

Audit Supervisor

A 33 year old qualified accountant who had also joined straight from A - levels and completed his professional qualifications while employed. His job involved the management of an element of the audit function within a large plant. He reported to an Audit Manager and led a team made up of two qualified accountants, three part-qualified and four clerical and secretarial staff. He feels that his current job makes him feel more part of the 'management team'.

Sales Training Officer

A 32 year old located in a centralised function supplying and organising sales training throughout the organisation. He manages a team of four trainers with two administrative and secretarial support staff. He is a graduate who received sales training in a large multi-national food manufacturer. He joined this organisation four years ago as a trainer and after two years was promoted to his current position.

Senior Industrial Designer

A 37 year old graduate engineer who had been with the organisation for 15 years. His current job was concern to integrate design issues with production concerns. He was thus involved in project

teams, working parties, and other laterally-integrating work teams. He had only two direct subordinates, even though he would have a quite senior role in a project team. Technical and market changes were beginning to highlight the importance of his job which acted to reassure any career anxieties.

Manager, Computer Department

A 40 year old non-graduate manager who ran the computing operation at a large plant. He was directly concerned with the operation of the systems and had ten people working directly for him. He had joined the company 10 years previously as computer programmer but had rapidly moved into a supervisory role on the operations side. In earlier jobs he had been a relatively active union member but had left the union when he took up his current post.

Marketing Manager

A 38 year old graduate manager located in a centralised marketing function. He has 10 years company experience after working in marketing for another large company manufacturing consumer durable goods. His current job gives him eight direct reports and he is head of department of 37. The most important aspect of his job, as he perceives it, is to encourage more market-oriented management in all functions.

Building and Works Manager

A 47 year old former tradesman who has been with the company for 15 years. His responsibilities are for the building maintenance of a group of manufacturing office sites. He joined the organisation as a supervisor of tradesmen but has been regularly promoted to his current relatively senior position. He felt some irritation at the emphasis on the formal engineering training which

he lacked but in general felt very integrated with the company. His major worries centred on the impact of cost-cutting on the building maintenance programme.

Service Manager

A 36 year old electrical engineer responsible for the delivery of service to customers who had purchased from a range of domestic appliances. He had joined as a graduate trainee and despite some anxieties about what he perceived as the bureaucratic ethos of the company and his own promotion through its ranks, felt quite a 'company man'. Nevertheless he expressed worries about the role of service in the overall product, feeling it had become marginalised as cost constraints began to bite.

Marketing Coordinator

A 35 year old graduate manager attached to a manufacturing division. His role is to liaise between production managers and central marketing. He joined the organisation 8 years previously after 5 years with another multi-national company where he had been a general graduate trainee before specialising in marketing. He has a small team composed of three marketing officers and two clerical workers. However, like other managers involved in lateral integration problems he takes a leading role in several project teams.

Senior Heating and Ventilation Engineer

A 38 year old graduate engineer responsible for the delivery of these services to a group of buildings within a manufacturing division. He manages a team of seven engineers who in turn manage groups of skilled workers. He has never been in a union but several of the engineers who report to him are and all of the skilled workers. Although a service function this job involves work with senior plant management. This work he regards as especially rewarding.

Market Research Manager

A 43 year old graduate social scientist located at the divisional head office for one particular product range. He is responsible for the collection, collation and distribution of market research data on a regular basis. He partly responds to the demands of other departments and acts proactively to secure relevant market information. He has a department of eleven and also makes use of external agencies in data collection. He is beginning to believe that he has reached a career plateau.

Process Development Manager

A 39 year old graduate engineer located in a large manufacturing plant in the North West of England. He is responsible for the continuing development of production methods, aiming for increased quality, output and cost-effectiveness. These targets have costs for each other and he constantly feels torn between competing objectives. He had 18 years company experience, joining after University. He is a lapsed union member. He has a small team (5) of skilled engineers who report directly to him and some administrative support.

Head of Marketing, Divisional Head Office

A 48 year old relatively senior manager who had joined the company 10 years previously from a competitor. His responsibilities involved coordinating marketing activities across the division. He had eight marketing managers reporting to him. He is a graduate with further post-entry qualifications in marketing and wide experience in U.K. and European companies.

Marketing Manager

One of the direct reports of the above. This 42 year old had 8 years company experience and had joined after being made redundant from an engineering company. He was responsible for marketing activities for a range of products. He identified strongly with the company feeling that he had found a safe haven from further redundancy. On the other hand, he felt his own career prospects were limited by the existing structure.

Computer Services Manager

A 43 year old graduate mathematician located at this division. His role was to act as a resource for operating departments who wanted to develop computing solutions to operational problems. He regarded the role as very much tied to the future development of the organisation. He had a group of nine computing specialists who worked for him and reported himself to the Divisional Information Technology Manager. He had 12 years company service and had worked previously for several software companies.

Credit Control Manager

A 34 year old who had joined the company after A-levels. He had always worked in the finance function and had responsibility for the enforcement of tight credit control rules. The organisation placed considerable emphasis on this activity and had in consequence developed a sophisticated system of control. His job was to operate this system. He had a team of six clerks and one part-qualified accountant who reported to him.

Process Development Manager

A 36 year old graduate engineer with 10 years experience with the company, joining after being a graduate trainee with a large engineering company. The job involved continuous improvement of production process methods and in his case, some research responsibilities for examining radical innovations in production methods. Despite its importance he had few subordinates but was heavily involved in a lateral 'influencing' relationship within the organisation.

Purchasing Manager

A 50 year old manager with 20 years company service. He had joined as a tradesman and been promoted through first line supervision into the purchasing function. His current job gave him responsibility for 'buying in' a range of components for assembly. Most came from other factories but increasingly he was concerned with securing sources of supply outside the organisation. He had been a trade unionist as a tradesman but had left the union when he became a foreman.

Software Development Manager

A centrally located 40 year old with 4 years experience in the organisation after working for several large companies and a small software house. His role was to facilitate the development of appropriate software for client managers located in different functions. A group of six software engineers reported directly to him.

Building Superintendent

A 42 year old graduate engineer with responsibility for the safety and maintenance of a large factory. He had 5 engineers reporting to him directly and had responsibility for 40 employees in total. He had joined the company six year previously after spending several years working abroad

as a mechanical engineer. In his current role he was frequently involved in contacts 'upward' with the plant management; he derived considerable satisfaction from this. Despite this, he expressed fears that his career had plateaued.

Audit Manager

A 35 year old accountant with 5 years experience after training in a large accountancy practice. He had seven trained and partly - trained accountants reporting to him plus three clerical workers. He ran a standard audit department but part of his brief was to develop new systems which would speed up and reduce the cost of auditing. He regarded this as the most significant part of his work, though he openly expressed the view that this would limit opportunities for those below him.

Stores Unit Manager

A 49 year old with 5 years service after jobs in a variety of manufacturing companies. He had responsibility for fifteen unskilled workers and four supervisors who operated a very extensive stores department in a large Southern factory. He had been an intermittent union member in his previous job but felt membership incompatible with his current job.

Transit Manager

A 37 year old graduate economist with 15 years experience in the organisation. His current job involved the legal and cost-effective transfer of parts and completed products across national boundaries. He had five direct subordinates but was himself heavily involved in liaison with other functions in the organisation especially marketing, distribution and production. He regarded his current job as very much a stepping-stone, but was beginning to be concerned that his career had 'stalled' after 4 years in the same job.

Manager, Mechanical Design

A relatively senior 43 year old manager responsible for the design of tools and tool pieces for a number of factories in the North West. He had twenty years experience after joining as a mechanical engineer with a further postgraduate qualification. He had twenty staff working for him, about half of whom were themselves graduate engineers, most of the remainder were skilled tradesmen.

Work Measurement Manager

A 38 year old manager who ran a fairly standard works study department concerned to establish 'times' and 'prices' for a variety of manufactured components and assembled products. He had a team of seven works study engineers and two clerical workers. He had joined the organisation ten years previously after gaining a series of work-study qualifications at night school. Earlier in his career he had been a member of a managerial union. His current concern was with the impact of NCM on the work study activity.

This group of managers exhibit a wide range of occupational titles. However, they can be sorted into the following broad functional areas.

Personnel & Training	Production	Finance, Audit & Accounting	Planning	Purchasing
9	11	10	3	1

Management Services (including work measurement, BR, T.E.O.)

7

Divisional Managers

2 (Both of these have wide functional responsiblities)

Information Technology

5

Building Stores & Valuations

5

Marketing, Export, Distribution & Servicing

11

Product & Process Design & Development

6