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Non-participation and depolitization: an assessment of alternative theories.

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NON-PARTICIPATION AND DEPOLITICIZATION: AN ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVE THEORIES

A Dissertation Presented

By

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DEDICATION

To my mother and father, Katherine and Thomas DeLuca, Sr., who taught me to seek truth and justice.

To my brother, Robert DeLuca, who showed me a just path to happiness.

To my grandparents, who taught me to persevere.

And to my friends, who saw me through.

You have all been my teachers.

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ABSTRACT

Non-Participation and Depoliticization:

An Assessment of Alternative Theories

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Three paradigms for the explanation of non-participation are identified, compared, and evaluated.

"Pluralist" explanations emphasize the apathy of citizens who freely choose not to participate. Bernard Berelson suggests present levels of apathy are functional for American democracy, insulating it from the shock of intense interest. Robert Dahl sees participation as a cost, devoid of intrinsic value. However, he argues that severe political inequality exists, unfairly limiting citizen opportunity to participate.

"Reform" explanations suggest that many citizens are depoliticized: systematically denied entry points into the political process. E. E. Schattschneider argues that political withdrawal is really rational abstention from a system that does not meet non-participants' needs. Peter Bachrach adds that people also withdraw because they are

denied participatory structures to help them fashion political interests out of subpolitical grievances.

"Radical" explanations emphasize inculcation of apathetic consciousness, and structural pressures against widespread participation. Herbert Marcuse argues that people are becoming fully adapted to advanced industrial society: apathy is an extreme condition of consciousness, a mortification of political life.

C. Wright Mills provides the best explanation, arguing that the political realm is subordinated to an apolitical mass society, preventing people from articulating political issues out of inchoate troubles.

To explain non-participation, we need to study how ideology and structural pressures are interpreted by non-participants. We must go beyond theories that focus on individual apathy or false consciousness, crudely conceived.

How will the depoliticization required by advanced capitalism be legitimated? Samuel Huntington suggests we moderate our activism to prevent overloading the system. His plea helps legitimate depoliticization by tempering democratic aspirations, allowing social scientists to explain future non-participation as individual apathy.

American democracy can be revitalized. A coalition can be forged for "jobs and peace" to counter corporate power, thereby stimulating further democratic participation.

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INTRODUCTION

The first two years of the presidency of Ronald Reagan are bringing about some of the most dramatic changes in public policy since the New Deal. Not only has military spending been radically increased but the role of government as a moderating influence on the extremes of capitalist development is being seriously questioned for the first time in forty years.

Moreover, the Reagan program to revitalize American capitalism is based on an economic theory that is largely untested in national affairs: "supply-side" economics, high defense spending, lowered taxes, particularly for businesses and the wealthy, huge Federal budget deficits, and slashed social programs. All are part of a policy to shift capital resources to accumulation, augment business incentive, accelerate corporate growth, further limit the power of unions, and completely marginalize minorities, women and the underclass.

Even more remarkable than the scope of the "Reagan revolution," however, is the narrow political base upon which it is built. Certainly the Republican right benefits from a weak Democratic Party, whose own retreat from welfare state policies is tacit acknowledgement that

these policies no longer work adequately. In 1980, a tired program saddled to a "weak" and incompetent President provided the Republicans with an ideal opportunity to reset the American political agenda. Thus we can explain the fact that the electoral shift to Reagan did not need, and was not accompanied by, an ideological shift to the right among the electorate. Given the increasing decomposition of the political party structure, neither was it likely to be the beginning of a realignment into the future of a new conservative majority based in the Republican Party.[1]

Instead the Reagan victory reflects a fundamental continuity that goes back to the defeat of populism around the turn of the century: the secular decline, with some variation, of the percentage of Americans who vote in Presidential elections.[2] The Reagan revolution was ushered in by a "landslide" in which one out of four eligible voters chose the conservative candidate, as nearly half the electorate did not meet what surely is a most minimal standard for political participation--voting once every four years.

Political scientists often have asked, why do so many Americans not participate in political activity, and what impact does low participation have on the democratic character of the polity as a whole? As we shall see, the

answers they give can differ quite radically, even though they all begin their analysis with a common perception of low participation and a common commitment to democracy as the best way to organize political life.

In this thesis, I shall assess the relative merits of three frameworks for explaining non-participation: the pluralist, reform and radical. My purpose will be, first, to articulate the explanation of non-participation within each school, with special reference to the particular role it assigns the concept "apathy." Political apathy historically has played an important role in academic explanations of non-participation, and remains central in popular journalistic explanations. Moreover, as a key explanatory term it helps set the parameters within which the analysis of non-participation ranges: between choosing not to participate out of indifference or contentment, to being programmed into an apathetic posture. Morever, as we'll see in the last chapter, if the work of Samuel Huntington provides a guide, apathy may be resurrected as an important intellectual explanation (and justification) for widespread non-participation in the future.

Secondly, I shall elaborate the distinctive features of each explanation, suggesting why it is classified where it is. Thirdly, the relative strength and weakness of each

will be discussed. Fourthly, I shall draw out the implications of each, not only for a broader theory of democracy but also for immediate political practice. Finally, the analysis will be drawn together in a concluding chapter that will argue both for a mode of inquiry that seems well-suited to the analysis of participation, and for a specific explanation of non-participation: the conceptualization of political subordination extracted from the work of C. Wright Mills in Chapter III and further developed in Chapter VI. Although the approach to inquiry and the specific explanation complement each other, as we shall see, the mode I am suggesting could be used to reach conclusions other than those I arrive at.

In organizing the three paradigms, the typology will be based on the analysis of power developed by Steven Lukes.[3] The explanation of non-participation is, at the same time, an investigation of what type of relationship obtains between the non-participant and the act of not participating. Does the agent do so voluntarily, freely consenting not to participate, for example, because he or she is simply not interested in politics? Have unfair voter eligibility requirements been established, disenfranchising a particular race? Does either of the two main parties represent concerns that speak to the needs of

non-participants? If not, are there other political avenues open to them? Do non-participants experience inchoate grievances they are unable to articulate into political issues because of an absence of available political ideas that speak to their deepest troubles? Do the present political system and its personnel manipulate non-participants into a posture of apathy? Taken together, the answers to these questions help us determine whether an agent freely decides not to participate or whether there may be constraints operating on the agent, some of which he or she may be unaware of.

In Chapter I, we shall explore, then, the consensus or pluralist explanation of non-participation through the work of Bernard Berelson and Robert Dahl. This account, tied closely to behavioral methodology, is based on what Lukes calls the "one-dimensional" view of power: It

> involves a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as express policy preference, revealed by political participation.[4]

The pluralist account will prove deficient primarily because, insisting on the need to find overt conflict before it will determine that a consensus does not exist, it overexplains non-participation in terms of apathy or indifference, failing to consider the way a political

agenda may itself prevent submerged political conflicts from surfacing. It overlooks the possibility, therefore, that non-participants may withdraw from politics because the scope of politics--the breadth of issues that set the terms of the present political agenda--do not speak to their needs. Conflict remains latent with no serious avenue available for political discontent to be expressed.

The reform or conflict explanation of non-participation, to be explored in Chapter II, will correct this deficiency. Through the work of E. E. Schattschneider and Peter Bachrach, we will examine the foundation argument for a thesis of depoliticization: the political arena is organized so as to exclude, in terms of the political agenda and viable political organizing, important segments of the American public. In the reform view, typically, people have grievances with the going order but can find no channel through which to press them. The methodology of the study of power generally employed within this explanation, therefore, corresponds to Lukes' "two-dimensional" view, incorporating

> a qualified critique of the behavioural focus of the first view. . . and it allows for consideration of the ways in which decisions are prevented from being taken on potential issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as embodied in

express policy preferences and sub-political grievances.[5]

Although the reform concept of depoliticization is an important advance over the pluralist explanation, it will prove lacking in two respects. First, it does not explore the way in which structural imperatives of a social system (e.g., accumulation under capitalism), and not just elites or interest groups, set the parameters within which various political agendas may be set. Secondly, it does not consider that conflict may not exist, even in the form of sub-political grievances, not because it is submerged but because political consciousness has been channeled to accord with dominant ideology, while harming the real interest of the non-participants. With the work of C. Wright Mills (Chapter III), and Herbert Marcuse (Chapters IV and V), then, we will extend the concept of depoliticization to include these two elements. A thorough analysis of non-participation, therefore, will need to incorporate Lukes' "three-dimensional" view of power, which involves:

> a thoroughgoing critique of the behavioural focus of the first two views as too individualistic and allows for consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics, whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individuals' decisions. This, moreover, can occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted--though there remains here an implicit

> reference to potential conflict. This potential, however may never in fact be actualised. What one may have here is a latent conflict, which consists in a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude. These latter may not express or even be conscious of their interests, but, as I shall argue, the identification of those interests ultimately always rests on empirically supportable and refutable hypotheses.[6]

While these paradigms are our organizing vehicle, we will find that theorists do not alway oblige by fitting neatly within their contour. Robert Dahl's tacit understanding often transcends the pluralist view, and sometimes his later writings on political inequality are in serious tension with the broader argument he has advanced over his career. Peter Bachrach's early writing sometimes edges near the radical paradigm, and in his later writing, I believe, he enters that framework. The purpose of the categories, after all, is not to pigeon-hole authors but to describe what features constitute a particular mode of inquiry--and to determine which concepts and approaches are useful and which need to be modified or abandoned.

In the last chapter, we shall also see that a subtle shift has occurred over time as to which concepts are emphasized in understanding the role of non-participation in the political order. For example, where Berelson and

the early Bachrach focus on participation and its relation to democratic theory, Bachrach's later work and the work of Samuel Huntington emphasize, although in radically different ways, the central role of system imperatives for understanding the present political order. For Bachrach, this concern issues in a call to temper or remove the imperatives themselves, where for Huntington, it involves arguing that we now must moderate the disruptive effects of excessive participation.

The transition from Berelson to Huntington is particularly important, for they are two authors whose work has a common concern for the stability of the social system as it now exists. Where Berelson recognized that substantial non-participation was functional for what he considered to be the smooth running of modern democracy, Huntington now argues it is a functional necessity for the continuation of the social system. The critical point is that, writing in the 1980's, both Huntington and Bachrach place at the center what remained a germ in Berelson's analysis: the present systemic necessity of depoliticization for advanced capitalism. Similarly, in the 1960's and early 1970's, abstract issues of political participation occupied the high ground in much democratic theory. Today these are more likely to be the backdrop of arguments over whether we

should fashion our political order in harmony with such imperatives or whether we can and should alter the system and thereby the imperatives themselves, allowing the development of increased participation.

The argument throughout will be that there are many concepts pertinent to the explanation of non-participation, ranging from the "apathy" of Berelson, to the "displacement of conflict" of Schattschneider, and the "one-dimensional man" of Marcuse. While the theorists will profoundly disagree on the appropriate explanation of non-participation, it is important to note that their disagreement is based on a prior consensus on the importance of organizing our political life democratically. Without such a consensus, they would have difficulty engaging one another. The "debate" will include a host of ideas and concepts essential to democratic theory, on whose meaning they share imperfect agreement, ranging from the value of participation, the concepts of interests, freedom and power, and the proper roles of apathy and depoliticization in explaining non-participation.

Let us take the example of political apathy. Apathy is in many ways "essentially contestable" because it is a part of a political language that helps constitute a democratic way of life. In a democracy, it is an important

appraisive concept, yet in accepting a particular set of criteria for proper application of the concept, one goes some way toward accepting a complementary democratic theory as well. Prior to the debate over particular constructions of the concept, however, there is shared meaning which makes the debate possible. Because America prides itself in being democratic, and political democracy is generally thought incompatible with widespread non-participation based on indifference, Americans generally agree that apathy, all other things being equal, should be discouraged.

Theorists as diverse as Berelson and Marcuse acknowledge these presumptions and agree that apathy in a democracy needs further explanation and justification. In fact, Berelson, who ends up justifying the role he sees apathy playing in American political life, feels compelled to begin by explaining why present conditions in America differ sufficiently from past conditions to justify revising the normative import of the term. Berelson claims that in <u>modern</u> democracy a fair amount of apathy may help the political system by promoting stability. The crucial point is, however, that he could not simply accept high levels of non-participation: he had first to explain them with the concept of apathy (here equated with lack of interest or with contentment) and second to justify them as

aiding stability before he could make his claim. Marcuse, on the other hand, views apathy as symptomatic of a society of manipulated consensus. For him, apathy indicates severe and profound depoliticization rather than freely chosen non-participation.

Both tacitly agree, however, that in a democracy, apathy is in need of serious consideration and explanation. Of course, they ultimately disagree on much more: the criteria for applying the term; the meaning of the term; the function the term should serve within a political language of democracy; and especially the meaning of what would constitute a truly democratic society. But it is essential to remember that the debate proceeds from common, though imperfectly shared, assumptions concerning how we are to explain non-participation and apathy from a democratic point of view.

To fully grasp these assertions, we must understand what is at stake in a conceptual dispute. If important political concepts stand in a reflexive relationship with the political and social structures we sustain or develop, and the consciousness with which we understand these arrangements, then debates over the way to use concepts carry political import. Consider what is involved in the type of "conceptual reform" Berelson attempts by altering

the normative import of the term "apathy." William E. Connolly writes:

> To reform successfully a notion embedded in our political life that bears close conceptual ties to our basic ideas of responsibility is to infuse the norms of responsibility themselves more deeply into the political practices of modern society. Debates over the grammar appropriate to such concepts are at root debates over the extent to which such infusions are justified.[7]

As we shall see in the last chapter, the particular way we use concepts in reference to the explanation of non-participation is of great political moment. We now live in a time when problems both in our economy and in the legitimacy of our political institutions have become increasingly significant. The solution now being offered to the economic mini-crisis is to require that even more disciplines be imposed on those least able to afford them. Even a Democratic administration is not likely to reverse completely the radical austerity inaugurated under Reagan. This program requires the continued depoliticization of massive numbers of Americans, whose self-interest (and indeed survival) is transparently harmed by current policy. Yet, if Americans today are less likely to believe that current policy is for the <u>common good</u>, how is such depoliticization to be made plausible to both the most obviously depoliticized and the rest of the citizenry?

Here is where the role of responsible social science may face an important challenge in the near future. For, in explaining why people don't participate in politics, theorists will also be casting a vision of what the present political landscape looks like and what role American citizens should have in determining its future contours. To the extent that they successfully articulate their views, these will become part of the file of political ideas that set our agenda for good or ill, for fuller democracy of further depoliticization. In this way, as political scientists, we are unavoidably politically engaged.

The danger, therefore, is great--particularly the danger of developing an apology for future depoliticization, under the guide of sanctioning very low political participation for the sake of "realism." There is also the opposite danger of developing over-simplified ideas about elites conspiring to keep the "masses" disenfranchised.

This paper does not pretend not to have a point of view. The view here is that there does exist widespread depoliticization in our country. Its contours, however, do not accord neatly with a simple depoliticization thesis nor need all non-participation be explained through this framework.

There is a methodological point as well: the best theory is that which is "tested" against competing theories, adapted where weak, defended where strong. The thesis of political subordination, which I shall conclude has the greatest power in the explanation of non-participation, will first be articulated in the chapter on C. Wright Mills and then developed in the concluding chapter. The conclusion, however, will have been developing throughout, by exposition, critique and comparison of the pluralist, reform and radical explanations of non-participation.

CHAPTER I

THE PLURALIST OR CONSENSUS EXPLANATION OF NON-PARTICIPATION

Introduction

In this chapter, I shall explore the pluralist or consensus explanation of non-participation by studying the work of Bernard Berelson and Robert Dahl. Their work will provide the launching point for the critique of the explanations of non-participation to be developed throughout.

Berelson's argument is quite straightforward. People do not participate in politics because they are apathetic or indifferent, and their non-participation serves to cushion the political system from the instability widespread participation would generate. Contrary to "classical" democratic theory, Berelson argues that non-participation and apathy are functional (and good) for "democratic" political systems.

Robert Dahl provides a more complex argument, suggesting that non-participation results when the opportunity costs of participating exceed the benefits. Because he sees participation as neither intrinsically rewarding nor necessary to help one come to know one's interests, he expects widespread non-participation--all things being equal. Like Berelson, he usually explains non-partici-

pation in terms of apathy.

Dahl, however, moves far beyond Berelson in arguing that political inequality can also foster non-participation by placing unfair burdens on some, denying them the right to have an equal opportunity to influence decision-makers. In his recent work, he even suggests, at times, that capitalist ideology and concentration of power undermine attempts to combat political inequality, particularly attempts at public control over corporations.

Taken as a whole, however, his work does not consider sufficiently how the present scope of political issues may help foster non-participation by not speaking to the perceived needs of many American citizens. Nor does he fully consider how the present bias in the way politics is organized only allows certain types of issues to surface. To explore these concerns, we will turn to the work of E. E. Schattschneider and Peter Bachrach in Chapter II.

Revising Democratic Theory I: The Role of Apathy in Bernard Berelson's Explanation of Non-Participation

In Voting (1954), Bernard Berelson offered an explanation of non-participation that helped set the terms of debate for much theory that was to follow.[1] Berelson wanted to explain an anomaly he saw in American society between

widespread non-participation in politics and the smooth functioning of what he considered a democratic polity:

> Individual voters today seem unable to satisfy the requirements of a democratic system of government outlined by political theorists. But the system of democracy does meet certain requirements for a going political organization. The individual members may not meet all the standards, but the whole nevertheless survives and grows.[2]

For Berelson, "classical" democratic theory was unable to account for several essential "facts" of contemporary "democratic practice," revealed by survey research. Individual citizens often "fail" to meet the requirements of the "classical conception of meaningful participation," showing little interest, discrimination, or knowledge. Even many voters vote neither out of principle nor with full rationality.

At the same time, we can have in operation a successful democratic system of governance because, fortunately, democratic political systems require "incompatible properties"--which, "although they cannot all reside in each individual voter, can (and do) reside in a heterogeneous electorate."[3] These are involvement and indifference; stability and flexibility; progress and conservation; consensus and cleavage; individualism and collectivism. Because the shortcomings of some of the citizenry help balance these qualities in the system as a whole, they support the

existence of a healthy democratic polity.

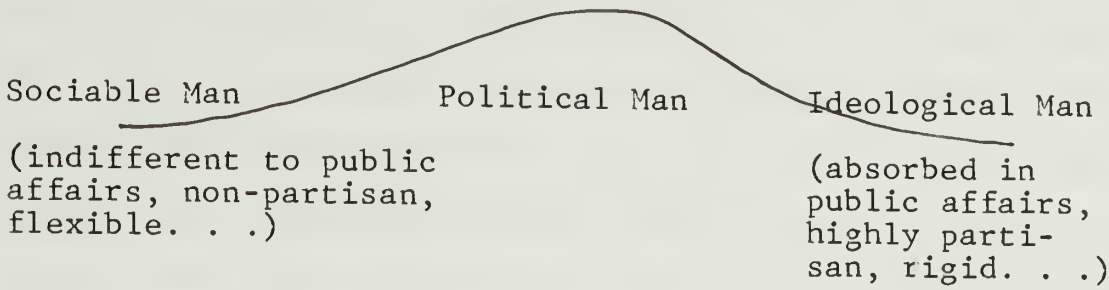
The classical ideal, he concluded, should now be revised to accord with contemporary facts. Upon completing his revision, Berelson ironically found that high levels of non-participation help sustain the superior quality of our democratic polity. Berelson, therefore, responded to the disharmony between the ideal of democracy and widespread non-participation, by privileging the claim that America is, in fact, a democratic polity over the claim that widespread non-participation is subversive of democracy.

Standing behind Berelson's argument is a transparent fear that, given the potentially totalitarian nature of a "mass," complex, industrialized society, it is functional and good for our society to deviate from "classical democratic theory."[4] He asks, how could:

> a mass democracy work if all the people were deeply involved in politics? Lack of interest by some people is not without its benefits too.[5]

In Berelson's view, mass democracy couldn't work if "all the people were deeply involved," and we are fortunately saved from this dire consequence because of our political and social pluralism and political division of labor. In Elmira, the town he studied, political lines are meaningful "but not identical with the lines of social groupings."[6] And the political division of labor, "as repugnant as it may be in some respects to our individu-

alist tradition, . . . is serving us well today in mass politics."[7] "Happily for the system," Berelson reports, "voters distribute themselves along a continuum":



> And it turns out that this distribution itself, with its internal checks and balances, can perform the functions and incorporate the same values ascribed by some theorists to each individual in the system as well as to the constitutive political institutions![8]

Having established, first, that "modern" democratic society could not stand the shock of widespread participation, and secondly, that it is now in the system as a whole we are to look for the balance of democratic attributes formerly sought in the individual, Berelson draws the following conclusion. From a democratic point of view, he now believes himself free to suggest an apathetic stratum of society is essential to the functioning of the modern democratic polity:

> The apathetic segment of America probably has helped to hold the system together and cushioned the shock of disagreements, adjustments and change. But that is not to say that we can stand apathy without limit.[9]

While Berelson is not explicit on this latter point, presumably apathy without limit would create too much complacency, undermining democracy.

The essential point remains. Classical democratic theory is incapable of explaining the anomaly consisting of the existence of both widespread non-participation and apathy, and effective modern democratic governance. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theory must be revised to accord with these twentieth-century facts. With Berelson, non-participation motivated by apathy now becomes an ingredient essential to the viability of modern democracies in mass, industrialized societies.

Based on the above discussion, I take the following to be Berelson's paradigm of political apathy:

> X (a person) is apathetic with respect to Y (politics) if he or she is content with and/or uninterested in present political arrangements and therefore freely chooses not to vote or participate in electoral activity.
>
> Note: Although Berelson does not explicitly mention contentment, this concept is necessary to help sustain his view of "harmonious community interest."[10] Otherwise, he would have to maintain the more difficult claim that all apathetics are indifferent both to politics and to their own possible satisfactions resulting from public policy. He would then have to show how high levels of apathy (now based on indifference even to one's own contentment) are compatible with the "harmonious community interest" and the consensus he believes to exist and to be critical for the functioning of a modern democratic polity.

Evaluation of Berelson's Revision of Democratic Theory and Explanation of Non-Participation

Berelson's general explanation of non-participation and his peculiar use of apathy are gravely flawed. However, his interpretation does have one virtue. Given his favorable evaluation of American democracy, it is crucial to Berelson to maintain that apathetics, in some meaningful sense, freely choose not to participate in politics.[11] The element of choice is extremely important in our everyday use of the term "apathy" because it helps us to locate responsibility for non-participation.

If in a democracy there is a prima facie case in favor of participation, then widespread non-participation, once found to exist, must be explained and justified. Otherwise the question arises, "how democratic is the society, after all?" To say that non-participation is due to "apathy" is one form of explanation, allowing us to ascertain both the reason and the responsibility, precisely because it helps us to pinpoint the motivating factors that stand behind the non-participation.

For example, it makes sense to say, "John did not vote in the referendum on the nuclear freeze because he is

apathetic about nuclear war. John is capable of caring," the argument might go, "but other concerns have made that issue seem irrelevant to him now." Part of the meaning of these statements is that the non-participation is explained and justified by locating responsibility with John and, indeed, placing the blame on him for "not caring" enough about something that should be important to him. Other possible explanations, such as insufficient publicity about election times, unnecessarily difficult registration procedures, etc., are therefore rejected. The import of this example is to support Berelson's tacit claim that, in explanations of non-participation focusing on the concept "political apathy," an important element of non-participant choice and responsibility is implied. As we shall see, however, the responsibility for non-participation need not always lie with the non-participant.

Unfortunately, Berelson's explanation of non-participation falls prey to the weakness of his analysis of American politics more generally: it is inherently uncritical. Berelson simply assumes that America is a modern industrialized democracy par excellence, however its practices might deviate from the norms required by "classical" democratic theory.

Anything that supports the prosperity and growth of

the present "democratic" system, it follows, should now be written into democratic theory. The implicit claim is that these practices, now viewed from the lens of a "realistic" theory, should be positively appraised. Carole Pateman writes of Berelson's argument:

> Berelson's theory provides us with a clear statment of some of the main arguments of recent democratic theory. . . . From this standpoint we can see that high levels of participation and interest are required from a minority of citizens only, and moreover, the apathy and disinterest of the majority play a valuable role in maintaining the stability of the system as a whole. Thus we arrive at the argument that the amount of participation that actually obtains is just about the amount that is required for a stable system of democracy.[12]

Berelson's alteration of the role of participation and apathy within "modern" democracy, then, reflects his revised democratic theory. Both are subject to the general critique of social science and the language it employs advanced by Herbert Marcuse, in One Dimensional Man: when political language is functionalized, it is robbed of its capacity to aid critical analysis. If the norms with which we are to judge comtemporary affairs are drawn uncritically only from what appear to be dominant practices, how are we to know if anything is amiss within or beneath these practices? Let us ask two questions. First, under what circumstances is it legitimate to revise the critical

grammar of any political language? Secondly, has Berelson adequate justification to do so in this case?

There is little doubt that political theory and philosophy is, and should be, revised with historical change. It follows then, that there are times when changing the function of dimensions of our political language is also justified. For example, the judgment embodied in the concept "democracy" has undergone substantial alteration over the last three centuries, running the gamut from negative to positive appraisal. It is Berelson's particular revision, and not his desire to revise, that is objectionable.

In Berelson's work there is no serious effort to justify the revision he proposes, nor is the revision implicitly justified. Instead, his facile equation of American politics with "modern" democracy leads him to miss the importance of in-depth argument favoring what amount to very controversial revisions. His argument is tautological in the worst way; he develops criteria for modern democracy from a society he presumes to be democratic, without a serious effort to give a reasoned defense of the criteria he "discovers." In fact, the criteria he discusses amount to little more than the balancing of opposing tendencies (e.g., involvement and indifference, progress and conser-

vation) and, without further elaboration, might also be construed as qualities necessary for successful political systems that are not necessarily democratic. Nevertheless, Berelson obtusely uses the functional argument that because American democracy meets the criteria for an ongoing political system, the characteristics of American society now become the realistic criteria for modern democracy.

Apart from lack of analytical rigor, Berelson's work also suffers from important conceptual and substantive weaknesses. Perhaps the most important of these is the unjustified change he insinuated into the moral point of the term "political apathy." Ironically, according to Berelson, in today's political world, apathy should aid us in assigning praise rather than blame for non-participation:

> . . . the voters least admirable when measured against individual requirements contribute most when measured against the aggregate requirement for flexibility. . . . They may be the least partisan and interested voters, but they perform a valuable function for the entire system.[13]

Apathy, then, up to certain unspecified limits, is functional for American democracy.

Many criticisms can be leveled against this position. The so-called "pluralist--anti-pluralist" literature has explored these, and I will only mention two directly

pertinent to our study.[14] First, Berelson assumes that participation has no intrinsic importance or developmental value, and he therefore misunderstands the value attached to participation by radical theorists of democracy. A rigorous development of his position would have to show these views to be problematic. Secondly, Berelson merely assumes that non-participation is motivated by indifference or contentment. This assumption would have the prima facie force Berelson attaches to it only if we could be confident that there were no other constraining factors on participation--as we shall see, a problematic issue at best.

Trapped by his functional equation of modern democracy with the American polity he observed in the 1950's, Berelson asks us to use the concept "apathy" in the following peculiar way when explaining non-participation: if we were to begin with a person, "John," who did not vote in a referendum, Berelson would ask us to comment in somewhat this fashion: "John is apathetic about politics and therefore didn't vote in the referendum. Thank God for people like John, for without them our democracy couldn't stand the disruption of referenda. Perhaps if there were more people like John, our democracy would run more smoothly," In this case, we are asked to presume that John is indifferent about politics, that he has good reason to

be indifferent, since political decisions are at least not likely to adversely affect his wants, and that he should be commended for his lack of interest.[15] Berelson begs all of the questions implicit in these assumptions.

Yet, these assumptions and others implicit in his work, once unearthed and evaluated, provide a weak underpinning for Berelson's use of apathy as an uncritical functional concept. First, there is implicit in his work too close a conceptual connection between political apathy and contentment, allowing him to justify non-participation by implying that it does not adversely affect the wants or interests of the non-participants. How would Berelson's use of the concept help us comprehend apathy resulting from intense interest which is frustrated and then translated into discontent and withdrawal from politics? Studying only surface behavior, Berelson would categorize such non-participation simply as apathy. Utilizing his odd definition of apathy, Berelson would first, misdescribe <u>rejection</u> of political activity as apathy, and secondly, insinuate that the apathetics are content to boot, entirely missing the deeper significance of the <u>political act</u>. Rejection of the present scope of politics, through Berelson's eyes, turns into a silent vote of approval.

There is also a conceptual distance between

contentment and apathy that is important in enabling us to be certain our contentment will be assured into the future. Consider that a content person can be lulled into apathy only after deciding, in some sense, that withdrawing from political activity will not threaten his or her contentment with the existing state of affairs. To the extent that this person remains apathetic, he or she suspends these judgments, making it more likely that the contentment will be jeopardized in the future. While contentment, then, could be a motivation for apathy, there are good reasons why it is not fully integrated into the concept. Moreover, from a "democratic point of view," it is plausible to argue that a person who is apathetic should not be content with that state. Again, this draws attention to Berelson's unjustified attempt to fit the reality of widespread non-participation, explained as apathy, into democratic theory.

Secondly, Berelson restricts the use of the term to individuals. The effect is to devise as the grouping "non-participants," simply a collection of disparate apathetic individuals, presumably of no particular socioeconomic or racial grouping. Used exclusively in this way, a potentially critical component is removed from the term, because in ordinary usage apathy has a somewhat ambivalent meaning.

While one sense of apathy relates to individual responsibility, another begins to shift responsibility to structural sources. For example, we clearly know what we mean when we say, "John is apathetic about the nuclear freeze referendum." But what is meant by the phrase "apathetic masses" or, more pointedly, by "poor people are apathetic about the nuclear freeze"? When we say that the "masses are apathetic," we are suggesting that they "don't care" in some sense, but we are also acknowledging that there is something about being in a particular position which promotes this posture. Similarly, we recognize the apparent irrelevance of the nuclear freeze to the lives of people shackled to the immediate concerns fostered by destitution.

As these examples indicate, our political language pushes us to begin to look beyond individual choices or attitudes when the concept of apathy is applied to <u>social groupings</u>. We may still decide, of course, that responsibility lies with the group in question. However, the possibility is now tacitly acknowledged within the use of the term that some other factors may induce apathy--an implication not as apparent when we think of apathy exclusively in terms of individuals.[16]

Thirdly, Berelson's use of apathy in reference only to politics in general, without specifying particular issues, can have the effect of weakening the precision of the analysis and restricting its critical potential. To the extent we see the non-participation of a group or individual based on apathy toward a specific issue, we are likely to wonder why this issue helps motivate withdrawal. We are also more likely to ask if there may exist a range of issues which produce a similar reaction, at the same time holding open the possibility that there also may exist a range of issues which would motivate active participation.

When we focus on only the apathy of individuals with respect to politics generally, therefore, we are likely to lose critical vantage points which a more flexible use of language would allow. For example, if we claim "poor people are apathetic with respect to the nuclear freeze," this statement is suggestive because we have specified a group and an issue. If we believe that the statement is true, it prods us to ask, what is it about this class of people in relation to this issue that motivates lack of interest?

Fourthly, Berelson's use of apathy, at times, confuses the grammar of motivation (apathy), with the grammar of action (non-participation). Although he does suggest that

participants are often indifferent, he virtually equates apathy with non-participation. Yet, it makes perfect sense to say that "Mary has not voted in the last twelve years out of principle alone because she doesn't think any real alternatives have been present." Clearly, Berelson's behaviorism here obfuscates the explanation of non-participation.

Someone might agree to the validity of some of these conceptual criticisms and still object to the basic claim that Berelson is an apologist for widespread non-participation in American politics. It might be argued, for example, that Berelson states he is not in favor of "apathy without limit." Yet, he never specifies those limits, a problem symptomatic of his general discussion of democracy: for there is no way Berelson can establish criteria of this sort without engaging in the kind of theoretical enterprise that his work excludes--the rational defense of one democratic theory in relation to opposing theories. He merely asserts that the present stability of our political order indicates that the amount of apathy we now have is just about right. Untroubled by the need to demonstrate the validity of this basic proposition, Berelson's analysis of non-participation and his use of apathy may truly be called ideological.

And not just harmless ideology, because his analysis is likely to lead to perverse political consequences. To the extent that apathy is the only important explanation of non-participation we have access to, we lose a critical range of other important explanations, particularly those that suggest that the political system has depoliticized massive numbers of citizens. The result may be to blame the most politically and economically disenfranchised classes within America for their depoliticization.

Berelson's 1954 work is, in fact, based on his presumption that democratic theory has been remiss in not looking for empirical evidence as to what precisely constitutes "democracy," often resting content with 18th century ideas. Let us look at some recent empirical work.

Evidence has existed for quite some time revealing a close connection between non-participation in political and organizational activity and low socioeconomic status (SES). Indeed, in an earlier work with Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (1944), Berelson and his co-authors themselves report:

> People on the lower SES levels are less likely to belong to any organizations than people on high SES (Social and Economic Status) levels. (On an A and B level, we find 72 per cent of these respondents who belong to one or more organizations. The proportion of respondents who are members of formal organizations decreases

> steadily as SES level descends until, on the D level only 35 per cent of the respondents belong to any associations.)[17]

In a recent work, Participation and Political Equality (1978), Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie and Jae-on Kim find that, in the United States, social class is not an important ingredient of political competition, with neither strong working-class consciousness nor parties organized specifically along class lines. "At the same time," they report:

> the class basis of political activity is very strong--the participant population is heavily biased in the direction of those who are more affluent and better educated--more so than in other nations. (See Verba and Nie, 1972, chapter 15.) Our explanation of this seeming contradiction was that the very absence of class as a basis of politics in an ideational or organizational sense meant that class would play a key role in relation to individual political activity. In the absence of explicit contestation on the basis of social class the haves in society come to play an inordinate role in political life.[18]

If we take voting, as Berelson does, to be a prime example of political participation, we find in the United States a severe decline in participation along with the decline of the most important mass mobilizing vehicle, the political party, and the rise of corporate capitalism, all dating to the turn of the century (in particular, the election of 1896). The class bias of American participa-

tion seems to have arisen out of an inability of the earlier parties and movements, in particular populism, as Walter Dean Burnham puts it, "to adapt their structures, mass coalitions, and political goals in a way which corresponded with the rise of functional collectivism in society and economy":

> And this, in turn, was merely the behavioral certification of the failure of any broadly based collectivist political consciousness to emerge, then or later, among Americans. It was not possible in the last analysis for democratic consciousness and democratic mass organizational structures to transcend the postulates or the limitations of the middle-class individualist democracy. Thus, when the conflict between industrial capitalism and the pre-existing democratic structure came into the open, it was in the first place not very widely perceived as a conflict at all, except among certain marginal intellectual and labor groups; and it eventuated in the displacement of democracy, not of industrial capitalism.[19]

There is, then, a class bias in American political participation that has its roots in the corporate ascendancy in this country and which continues into the present. The high degree of non-participation in voting, which Berelson attempts to explain, is at the same time non-participation with a pronounced class skewing: those who do not participate lack the economic, organizational and ideological resources with which to challenge the present scope of politics. Berelson's focus on apathy,

indifference, contentment, etc., can only obscure these most fundamental facts about political participation. For unless he argues that our more disadvantaged citizens are pressured into these postures, he must make the implausible assumption that they are content to withdraw from a political system that patently harms their interests. It seems to me that it is fundamentally on the latter assumption that Berelson's explanation of non-participation, rooted in apathy related to free choice, attempts and fails to sustain itself.

Moreover, Berelson's explanation itself becomes an ideological resource against stimulating broader participation. To the extent the disenfranchised internalize explanations focusing on individual apathy, they will also tend to blame themselves for their non-participation. And as a consequence of explanations such as Berelson's, we are all more likely to misunderstand those contemporary power relationships which may inhibit participation.[20] The effects are important: at the same time, they confuse our ability to locate political responsibility, hinder political organizing and misconstrue the real needs of important segments of the public, as well as the needs of democratic public policy making.

Berelson may not intend his use of the term "apathy"

to have these consequences. Nevertheless, by exaggerating the degree of apathy prevalent and restricting its character to focus on individuals, his analysis also produces these important effects. Although he suggests that now apathy is to be praised (within certain unspecified limits), fulfilling important functional requirements, our ordinary usage is not so easily displaced. His peculiar use of the concept, therefore, also trades upon our sense of the term in ordinary usage, particularly our negative appraisal of "apathetics." Only now having stated his odd case, he believes himself free to offer apathy as an explanation that demonstrates the legitimacy of widespread non-participation existing in a democracy.

Berelson's analysis, then, must bear scrutiny on two levels. First, are the widespread non-participation and apathy he reports compatible with democracy? Secondly, what are the consequences for our determination of political responsibility of his overuse of apathy, and his narrow construal of its meaning, his "revision" of the moral inport of the term notwithstanding?

It is this second question we have focused on, and found Berelson's analysis conceptually shallow, strong in assertion while weak in argument. In the end, his work tacitly serves to legitimate without adequate foundation

the need for a depoliticized public within advanced capitalism, a project to be replicated, as we shall see in the last chapter, in a more sophisticated version by Samuel Huntington almost 30 years later.

Revising Democratic Theory II: Robert Dahl, Polyarchy and the Explanation of Non-Participation

Robert Dahl's work incorporates a modified version of the explanation of non-participation and the the role of political apathy in such explanation, suggested by Bernard Berelson. Essentially, Dahl's work is also an attempt to develop a contemporary democratic theory that corresponds with and can account for empirical observations of "democratic" countries--generally, Western, liberal, capitalist, parliamentary polities. Dahl develops what he calls a theory of "polyarchy" to account for the practice of modern, complex, "democratic" societies.

In modern democracies, minorities rule.[21] This is not a surprising development, in his view, because in political systems as in "all human organizations there are significant variations in participation." Although widespread non-participation is undesirable, some non-participation may prove salubrious to the functioning of a democratic

polity. For it turns out that, although non-participation correlates with low SES, it also correlates with authoritarian personalities, potentially subversive of democratic institutions.[22]

Elections play a critical role in polyarchies. Although they don't really fully indicate majority preferences, they do provide for elite competition, and also serve as a mechanism of democratic control.[23] Beneath elite contention, however, consensus on basic democratic values by the politically active is necessary to absorb the stress of democratic competition.[24] Consensus is also important, from a democratic point of view, because it is the majority that sets the terms of the consensus under wich minorities rule through elite competition.[25]

Perhaps the most critical norm of the consensus is political equality, defined as the equal opportunity to influence decisionmakers through some form of political participation.[26] While political inequality is an important problem, demonstrating the degree to which we fall short of a critical democratic goal, Dahl concluded in 1970: American polyarchy "looks very much better when it is compared with other political systems that have actually existed. . . ."[27]

Dahl's explanation of non-participation and his use of

apathy will prove to be an improvement of Berelson's primarily because they begin to uncover a relationship between what he calls "political inequality" with ineffective participation, and the generation of despair at participating. Dahl's explanation of non-participation, however, also symbolizes deficiencies in his general methodological and theoretical orientation, often more suggestive of problem areas than successful resolutions of problems. While some of these difficulties may be caused by occasional lack of rigor, others indicate that Dahl is somewhat a transitional figure whose tacit understanding sometimes goes beyond his systematic treatment. This becomes clearest as we observe his increasing focus on the problem of political inequality in his later work. It is therefore more difficult to develop a fair representation of Dahl's explanation of non-participation and his specific use of apathy than it was for Berelson. In order to undertake this task, it will be necessary first to discuss the meaning and relationship, for Dahl, of the concepts, consensus, "political man," political inequality and non-participation.

As we have seen, consensus is an important element of polyarchy: it is necessary for it to flourish and proof of its ability to govern fairly and democratically. While

Dahl suggests that social training in shared values is important in developing consensus, continuing consent requires, in turn, that the citizen has:

> unimpaired opportunities. . . to figure out, discover, and formulate his goals or preferences: to find out what he really wants . . . to have his preferences weighted equally in the conduct of the government--that is weighted with no discrimination because of what he wants or who he happens to be.[28]

Herein lies the peculiarity in Dahl's notion of consent. Neither value formation nor the development of shared values as part of a growing sense of collective responsibility plays a significant role in most of Dahl's work. In an extremely favorable 1977 review essay on Dahl's scholarship, George Von Der Muhll writes:

> When not altogether ignored, the binding force of a commitment to publicly defined values is either discounted without argument or reduced to a formula for realizing private preferences. Dahl's political actors pursue fixed goals derived from their personal utility curves. . . . the relative stability of the various democracies is accounted for through configurations of interests and resources, and authority itself is discussed in terms of personal needs and individual calculations of opportunity costs.[29]

Given this individualistic, indeed, atomistic conception of human interests, it is not surprising that Dahl believes, with Madison, that conflict "is sown in the nature of humankind." While one way to achieve consent might be to press for agreement on policies, this is both

unrealistic and potentially tyrannical should an individual (or numerous individuals) disagree with an adopted solution. This leaves the possibility that consent can be established realistically, and democratically, through agreement on process.[30]

Dahl favors the process of "procedural democracy." In a recent essay, "On Removing Certain Impediments to Democracy in the United States " (1978), he lists five criteria for the full execution of this process:[31]

1. Political equality: "The decision rule for determining outcomes must equally take into account the preferences of each member of the demos as to the outcome."
2. Effective participation: For #1 to be effective, "every member must have equal opportunities for expressing preferences and the grounds for them, throughout the process of collective decision-making."
3. Enlightened understanding: "In order to express preferences accurately, each member of the demos ought to have adequate and equal opportunities for discovering and validating, in the time available, what his or her preferences are on the matter to be decided."

4. Inclusiveness: The "demos ought to include all adults who are obliged to obey the rules of the association."

5. Popular sovereignty: The demos, through procedural democracy, can oversee (and change) the scope, domain and procedures of decision-making that occurs "outside" the domain of procedural democracy (i.e., technical, administrative or judicial decisions).

These are, in Dahl's view, standards by which to judge aspiring democratic polities. It is also consent to this process, based on democratic values, that would fulfill an ideal-type consensus, allowing clashing preferences to run their course, giving everyone an equal opportunity to have his or her choices adopted. In the real world, practice falls short of ideal on both counts, however. In Who Governs? (1961), Dahl wonders whether substantial segments of the public either comprehend or share democratic values.[32] In various works, including his most recent, The Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy (1982), he raises the question of political inequality as a critical problem for present American polyarchy. However, political inequalities notwithstanding, he never retracts his earlier position that the American system of government operates,

by and large, with the consent of the governed: we presume, then, that they continue to be in a position to determine relatively freely their interests and press for them in the polyarchy within constraints of the existing political inequality.

In coming to this conclusion, as we shall see, Dahl simplifies the nature of political inequality, underplaying the ways in which present institutions, constraints of social structure, and consciousness may undermine freedom. If we are not as free as Dahl imagines, then either our consent is mistakenly given, or what appears as consent may really be disguised political confusion or even alienation. And what appears to be non-participation based on apathy or indifference may be severe depoliticization. These issues will be central to our discussion of the reform and radical explanations of non-participation in the following chapters.

To augment our understanding of Dahl's conception of consent in a polyarchy and the proper role of participation, we need to consider his view of "political man": Why isn't political activity more rewarding for more people?

> The explanation, no doubt, turns on the fact that man is not by instinct a reasonable, reasoning, civic-minded being. Many of his most imperious

> desires and the source of many of his most powerful gratifications can be traced to ancient and persistent biological and physiological drives, needs, and wants. Organized political life arrived late in man's evolution; today man learns how to behave as a political man with the aid and often with the hindrance of instinctive equipment that is the product of a long prior development. To avoid pain, discomfort, and hunger, to satisfy drives for sexual gratification, love, security, and respect--these needs are insistent and primordial. The means of satisfying them quickly and concretely generally lie outside political life.[33]

While people are capable of calculating the rewards to be gained from politics, Dahl seems to argue politics is not likely to contain the most important rewards, nor is political participation *per se* one of them. In this sense, people have individual political "rationality" but not the potential for civic virtue, classically conceived, as a basic characteristic. The public interest, such as it is, will be the result of the unavoidable political interactions some individuals and groups will decide to engage in, so as to meet their needs. These are fairly consistent themes in Dahl. While there is some tension here between Dahl's use of the language of "social training" and his individualist conception of the formation of wants, the latter theme is more central to his writing. The former is not sufficiently developed to suppose that Dahl means more than the simple learning of roles--necessary even in the individualist conception of human nature he advances.

The problem of political inequality

For Dahl, the problem of political inequality arises when unfair impediments exist, preventing members of the "demos" from enjoying the equal opportunity to have their choices become effective. When a person is denied equal access to the resources necessary to effectively press for satisfaction of his or her wants, an imbalance in political influence results, creating political inequality. In Dahl's view, the dominant sources of political inequality include: racial discrimination; differences in education, income, wealth; unequal access to communications; unequal political skills and incentives. The following example illustrates his view:

> In every polyarchy, consequently, and more emphatically in the U.S. than in some, electoral officials are rarely recruited from the ranks of blue collar workers: full time politics is distinctly a monopoly of the white-collar strata.[34]

In this case, higher levels of education, for example, might give advantages to the white-collar strata, creating a form of political inequality: a maldistribution of electoral officials by occupational position.

While Dahl argues, in his recent work, that such inequalities are widespread,[35] American polyarchy survives

in spite of them.[36] Taken as a whole, Dahl's work indicates a basic commitment to our present system of governance as basically a neutral instrument of public policy formation, although deformed by the imposition of political inequalities upon it. These most often take the form of discrimination against certain minorities, historically most severe in the case of Blacks and Native Americans, and disadvantages of skills and access, accruing from one's social and economic position. Nevertheless, if only we could develop greater equality of political resources, as defined by Dahl, then the criterion of equal opportunity to make one's choices effective would become fully operative. Such opportunity is the hallmark of democracy in the modern world.

To his credit, Dahl's concern with political inequality develops and toughens in his later writings. In his text Democracy in the United States: Promise and Performance,[37] for example, he is quite outspoken about the pervasiveness of racial discrimination in American history. In his 1970 After the Revolution? Dahl suggests that political inequalities may result from of our present mode of economic organization. In criticizing the "Corporate Leviathan," Dahl argues that private corporations really are public services and should be accountable

to those they affect. Dahl arrives at his conclusion after weighing three criteria necessary for authority: personal choice; competence and the potential of delegating authority to those presumed competent (e.g., business managers); and economy, weighing the opportunity costs of participation against other uses of the same time, energy and resources. Dahl concludes that we need more democracy in the workplace and more public accountability of the corporation. However, while he comes close to viewing the corporation as a proto-political organization, he does not claim that the stratified relationships, either in ownership or in job organization constitute, in themselves, political inequalities.

In his essay, "On Removing Certain Impediments to Democracy in the United States," Dahl presses further, arguing that American democracy is limited by certain commitments the nation has made over its 200-year history. The five most important commitments are: (1) to a liberal political and constitutional order, giving primacy to certain political and civil rights (1776-1836); (2) to the belief in a democratic political system (1800-1836); (3) to the socioeconomic order of corporate capitalism (1900); (4) to the ideas and institutions of the welfare state (with the New Deal); (5) to play an international role as a world

power (with World War II). Except, perhaps, for the commitment of democracy itself, Dahl argues, all the others have created problems for democracy. For example, while the fourth commitment certainly provided benefits and protection of the rights of workers, like the fifth commitment, it dangerously expanded the scope of presidential power. Indeed, given the constitutional system and the desire for democratic rule, majority coalitions seeking to displace established privilege are likely to succeed only by concentrating political resources in the presidency "great enough to make the office a standing danger to majority rule and procedural democracy itself."

The constitutional system itself is now, and has always been, hostile to the principle of majority rule. Originally, it excluded the majority--women, nonwhites, and propertyless white males--from democratic governance, denying them the right of consent and political equality. And the elaborate system of checks and balances, constitutional federalism, separation of powers, etc., designed to protect fundamental rights, "are both adverse to the majority principle, and in that sense to democracy, and yet arbitrary and unfair in the protection they give to rights. . . . However laudable their ends," Dahl concludes, "in their means the framers were guilty of overkill."[38]

The commitment to corporate capitalism changed the fundamental distribution of resources so favorable to democratic development in the relatively egalitarian, agrarian society that preceded it. There were two major consequences of this change. First, corporate capitalism generated much greater differentials in political resources, skills and incentives, largely as a result of the great differences in wealth, income, social esteem, education, occupational skills and ethnic status. Political inequality thereby augmented the difficulty of a majority coalition forming to change the allocation of rewards. Secondly, the expanding corporate form meant that increasing numbers of people were to live out their working lives within a "hierarchical structure of subordination." The system of democracy, then, became marginal "to the actual political system in which the members of the demos lived their daily lives":

> Thus, the transfer of the Lockean view [defense of private property] to the corporation was a double triumph. By making ownership the only, or at least primary, source of legitimate control over corporate decisions, the new order not only excluded democratic controls in the internal government of the enterprise but placed powerful ideological barriers against the imposition of external controls by a government that, for all its deficiencies, was much more democratic than were the governments of business firms.[39]

What can be done to make our polyarchy more demo-

cratic? Dahl suggests we assume that the first two commitments can be interpreted as commitment to procedural democracy, once the "inconsistencies" are ironed out. In terms of the expansion of the power of the President as a result of commitments #4 and #5, he suggests organizational and constitutional changes to make it easier for an oppositional majority to oppose an entrenched minority. These include abolishing the presidential veto; creating a unicameral Congress; inaugurating proportional representation and a multiparty system in Congressional elections; etc.[40] His hope is that such changes will make the system more responsive to majority desires and reduce the pressure toward the "pseudodemocratization" of the presidency--the need to develop a majority coalition through the chief executive, thereby dangerously increasing presidential power and subverting democracy.

Now questioning important aspects of American ideology itself, Dahl argues that if "we abandon the absurdities in extending Locke on private property to ownership or control of the modern business corporation," then we can properly see that the rights of owners are secondary "to the primary rights that are necessary to self-government." Our commitment to corporate capitalism, therefore, needs to be "reconsidered": because large economic units are, in

principle, public enterprises, they exist not by right but by demonstration of social utility. The proper question, then, becomes: is a privately owned corporation "more effective in achieving our social purposes, including procedural democracy, than all possible alternatives to it"?

Dahl warns us against prejudging the answer as to how such enterprises should be organized, controlled or owned: "To arrive at a correct answer depends," in his judgment, "as much on technical as on philosophical or ideological judgments, and perhaps a good deal more"[41] (my emphasis). In fact, the question of ownership should be viewed, in part, as subordinate to the question of what is the most desirable form of social control: government ownership, he argues, "is as consistent as private ownership with despotic control of enterprises."

Dahl makes two substantive suggestions. First, the time has come to move from the attempt to limit (and fail at limiting) the translation of economic to political resources and move to a more equitable distribution of economic resources, particularly wealth and income. Secondly, procedural democracy should now be applied "to the government of firms." In 1978, it is with these proposals Dahl seeks to redress the problem of political inequality within the corporation and the polity at large

that is the inheritance of our commitment to corporate capitalism.

In his latest book, Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy, Dahl refines his position further stating the main problem quite starkly:

> . . . while necessary, desirable, and inevitable in a democratic order, organizational pluralism may also play a part in stabilizing inequalities, deforming civic consciousness, distorting the public agenda, and alienating the final control over the public agenda by the citizen body.[42]

Rejecting both the "myths" of "bureaucratic socialism" and the "unworldly realm of neo-classical" market theory, Dahl argues both against the presumption that either nationalization or the "fair exchange" in a "free market" can provide viable solutions to the political dilemma he sees. Where the former creates problems of inefficient, undemocratic, bureaucratic control, the latter is unable to really provide the regulation necessary to ensure the fair exchange that is the hallmark of its ideology.

A solution would involve two components. First, income distribution would have to be "fair." This change would lessen the objective condition of inequality that now prevents greater civic virtue based on a complementarity of interests from emerging. While conflict remains for Dahl the stuff of politics--in his view, perfect harmony

would render politics obsolete--imperfect complementarity of interests is an attainable goal:

> . . . interests are often imperfectly complementary, in the sense that for each actor the gains from cooperating with others outweighs the costs on balance.[43]

Secondly, "decisions that would remain discretionary because of the inevitable looseness of regulation by the market would be subject to democratic control."[44] This would allow the type of regulation necessary to reduce inequality while encouraging efficiency. Regulation, however, need not all be of one piece. Where certain organizations such as trade unions and some "economic associations," political parties, etc. would be entitled to a healthy "boundary" which regulation should avoid crossing (because of just claims to "fundamental rights" to such independence), "privately owned and controlled economic enterprises, particularly in the form of very large corporations, are a different story." Large corporations, he argues once again, are essentially "private" governments with public power.

> Yet the government of a large corporation differs radically from the government of the state in a democratic country, because neither in theory nor in practice are corporate governments democratic.[45]

Democratic control, however, requires the creation of

an appropriate demos, that is public body, charged with making important public decisions. Considering both claims to "fundamental rights" and to "social utility," Dahl suggests that "different matters should often be subject to control by different bodies of citizens"--including the employees of "economic enterprises," who, as "citizens of a firm" should possess "equal votes." Citizen and employee control through public bodies that are decentralized, while not chaotic, is the best solution to the problem of private control over matters that should be on the public political agenda. These should include exploring possibilities of worker participation or control and employee ownership: plans that might increase incentives and funds for investment while also redistributing ownership and control. An appropriate balance, then, needs to be struck between markets and competition and democratic regulation over those areas where corporate capitalism violates "fundamental rights" and subverts the democratic process.

The ultimate success of this project will require the completion of three stages of change: (1) a change in civic consciousness to modify individual and group egoism; (2) a reduction of inequalities, which would run its course, encountering problems of electoral resistance and increasingly disadvantageous tradeoffs with economic effi-

ciency, growth and incentive--thereby necessitating; (3) structural change in the economic order that "would simultaneously foster economic incentives, efficiency, and political equality."[46] While the Scandanavian countries, which Dahl now seems to view as the most advanced, are struggling with the problems inherent in the second stage, "the United States still stands before the threshold of the first stage." Yet, the tension between economic institutions that are perceived as private and their public and social character "creates a discordance that probably cannot be indefinitely sustained." It is one that could particularly manifest itself in periods of low economic growth, in which issues of inequality might come to the fore of the public agenda. Dahl concludes:

> I cannot say, of course, whether the changes in structure and in civic orientations necessary to remedy the defects of organizational pluralism will come about. To the extent they do not, however, the United States will surely fail to achieve the best potentialities of pluralist democracy.[47]

Yet how are we to understand Dahl's interpretation of the obstacles of power that prevent us from changing the circumstance of political inequality? In <u>After the Revolution?</u>, where he develops his precursor arguments on political inequality, he makes both of the following comments:

> . . . until we reach much greater parity in the distribution of political resources, other steps toward democratization are like treating tuberculosis with aspirins. . . .[48]

And:

> . . . the greatest obstacle to democratization and reducing inequalities is not that . . . elite of wealthy men themselves, or even that military industrial complex . . . but rather the . . . American people.[49]

Note the tension within the following comment in the 1976 edition of Democracy in the United States; also note the tension between the comment as a whole and the above discussion of political inequality:

> Another set of differences that contributed heavily to political inequality among Americans were difference in political skills and incentives. These are among the elemental causes of inequality. . . . In every political system, some citizens are much less interested and active in politics than others. Apathetic citizens disfranchise themselves; active citizens gain influence.[50]

These incongruities, I believe, reveal both Dahl's commitment to pluralism and his belief that a functioning democratic polyarchy exists, and his attempt to draw out the serious inequalities that have manifested themselves, partly undermining these beliefs. While Dahl argues, therefore, that we need much greater equality of condition to ensure political equality and freedom,[51] he also glibly places the blame for inequality on the "military-industrial-financial-labor-farming-educational-professional-

consumer-over and under thirty-lower/middle/upper class complex":[52] that is, the American people.

While it is to Dahl's credit that he now gives the highest priority to the problem of political inequality for democratic theory, he has not yet forthrightly rejected his prior analysis of where primary responsibility lies for this problem. For he cannot hold both that political inequality results from our present socio-economic system, buttressed by ideology and that the "greatest obstacle to democratization" is the average American. While the former theme predominates in his later work, it remains in serious tension with much of his political theory.[53] It now remains for him to clearly state how free he believes political thought and action to be within contemporary America--and to reconsider his earlier work on political participation in this light. Otherwise we are left to conclude that the freely arrived at choice of the American people not to participate remains itself a central obstacle to greater participation.

Explaining non-participation

People refrain from participating in politics, Dahl argues, when the opportunity costs of participating are greater than the gains. If it is in a person's perceived

rational self-interest to participate, he or she will--unless obstacles are placed in the way, thereby increasing the opportunity costs. For Dahl, participation is often not perceived to be in the rational self-interest of the agent, as many factors mitigate participatory zeal: (1) people are, after all, not civic-minded by nature and participation is not intrinsically rewarding; (2) citizens might not perceive important differences between the competing political parties; (3) they might have a low sense of political efficacy; (4) they might be content with the likely outcome of a political contest; (5) their knowledge is often limited;[54] (6) sheer size discourages participation; (7) government is likely to be remote; (8) inequalities of political resources place formidable obstacles in the way of participation.[55]

It is important to note that, in Modern Political Analysis, Dahl emphasizes the first five items, while, in the more recent After the Revolution?, he emphasizes the latter three. There is an important shift in emphasis as to what constitutes opportunity costs, but little or no shift in the basic formula of how one calculates such costs, or what the value of political participation is.[56] Rational self-interest remains the critical variable and, as Dahl becomes more aware of systematic inequalities, he

seems to press for more participation primarily for more effective self-protection. Consequently, Dahl concludes that non-participation is a problem in a polyarchy primarily because participation tends to protect one's self-interest and helps fortify the basic consensus (except for authoritarian participants). He adds almost as an afterthought: it is a "good norm."[57]

Dahl's work on political apathy reflects the tensions we have pointed to in his various statements on non-participation and political inequality. Sometimes, apathy is equated with non-participation--"the apolitical spectrum." Here he is very close to Berelson:

> . . . in all polyarchies, it seems, a sizable number of citizens are apathetic about politics and relatively inactive: in short apolitical.[58]

However, he also notes that people "who care a great deal about the outcome" of a "one-sided election" may not participate because their vote won't matter.[59] One would presume from this comment that such people would not be apathetic, although they didn't, in fact, participate. In other works, Dahl does seem to indicate that apathy is the prime explanation of non-participation. Recall his comment that "apathetic citizens disfranchise themselves."

Why is there so little interest? Politics is so remote from the lives of the substantial apolitical spec-

trum "as to lack much meaning." However, what are we to presume the sources of the remoteness to be--size, human nature, political inequality? Are we to presume that remoteness induces apathy? If it does, will this later undermine the ability of an individual to assess opportunity costs to determine whether participation is in his or her self-interest? Is Dahl here beginning to suggest that some form of depoliticization is rearing its head, or is he suggesting tacitly, as his former student Nelson Polsby has stated forthrightly, that we should not impose middle-class participatory values on lower class apathetics?[60]

In After the Revolution?, Dahl offers a more careful statement on non-participation and apathy:

> The most important causes for non-participation are now pretty well specified. Many of these, and certainly the most unjust ones--registration and voting laws and practices that make participation unnecessarily difficult, discriminatory laws and practices, severe lack of education, inadequate organization and mobilization, apathy produced by poverty or a group history of subjection and defeat--can be eliminated or at the very least greatly reduced [by reducing unequal political resources]. . . . Of course even in a highly egalitarian society one could still choose whether or not or how much to participate. . . . Yet in comparison with the present, these differences would result more from the exercise of personal choice over an array of opportunities and less from objective differences in the opportunities available.[61]

In general, Dahl's views suggest the following relationship between apathy and the explanation of non-participation. In some of his writings, non-participants are considered ipso facto apathetic. In others, once apathy is developed, it becomes a source of non-participation. Both apathy and non-participation can be induced by political inequalities, such as low political skills, "cycles of political defeat," low education, etc., as well as by contentment or indifference. Ideally, for Dahl, non-participation would be a consequence of personal choices one makes, based on an assessment of opportunity costs and benefits, within a system in which equal opportunity to make one's choices effective prevails. Political apathy that resulted from such calculations would seem in no way to undermine the authority of the political system--even if it issued in quite widespread non-participation.

As we can see, there is ambiguity in Dahl's work, perhaps resulting from his desire to adjust his theory to respond to intellectual criticism and political upheaval. Nevertheless, there is a core to Dahl's concept of political apathy as he uses it in the explanation of non-participation. It can be reproduced as follows:

> X (an individual, group, or race)[62] is apathetic with respect to Y (politics, an election, an issue). If X is indifferent to or content with

Y, or suffers political inequality with respect to Y, causing opportunity costs to become greater than the likely benefits--as a result, he or she refrains from participating in the political process.

Evaluation of Dahl's Explanation of Non-Participation

Dahl's explanation of non-participation and his use of apathy are an improvement over Berelson's in several respects. Dahl does not functionalize the language of apathy to the same extent Berelson does. In Dahl's view, a democratic society should actively seek to remove the impediments to participation, allowing the notion of apathy to retain some of its critical function as an explanation of non-participation. Given Dahl's acknowledgement that political inequality is a serious problem, particularly in his later work, apathy and non-participation become sources of some concern.

Nor does Dahl restrict the explanation of non-participation to apathy based on indifference or contentment. Instead, he attempts to draw out some of the relationships between political inequality and non-participation, incorporating concerns about socioeconomic structure into his explanation. Unfortunately, he uses apathy in so many different ways throughout his work, confusion can arise

when trying to comprehend how he is using it in a specific situation.

Dahl also does not restrict the range of X to individuals. The critical function this performs is evident in his treatment of racial discrimination in his middle and later works.

Moreover, he shows greater sensitivity to the range Y can have. For example, it makes a great deal of difference whether a person is seen as apathetic about a specific issue or just vaguely about politics. Taking a broader view of both X and Y together helps us locate the reasons that stand behind the apathy we have observed: when we see members of a race apathetic about a certain issue, for example, we begin to ask, what is it about being a member of that race in relation to that issue that seems to promote apathy?

Finally, Dahl makes an effort to include public control over corporations and procedural democracy in the workplace within what should be now counted as "legitimate" political issues. Ironically, if ever adopted or pressed seriously by powerful political organizations, such proposals could serve to better test Dahl's thesis that we should expect significant apathy in all types of human organization--and, in particular, political organization.[63]

In general, Dahl's later views have improved as critics have displayed weaknesses in his earlier work. Dahl's explanation of non-participation and understanding of apathy in the 1950's and early 1960's were similar to Berelson's. For example, in Who Governs?, Dahl argues that citizens in New Haven use the political resources available to them--"hardly at all."[64] Dahl's more contemporary work shows greater sensitivity to the injustices of inequality and racism, brought to public prominence during the protest movements of the 1960's. The evidence of political inequality was, of course, always available,[65] and, as we shall see, Schattschneider and Mills made use of it in their explanations of non-participation. Dahl's belated and somewhat tentative response indicates prior commitment to his core thesis concerning the role of political participation in human affairs, and the presumption of the existence of a successful pluralist democracy.

In fact, Dahl's work does not fundamentally differ from Berelson's on the meaning of participation. For Dahl, participation primarily remains an instrument in the pursuit of a person's self-interest. All other things being equal, Dahl expects apathy; it is active political participation that needs to be explained. This view comes out clearly in Who Governs? and is a consistent theme in

Dahl's work:

> At the focus of most men's lives are primary activities involving food, sex, love, family, work, play, shelter, comfort, friendship, social esteem, and the like. Activities like these--not politics--are the primary concerns of most men and women. . . . It would clear the air of a good deal of cant if instead of assuming that politics is a normal and natural concern of human beings, one were to make the contrary assumption that . . . politics is a remote, alien, and unrewarding activity. Instead of seeking to explain why citizens are not interested, concerned, and active, the task is to explain why a few citizens <u>are</u>.[66]

In Dahl's view, as long as the competition between elites serves the purpose of meeting the rational self-interest of non-participants, there would seem to be little incentive for them to participate. Assuming that people might develop new needs or conceptions of self-interest through the vehicle of participation is an idea that is largely foreign to Dahl's work. Although he discusses the role of "social training" and even develops a notion of ideological control in his essay, "On Removing Some Impediments. . .," he does not fully consider that human needs are themselves, in part, socially developed: the private acquisitiveness he assumes to be basic to calculations of "rational self-interest" itself is, in fact, a social construction. Participation in the political life of a community might have the effect of

displacing those very needs that Dahl takes to be basic to human nature and remain for him the foundation argument against expecting people to participate in politics.

As Peter Bachrach points out, Dahl's conception of interests leads him, in the end, to misconstrue the essential nature of political participation: discussion and involvement can help a person develop the concept of what is in his or her interest and thereby a fuller understanding of the real situation he or she is in.[67] Presuming "that man is incapable of holding a social interest which conflicts with his self interest,"[68] Dahl ignores the idea that participation as a process may yield unanticipated benefits, rather than only the immediate rewards it brings in getting one's way:

> Dahl fails, in other words, to conceive of political participation two-dimensionally; as instrumentality to obtain end results <u>and</u> as a process that affords him the opportunity to gain a greater sense of purpose and pride in himself and a greater awareness of community.[69]

Understating the potential of participation, Dahl is free to exaggerate the levels of non-participation and degree of apathy to be expected in the normal course of affairs.

Conversely, even where Dahl suggests that we need greater citizen involvement, such as at the workplace, his argument remains instrumentalist. As George Von Der Muhll

points out, the criteria for authority developed in After the Revolution? of personal choice, competence and economy are not the test of "rightness" of a particular organization of politics. Although using these criteria enables Dahl to conclude that greater workplace democracy and public control over corporations are desireable, in and of themselves they only test whether the process to be adopted will advance or retard our self-interest. The criteria, then, suggest:

> questions any instrumentally oriented consumer would rationally wish to ask of a public service agency. They do not differentiate decisional processes we support because they are effective in meeting our needs from those we regard as legitimately binding without prior assessment of their outcomes.[70]

And even in Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy where he discusses the need to increase civic virtue, the cost-benefit calculus dominates. In systems comprised of large aggregates of individuals, he argues, civic virture is constrained by the inevitability of conflict: the impossible idea of civic virtue as pursuit of the "general good" should, therefore, yield to the possible solution of "enlightened egoism." The ideal of "perfect complementary" interests becomes the realistic standard for civic virtue, where "the actions of each to achieve his or her ends would create benefits at no cost to the others."[71] Against this

ideal, which Dahl believes can only be imperfectly achieved in practice, we can still maintain that civic virtue involves commitments beyond the advancement of self-interest--even that self-interest attempting to minimize social conflicts. While self-interest understood in this way is surely a good in itself, real civic virtue also includes common commitments, as Von Der Muhll puts it, "we regard as legitimately binding without prior assessment of their outcomes."

Surely Dahl's own commitment to democracy is itself more an example of this type of civic virtue than of "enlightened egoism." And is this not the real social glue that undergirds the commitment of most Americans to the democratic ideal? Democracy is, then, more than a process to fairly allocate benefits--it is part of the contemporary conception of what constitutes the "general good." We can agree with Dahl that conflict is inherent in modern political life and still maintain that civic virtue remains more than the sum of individual calculations of "enlightened egoism."

Further, we can even argue that political participation can itself help develop one's conception both of one's interest and the "general good," in terms that may include but are certainly not restricted to a cost-benefit calculus

of self-interest. Discussing Dahl's concern with democratizing the corporation in After the Revolution?, Peter Bachrach rightly concludes:

> Pragmatically, Dahl has transcended the structural confinement of pluralist theory. Theoretically, however, it is clear that Dahl's contention has not departed in any major respect from the narrowly drawn pluralist concept of interest.[72]

This instrumentalist horizon is reinforced by a reliance on behavioral methodology. Thus we have the conclusions that non-participation is not intrinsically rewarding because in the arenas studied there appears to be apathy. Behavioral evidence of the sort Dahl relies on, however, is only one level of evidence, ignoring reasons inhibiting participation and attitudes toward it that may not be suitable for behavioral "operational" definitions. Reliance on participation rates to predict the potential of future participation or to gauge how basic political participation is to our nature does no more than beg a series of questions: Why are participation rates what they are? What is the relationship between the rates and the quality of participation? Can effective participation, once experienced, lead to an increased appreciation for political participation as a component of community life?

Dahl's analysis of power is also rooted in the same basic assumptions as Berelson's and much behavioral

methodology. According to Dahl: "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do."[73] We see if this potential is actualized, as Polsby describes the pluralist approach, by studying "specific outcomes in order to determine who actually prevails in community decision-making."[74] The emphasis is on behavior that is easily observed.

We see this definition manifested in Dahl's explanation of non-participation. When free of constraining factors, people often allow themselves to become apathetic--an important source of non-participation. Policies or decisions prevent legitimate groups from participating, generally by denying them the political resources necessary for effective participation. This situation constitutes political inequality. Participation can be enhanced to the fullest degree possible and desirable, given human nature and the instrumental nature of participation, by removing these obstacles. In analyzing whether power is exercised, the emphasis is on behavior, policies and articulated preferences that have surfaced politically and are frustrated, rather than the scope of the issues drawn, covert grievances and troubles unable to find political expression, manipulation of consciousness, and imperatives of social structure setting

constraints on beliefs and action.

To take a complex example, it might be argued that, in a hypothetical working-class community, Blacks participate less than Whites in politics because they suffer the inequality of an inferior education. If attempts to rectify this imbalance through busing Black children to better schools in White neighborhoods is frustrated, we might conclude that this is primarily an example of White local residents exercising power over Blacks, contributing eventually to abetting their non-participation by increasing their political inequality due to inferior education. The hostility to busing itself is likely to be seen simply as a reflection of racist attitudes on the part of the White working class.

One is less likely to analyze the grievances of Whites denied political outlets and their vague troubles a means of articulation and displaced by them onto Black school children. The result is to reinforce racist attitudes and to divide potential working-class allies. These pressures, unable to be conceptualized as political inequalities within Dahl's paradigm, are nevertheless evidence of an exercise of power that has impact upon both the extent and quality of participation. Unable to forge effective coalitions to control essential decisions affecting the

community, such as investment practices, Whites are likely to retreat into non-participation born of despair of controlling one's community, after the narrow attempt through the racist vehicle of opposition to busing has run its course. The most effective exercise of power, with the implications for political participation, may lie outside the immediate sight of either of the contestants in the dispute.

The depth with which these assumptions are built into Dahl's analysis can be revealed by recalling, once again, certain propositions he argues in "On Removing Some Impediments. . . ." Here Dahl argues both that corporate capitalism has established resilient "ideological barriers" against the idea of government control of business and that corporate capitalism is an important source of political inequalities. His solution is to call for a redistribution of wealth and, I believe, for the principle of "enlightened understanding"--"each member of the demos ought to have adequate and equal opportunities for discovering and validating, in the time available, what his or her preferences are on the matter to be decided."

As to the latter point, the standard of "enlightened understanding" focuses on augmenting the individual's ability to rationally comprehend his or her self-interest.

Yet, this obscures a more basic understanding necessary to promote genuine democracy--the class basis of capitalism--and relates to Dahl's ultimately unsatisfactory understanding of how capitalism inhibits democracy. It is not just economic and social inequality of resources that impinge upon the political system, producing political inequality. It is that capitalism operates under a system of imperatives, one of which is that capitalists must maximize profit in order to accumulate wealth. This imperative thereby governs how the production process is controlled, whether through capitalists or their managers. As Philip Green argues, the "maldistribution of political as well as economic power are therefore secondary to the existence of social classes that set boundaries to one's political existence":[75]

> The existence of any large-scale productive enterprise supplying social necessities, which is operated according to rules formulated independently of the people who work in it, live around it, or otherwise rely on it in any decisive way is incompatible with political equality.[76]

Yet, when Dahl suggests that the form of control over such enterprises "should be treated as a problem that is prior to the form of ownership," he assumes that effective control can be exercised over private accumulation, investment, organization of production, products, worker's

rights, health and safety, etc. The question, he suggests, is "which is more effective in achieving our social purposes, <u>including procedural democracy</u>?" The answer, it will be recalled, depends "as much on technical as on philosophical or ideological judgments, <u>and perhaps a good deal more</u>."

The real question is, however, how can people decide primarily on <u>technical</u> grounds whether the class imperatives endemic to corporate capitalism are incompatible with democratic control over work, production and investment? This question must, in turn, be translated into the explicitly <u>political</u> question: what is the relationship of capitalism to democracy?

Moreover, the ideology of corporate capitalism cannot be effectively countered by providing individuals primarily with ideal of equal opportunity to achieve enlightenment of self-interest. An effective counterideology would be one which would recognize the similarities of structural position of persons within each class: it would take as its starting point the need for forging a collective interest. Instead, Dahl urges each citizen to seek self-interested enlightenment. Thus, in an important advance, Dahl recognizes the importance of ideology in sustaining corporate capitalism but provides a remedy that,

itself, is built on the same abstract individualism as the ideology of capitalism--individualism that has helped prevent the forging of a common interest to oppose the abuses of capitalist power.

Certainly a counterideology incorporating class considerations could also include technical questions, such as efficiency, that would influence how we organize our political and economic institutions. Sometimes there will be a need for a trade-off between technical considerations and ideals to achieve what we consider to be the best balance.

But the primary considerations will remain political and perhaps, in Dahl's use of the term, "ideological." Does a class society exist and, if it does, can anything more than "pseudodemocracy" coexist within it? The question is not abstractly between control and ownership: the question is, can we achieve effective control under the legal and social relations of advanced corporate capitalism? If we can, what kind of control can we achieve? Will the control be real or illusory, devolving into cooptation? The solutions Dahl proposes of redistributing resources, public control over corporations, and greater workplace democracy, while desirable in themselves, do not

grapple with these problems. For them to be effective they need: first, presume neither a neutral government doing the will of millions of disparate individuals, nor even thousands of pressure groups but a strong, vital government or other focused centers of political power that stand in opposition to the immense concentrated power of the corporations; and secondly, public awareness and resolve to press class interests through government at all levels, as well as through other modes of political organization. Whether or not one likes this scenario, it would seem necessary for Dahl's reforms, particularly his structural reforms, to stand any chance at all. Otherwise, how effective would the decisions of a faction-ridden government be, for example, to hold down corporate prices when threatened with the countermeasure of an investment strike? Dahl himself asks: "Is it imaginable that a more equitable distribution of wealth and income could ever be achieved in the United States without intense political conflict?"[77] In short, Dahl's reforms would require a broadly defined class-based opposition to present corporate power--that would unify majority interests in a powerful coalition, whatever the differences within the majority.

Dahl's work, then, remains better at stating the most obvious manifestation and abuses of power than uncovering

its multifaceted character. Inequality in general, and political inequality in particular, result in good measure from system imperatives that help shape both what ideas will appear reasonable to press as issues, and what interests will likely control the fundamental levers of economic and political power. Dahl is right in suggesting that non-participation is abetted by political inequality. Yet, the success of the reforms he proposes, in fact, would require a fuller awareness of how the scope of politics is defined and structural constraints formed within corporate capitalism.

At times, then, Dahl brushes with the reform and radical paradigms of power articulated in the Introduction to this thesis. In suggesting that political inequality, illicit corporate control over public decisions, etc. limit the ability of citizens to effectively participate in the control of public policy, he comes close to articulating the type of depoliticization thesis we will explore in the next chapter. This is particularly true when he suggests that corporate control over "economic" life is not yet an issue on the political agenda--although it needs to be. He stops short, however, of suggesting that the primary factor <u>creating widespread non-participation</u> is that the scope of

the present political arena systematically excludes critical basic needs of broad segments of the citizenry.

And while he discusses ideology and corporate concentration of power, aspects of the radical paradigm (our subject in Chapters III-V), he fails to explicitly discuss false consciousness as a mode of social control. Nor does he fully articulate the various ways in which system imperatives of modern corporate capitalism may require a high degree of non-participation; and the complex obstacles they deploy against developing the widespread politically conscious opposition that may be necessary to ensure the success of even the structural reform he argues for. While some of these concerns are pregnant with his recent work, they await his more explicit articulation.

The above analysis suggests the following weaknesses in Dahl's explanation of non-participation and his use of the concept "apathy." First, he draws too close a connection between apathy and non-participation motivated by rational self-interest calculated through opportunity costs, thereby misconstruing apathy induced by constrained political and social arrangements. For example, Dahl writes of a "cycle of defeat" in which inadequate political skills, low resources, and weak incentives reinforce one

another. Now while this interaction may describe certain situations, it does not quite capture the meaning of Dahl's own phrase "apathy producing subjection and defeat."

Indeed, this phrase begins to suggest that the "apathetics" are in some ways unable to, or disabled in their capacity to, care about politics. The paradigm case of this condition might be what Bruno Bettelheim has described as apathy in concentration camps.[78] By encouraging us to see induced apathy as somehow related to calculations of self-interest--from however weak and defensive a position--Dahl masks an insidious situation. Calculations of opportunity costs, lack of alternative ideologies, absence of supportive institutions may all help create a situation in which people devolve into a condition of apathy about their own fate. But the condition does not indicate an assessment of costs--quite the opposite, it indicates the inability to make accurate assessments. Thus while there is a relationship between apathy and opportunity costs, a healthy conceptual distance must be maintained between them.

Dahl often seems content with apathy as a fairly complete explanation--once the relationship between apathy and opportunity costs, and especially those incurred through political inequality, is understood. However, by

allowing apathy such wide range in the explanation of non-participation, the effect is often to create confusion and, in the end, limit the explanatory power of the term.

Secondly, by overstressing apathy in explaining non-participation, Dahl, like Berelson, focuses too much attention on the non-participants as the responsible agents. While Dahl is much more careful than Berelson in stipulating what stands behind the apathy, he often uses the term in such a way as to leave us often with the impression that it is the motivation of the apathetics he is pointing to.

Thirdly, Dahl does not fully integrate class in the range of X. While inequalities may be severe, the primary obstacles to effective participation are not seen as flowing from the imperatives of American social structure as an advanced capitalist system. Nor does Dahl generally include grievances in the range of Y--particularly covert grievances and troubles. To do so would be to admit that our political system blocks legitimate issues from surfacing more than Dahl allows. The effect in both cases is to exaggerate the amount of apathy related to individual motivation present by limiting our understanding of the structural forces pressuring withdrawal from politics.[79]

Fourthly, Dahl's tendency to rate low the value of

participation overlooks the potential "impact of widespread democratic participation upon societal values--especially toward authority, equality, and community."[80] Specifically he helps undermine the possibility of equality of power emerging as a dominant value, not the least because he restricts the notion of political equality to mean the equal opportunity to influence decision-makers. Taken as a whole, his views tend to legitimate the power relations involved in present political and economic divisions of labor and hierarchical organization more generally. For to the extent participation helps us evaluate the legitimacy of power relations based on apparent authority, uncritically accepting high levels of non-participation as inevitable hinders such scrutiny.[81] Moreover, because it is participation in existing hierarchical organizations that serves as the test, for Dahl, of people's desire to participate, an apathy based in human nature again may be overstated as a reason for non-participation; and the toleration of hierarchical, non-participatory, political and economic organization may be unwarranted.

Lastly, Dahl underrates the importance of the element of responsibility implicated in the concept of apathy because he misunderstands the relationship between political participation, discovering one's interests and

freedom. To the extent participation should be valued for reasons other than protection of self-interest and the generation of consensus necessary for polyarchy, apathy should be more emphatically discouraged than Dahl discourages it. As Peter Bachrach argues:

> The real interest of man is freedom: the freedom to discover himself and beyond that, the freedom to develop into a socially conscious human being. For this reason, democratic participation must be recognized as an integral moral value of contemporary democratic theory.[82]

CHAPTER II

THE REFORM OR CONFLICT EXPLANATION OF NON-PARTICIPATION

Introduction

In this chapter, I shall explore the reform or conflict explanation of non-participation by studying the work of E. E. Schattschneider and Peter Bachrach. Their work provides an essential critique and counterpoint to the pluralist explanation we have just reviewed.

Schattschneider really provides the base, arguing quite straightforwardly that many people do not participate in politics because the present scope of political organizing and debate does not speak to their needs. As we shall see, with his thesis of the "mobilization of bias," he rejects the pluralist assumptions that non-participation reflects consent for the present order and that apathy is an adequate explanation.

Bachrach extends Schattschneider's arguments by elaborating the relationship between non-participation and the problem inherent in articulating political interests from covert grievances and troubles. He warns us that we can't always be sure that people have a clear perception of their needs and suggests that meaningful political and workplace participation can help people better articulate

what is really in their interests.

In terms of the explanation of non-participation, Bachrach suggests we must hold open the possibility that people suffering under the burdens of a difficult daily existence may become apathetic about their political interests. With this idea, he begins to articulate the concept of apathy as a condition.

His analysis will fall short, however, by not fully incorporating the possibility of "false consciousness" and by inadequately considering the structural and ideological constraints that help foster depoliticized roles. I will turn to Mills and Marcuse in the subsequent chapters to fully explore these themes in relation to the explanation of non-participation.

E. E. Schattschneider and the Bias of Conflict

E. E. Schattschneider's major work, The Semi-Sovereign People, is an excellent early (1960) attempt to explain the existence of widespread non-participation in American politics. Where Dahl focuses on political inequalities as problems for the viability of the American consensus, Schattschneider claimed that pluralists incorrectly perceive

consensus to exist because they ignore fundamental, though submerged, political cleavages. The existing "consensus" was itself a particular distribution of power because, Schattschneider argued, "the definition of the alternatives is the supreme instrument of power":[1]

> All forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organization is the mobilization of bias. Some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out.[2]

In the American political scene of his time, this "bias" had resulted in forty million Americans rejecting electoral politics, with most Americans (ninety per cent) having no place in the pressure system. These facts were of fundamental significance for the future of American democracy:

> It is a great deficiency of the group theory that it has found no place in the political system for the majority.[3]

In fact, he argued, the participation of the "non-participants" could profoundly alter the scope of politics: the "struggle for democracy" was now over the organization of politics and not the right to vote. Present political organization should be significantly altered to include policy proposals that are outside the present consensus. In Schattschneider's view, to the

extent writers view non-participation in terms only of ignorance and lack of interest, they are offering a rationalization for the present system, deflecting attention from the need to change it:

> There is a better explanation. Abstention reflects the suppression of the options and alternatives that reflect the needs of the non-participants. It is not necessarily true that the people with the greatest needs participate in politics most actively.[4]

It may be just the opposite, in fact, as it turns out that the most socioeconomically disenfranchised groups are also those who do not vote:

> An examination of the social structure of the disenfranchised lends support to the foregoing proposition. . . . Every study of the subject supports the conclusion that nonvoting is a characteristic of the poorest, least well-established, least educated stratum of the community. Unquestionably, an expansion of the scope of the system would bring a new kind of voter into the community and would change the balance of forces.
>
> The question is: Has the quarrel that underlies American politics been so defined that it excludes a major segment of the nation from the political system?[5]

The relationship between nonvoting and the scope of politics, he suggested, was "the most important dictum about the political system, much more important than the distinction between Republicans and Democrats."[6] The democratic challenge was to develop a "public policy about politics" to use "political means" to overcome the extra-

legal, social, procedural, structural and organizational biases of the political system. The democratic goal must be to bring the disenfranchised into the political arena.[7]

How could this be accomplished? Schattschneider's argument was that the present bias of the political system had to be rearranged through a political program that spoke to the needs of the nonvoters. The present bias of the political system included within it conflicts in which none of the antagonistic positions really addressed the interests of the non-participants. Yet these conflicts, he maintained with simple brilliance, displaced other conflicts and potential issues that would motivate the disenfranchised to become involved. Moreover, the problem was deepened because the bias of the system extended beyond the voter-nonvoter cleavage. There was also a "class bias" to the present organization of significant interest groups:

> The vice of the groupist theory is that it conceals the most significant aspects of the system. The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upperclass accent. Probably 90 per cent of the people can't get into the pressure system.[8]

Not only nonvoters, but many voters as well, were denied important levers of power. It was the historic function of government in a democracy to help redress the imbalance. Presently, this process was stalemated as

crucial issues and conflicts were restricted in scope. The present bias could be overcome, Schattschneider concluded, if responsible political leaders and organizations would undertake the task of increasing the level of "socialization of conflict"--moving it away from narrow private interests to encompass broader interests. In this way, the powerless voters, and the disenfranchised voters especially, would develop a greater stake in the system, breaking the present hegemony of business. Democratic government could then serve its historic function of providing an effective vehicle to counterbalance the power of private wealth, and democracy would be preserved alongside capitalism.

The following paradigm of apathy is consistent with Schattschneider's pithy examination of American politics. Note the limited role it allows apathy in the explanation of non-participation, in sharp contrast to Berelson, and even Dahl:

> Apathy <u>may</u> explain non-participation when there are no significant Ys (political issues, overt grievances) which meet X's (individual, group, race, "subjective" <u>class</u>) <u>needs</u> but are kept out of the political arena.
>
> Note: This model extrapolates how I presume Schattschneider would use the concept of apathy, based on his discussion of non-participation. He does not use it to any important extent.[9]

Evaluation of Schattschneider's Explanation of Non-Participation

Schattschneider does not use the language of apathy to describe what he takes to be the systematic exclusion from the political system of identifiable groups. Instead, he develops concepts with more precise critical meaning, such as, "mobilization of bias," "abstention," "rejection," "suppression," etc. In contrast to Dahl, who often over-uses apathy, salvaging his usage by varying its content, Schattschneider's explanation of non-participation implies a restricted usage. What appears as consensus to Berelson and, at times, Dahl is here interpreted as a mobilization of bias accomplished by suppressing confict. Non-participation is characterized by the abstention of Xs, with grievances not addressed in the political system under the present "consensus" of two-party politics. And while Dahl does discuss political inequalities, it is quite another thing to claim, as Schattschneider does, that non-participation reflects the needs of the majority that systematically go unmet. Moreover, to reject by conscious abstention is not to be apathetic, no matter how much the concept is modified. Indeed, it implies taking most seriously those

needs that are going unmet.

Because Schattschneider thinks non-participation may be explained by the operation of a class system (loosely defined) he admits "class" to the range of X. Believing such a system prevents some issues from surfacing, he also adds overt grievances to the range of Y. With Dahl, such additions would have increased the likelihood of stipulating more precisely what he means by "apathy," or, indeed, curtailed his use of the term. Dahl's overuse of apathy is, of course, related to his exclusion of grievances and class from serious consideration in his explanation of non-participation.

To maintain, for example, that the "working class" is apathetic has different implications from maintaining that apathy characterizes disparate individuals, or even groups. Schattschneider's explanation serves to restrict the application of apathy, therefore, forcing one to explicitly use other concepts, such as those I've noted, to explain non-participation. For, to the extent a "class" has "overt grievances" which speak to their "needs" but have not been allowed to surface as "issues" in "legitimate" political channels, that class is not likely to be considered "apathetic." In the explanation of non-participation, therefore, we must at least search for evidence of

classes with grievances. Apathy becomes a plausible explanation only after we have determined that such class-based grievances do not exist.

Schattschneider's explanation of non-participation does have several important limitations. For one thing, his view of the political arena still focuses primarily on party politics and government. As a result, we are not likely to question whether what we, at first glance, consider to be "private" economic relations really should be considered instead as directly political relations. Now Schattschneider is aware of the enormous influence of business on politics and believes that government in a democratic society is the primary forum within which to redress the imbalance of power between classes. Nevertheless, this presumption concerning the nature of the political arena first, deflects attention from potential legitimate political issues,[10] and secondly, overlooks more subtle power relations that may inhibit participation. Should corporate ownership of vital industries become an issue for political consideration? Does the division of labor, fragmenting worker unity, serve to inhibit organizing and thereby participation, and should it be viewed as a <u>political</u> obstacle to greater participation?

Schattschneider also doesn't consider latent or covert

grievances in the range of Y. Therefore, before we know whether a grievance exists, we must be able to detect conflicts of perceived interest. However, might there not be grievances which people feel and, perhaps, even can articulate to some limited extent, yet which are not yet fully formulated? Lewis Lipsitz, for example, suggests that grievances may be latent--that is, the individual or group in question may not yet be fully aware of their terms as articulated preferences.[11] Grievances may also be overt but articulated only in personal terms due to ideological biases derailing potential translation into political issues.

The above weaknesses become more apparent when we consider that hierarchical job structures, reinforced by racial and sexual divisions of the workforce and atomistic lives, can prevent many from developing a political interpretation of their grievances by undercutting efforts to develop a group or class perspective to help identify what may be common structural sources. Thus, grievances may remain at the level of troubles individuals feel without becoming overt and sufficiently coherent to stimulate political organization.[12] Without a successful translation of latent or personal grievances into explicitly political ones, the base Schattschneider requires to alter the scope of issue conflict remains lacking.

Schattschneider's focus on overt "political" grievances also can lead unwittingly to an exaggeration of the individual apathy present because it limits the arena within which we look for grievances, as well as the nature of what constitutes a grievance. If, after having studied non-participants, no apparent issues are found around which to organize new conflict lines, what else are we likely to conclude is the source of non-participation?--particularly given the important role "apathy" plays in popular and journalistic explanations of non-participation.

Schattschneider's analysis itself, however, tends to downplay both apathy related to choices one makes and apathy as a condition. Certainly he is right, in contrast to Berelson, to focus on how the exclusion of the needs of certain groups from the scope of issue formation illicitly limits the range of issues that should be allowed to surface in the political arena. At the same time, however, it is important in our determination of responsibility not to eliminate by fiat the possibility that people may allow their will to wane or make other political choices which render them apathetic about concerns which, we want to maintain, should remain important to them. The concept of apathy related to choice should be kept alive, therefore, as part of a political vocabulary we would want to utilize

selectively and self-consciously.

Perhaps the most important case in which apathy with respect to needs can occur is that of needs not yet fully grasped and not likely to be grasped by the agent--the sense of apathy as a condition fostered by ideology and pressures of social structure. Schattschneider's focus on behavior and conflict misses this possibility. Again, the paradigm here is the concentration camp victim lapsing into total apathy. Consider also, however, the person who has been taught since childhood that any attempt to influence present political arrangements will only cause even more pain and suffering. Political explanation is here denied expression due to a "realistic" appraisal of structural pressure and, perhaps, personal danger, deflecting attention from political resolution of one's troubles.[13] Now it might be objected that this state is better described as depoliticization than as apathy. Both claims are true. For to the extent systematic exclusion from politics fosters inherently apolitical consciousness, the apathy that is engendered is <u>surely a subtype of depoliticization</u>.

In general, Schattschneider's explanation of non-participation focuses on those overt grievances not allowed within the present scope of party politics. This explanation overlooks covert grievances and thereby is likely to

miss the more profound ways in which the present "mobilization of bias" may prevent challenges to itself. Further, it may understate the amount of apathy actually present, whether related to choice or as a condition, by assuming that people never become apathetic with respect to what should be important to them.[14]

Schattschneider's contribution remains great, however. For while he pushes aside the concept of apathy, he restores to center stage the following proposition: the explanation of non-participation should consider both the needs of the non-participants and whether they are being addressed in the present scope of political conflict and the strong correlation between non-participation and social and economic disadvantages. Without such considerations, apathy can become, as it has in much pluralist analysis, an ideological smokescreen for what is better described as depoliticization.

Peter Bachrach and the Duality of Interests Standard

Peter Bachrach develops and enriches Schattschneider's explanation of non-participation. In this section, I shall primarily confine the discussion to Bachrach's earlier work, for it is here that he exemplifies a transitional

theorist, still within the "reform" paradigm of power outlined by Lukes (see Introduction) while bordering the "radical" paradigm. As we shall see later in this section and in Chapter VI, some of his later work moves him more explicitly into the "radical" paradigm.

Bachrach's work is indebted to Schattschneider's critique of pluralism through the "mobilization of bias" thesis. He does, however, augment this view primarily through his analysis of the concepts, power, interests, democracy and participation.

Bachrach's early analysis of power is essentially the same as Schattschneider's, although there is some vacillation in his work. In his early essay, with Morton Baratz, "Two Faces of Power" (1962), he suggested that power relations exist when there is conflict between groups over issues or over what grievances should be allowed to become issues. Its exercise may be intended or unintended.[15] Its most subtle manifestation occurs through what he and Morton Baratz have called "nondecision-making": can the student of politics, they ask,

> . . . safely ignore the possibility, for instance, that an individual or group in a community participates more vigorously in supporting the nondecision-making process than in participating in actual decisions within the process? Stated differently, can the researcher overlook the chance that some person or association could limit decision-making to

> relatively non-controversial matters by influencing community values and political procedures and rituals, notwithstanding that there are in the community serious, but latent power conflicts? To do so is, in our judgment, to overlook the less apparent, but nonetheless extremely important, face of power.[16]

In his later article, "Interests, Participation, and Democratic Theory" (1971), he argues that a power relation exists when "nondecision-making" prevents the development of explicit grievances as well as political issues.[17] In Power and Poverty (1970), however, he and Baratz claim that nondecisions must be "observable" and that covert grievances must have the coherency of an articulated preference.[18] Thus, in the earlier and later work, he argues for a broad interpretation of the definition of nondecisions, whereas in Power and Poverty, he restricts both. Even here there is some ambivalence, however:

> The observer may find that no one is aggrieved in the community. In that event he would be ill advised to search for evidence of non-decision-making. If there is no conflict, overt, or covert, the presumption must be that there is consensus on the prevailing allocation of values, in which case non-decisionmaking is impossible.[19]

Bachrach here uses the looser language of "aggrieved" to modify his view on what constitutes a covert grievance, although he does not move explicitly to the language of "troubles." However, when no "grievances" are found, he

continues, we must presume that consensus exists. Still, note again the ambivalence. In spite of the above remark, there may be:

> latent and potential groups (e.g., the poverty population) who are currently uninterested in the policy making process or are powerless, but who are likely in the future to become active and capable of exercising power and its correlates within the political system.[20]

As Isaac Balbus has pointed out, Bachrach here seems to indicate that there are objective conditions undergirding power relations.[21] For example, at various points, Bachrach speaks of: "ideological barriers";[22] authority in a pathological state reproducing pathology; brainwashing as an example of how power can be turned into "authority."[23] These indicate that Bachrach is uncomfortable with the need to demonstrate the existence of grievances in order to determine whether a power relation exists. Bachrach, however, concludes:

> Suppose the observer can uncover no grievances, no actual or potential demands for change. Suppose, in other words, there appears to be universal acquiescence in the status-quo. Is it not possible, in such circumstances to determine empirically whether the consensus is genuine or instead has been enforced through nondecision-making? The answer must be negative. Analysis of this problem is beyond the reach of a political analyst and perhaps can only be fruitfully analyzed by a philosopher.[24]

This statement is revealing in two ways. First, note

that Bachrach uses "universal acquiescence" to stipulate the meaning of "consensus" while using "appears" in a way that reveals the methodology employed. The effects are somewhat contradictory and, perhaps, indicate his insecurity with behavioral definitions of grievance. For Bachrach is suggesting that our search for conflict should not rest until we've found "universal acquiescence" and no potential demands for change, yet the appearance of surfaced grievances suffices. Secondly, Bachrach seems to indicate that, although relations of authority may have been established by power and may even be illegitimate, once fully established, they are the province of philosophers, not social scientists.[25]

In other works, Bachrach moves explicitly from his emphasis on observable conflict, as an essential characteristic of both nondecisions and grievances. In "Interests. . .," for example, he studies the relationship between political participation and the development of real wants.[26] He argues that the raison d'etre of democracy is freedom, yet freedom necessitates the development of real wants through political participation. Thus, participation is not simply intrumental to promoting existing wants but necessary for fully developing their terms as well. In this claim, he makes a significant move away from the

theorists we have studied so far. His claim here is that a political system becomes more fully democratic to the extent it allows not only the expression of articulated wants but participatory mechanisms which will enable people to develop further their real wants. He suggests, therefore, that we adopt a "dual conception of interests" which "recognizes that not all expressed wants reflect real wants."[27]

I take, then, the following statement to be an important move away from the position on grievances he argues in Power and Poverty: The "dual conception of interests" is necessary because

> Failure to delineate the real from articulated interests of lower strata individuals implies that their political apathy reflects the relative absence of personal concerns. Such a conclusion repudiates what we know to be true: that people consumed by the hardship of everyday life . . . possess neither the energy nor capacity to transfer moods of bitterness and futility into articulated preferences.[28]

Thus, when we use the "duality of interests" standard to investigate American politics, we find that when the system responds only to articulated preferences, it rewards its members in inverse proportion to their need. Bachrach adds, however, that the fact that such bias stems from inequality in the economic sphere does not necessarily render the political system less democratic. Instead, the

essential criterion of democracy is whether the system provides adequate participatory structures that will enable all groups to articulate their interests:[29]

> In other words, when there is a blockage in the conversion process from feelings to articulated preferences for a significant portion of the population, there is a reasonable doubt that convergence between real and apparent interests is taking place.[30]

For Bachrach, an essential question then becomes, what kind of participatory structures should be provided, given that the most disenfranchised seem uninterested in public affairs? He responds that, although "public affairs" appear remote and beyond influence, issues arising at the workplace are likely to be viewed with greater concern.[31] Further, because large corporations "authoritatively allocate values," they should be considered political institutions and subject to democratic control. There should be, therefore, an expansion "in participation in decision-making among members within their constituency."[32] Thus, to foster participation and democratic control, we need a public policy geared to decentralizing and establishing public authority over the corporations. An increase in participation would not guarantee radical social change (in fact, he suggests workers seem fairly conservative), but it would dramatically increase the

likelihood that the power of nondecision-makers would be lessened, and new issues could be expected to emerge.

Bachrach's work can be summarized as follows. First, he offers a developmental view of political participation, differing fundamentally from the instrumental view of Berelson, Dahl, and even Schattschneider. Secondly, he offers what Lukes has called a "qualified critique" of the behavioral concept of power. He does this first, by developing the paradigm of nondecisions and explicitly incorporating it into his analysis of power; and, secondly, at least in his article, "Interests. . .," by developing the concept of grievance to include "troubles." Thirdly, he consistently applies the pluralist concern for "authoritative allocation of values" and thereby includes the corporation as a political unit.[33] Fourthly, he attacks the political and economic division of labor by demonstrating the importance of direct participation in developing one's interests. Fifthly, he implicitly attacks Dahl's view that sheer size limits the potential of participation by developing a concern for participation at the local workplace. Sixthly, he is concerned with equality, not only because it is necessary to overcome political resource inequalities (Dahl) or the "mobilization of bias" (Schattschneider) but because it can help enable us to know

better our real interests and become free.[34] In sum, he begins to discuss the importance of equality of power in a democracy:

> The crucial issue of democracy is not the composition of the elite [whether businessman or worker but] . . . whether democracy can diffuse power sufficiently throughout society to inculcate among people of all walks of life a justifiable feeling that they have the power to participate in decisions which affect themselves and the common life of the community, especially the immediate community in which they work and spend most of their working hours and energy.[35]

Bachrach's explanation of non-participation

Constructing Bachrach's explanation of non-participation and paradigm of political apathy has pitfalls similar to constructing Dahl's because there are important differences between some of his works. The most important turn on the epistemological status of both "nondecisions" and "covert grievances" and the emphasis on, and meaning of, participation. These have implications for his analysis of the legitimacy of the present scope of politics.

Thus, in Power and Poverty, he responds to criticism by claiming that "a decision which results in prevention of conflict is very much an event--and an observable one to boot."[36] Elsewhere he worries less about the need for observable decisions and argues that we should study power

by examining the "mobilization of bias," the dominant values, myths, established political procedures and rules of the game.[37] It is clear that Bachrach is not talking about the dominant values of a society shaping the wants of citizens in the interests of a ruling class. Yet he does seem to indicate that there is an ideological bias against the development of certain issues--a view not easily assimilated into the paradigm of nondecisions outlined in Power and Poverty. Consider, for example, that in "Interests. . ." he seems to indicate that the economic and political divisions of labor, themselves, contribute to prevent "troubles" from being converted into politically coherent wants. In fact, he argues that increased participation may undermine certain values and relations of authority. It seems, then, that, in practice, he has taken back the concession made to his critics in Power and Poverty and moved to a position on nondecisions similar to his view in "Two Faces of Power" and, in fact, to Schattschneider's.

Unlike Schattschneider, however, political apathy is a grave concern for Bachrach, indicating whole strata of society neither fully conversant with their interests nor fully free:

We know that a predominant number of individuals

> in the lower economic strata are politically apathetic and ignorant. We also know that there is a positive correlation between social status and political participation--that the level of citizen participation and the distribution of organizational resources vary according to the shape of the stratification system.[38]

When we consider Bachrach's explanation of non-participation, his statements on political apathy, along with his methodological and substantive concerns, it follows that:

> X (an individual, group, race, subjective class) becomes apathetic with respect to Y (issues, politics) when the polity denies X the participatory structures within which to determine the meaning of Z (overt and covert grievances, or troubles X has) in relation to Y. Thus, X becomes apathetic (ignorant and indifferent) because without such structures X is likely to lack the energy and capacity to see how Y and/or Z might advance or retard his or her real interests.

Evaluation of Bachrach's Explanation of Non-Participation

Bachrach is the first theorist studied to begin to capture the sense of political apathy as a condition of consciousness. Note that Bachrach introduces the element of "real interests" and participatory structures to help enable one to come to know them. When a person is presented with an array of issues and does not find them to be in his or her interest, he or she may become apathetic

to the political order that continuously serves them. Here Bachrach moves away from Schattschneider's view that non-participants simply reject the present "mobilization of bias"--to the view that they may become apathetic because no significant political avenues or exist, or are likely to exist, through which they can express their needs or articulate inchoate troubles. For Bachrach, X may become apathetic to Y when Z is not sufficiently developed to do more than signal lack of interest for X in Y, as well as when X believes over time that there is no way to influence Y. Bachrach, then, has a more subtle understanding than Schattschneider of both apathy and grievances and of the mode of political power that can be generated by a "mobilization of bias."

Furthermore, Bachrach articulates the importance of participation for developing the capacity to know one's interest, a concern absent in Schattschneider. The effect is to add critical force to the concept "political apathy." For Schattschneider only criticizes the mobilization of bias for keeping from the political debate the needs of most Americans. Bachrach criticizes it for also preventing the development of a coherent set of needs--and thereby fostering quiescence or apathy as a condition people suffer under. Thus, the mobilization of bias is repugnant to

Bachrach for increasing the likelihood not only that many will reject politics but that many will become apathetic to politics, as well.

Consequently, Bachrach emphasizes the necessity for participatory structures to overcome apathy. In this, he begins to develop an idea that pluralists largely ignore, although repressive regimes know all too well: a lack of political organization with which to develop, sustain and promote the interests of the disenfranchised leads to political quiescence. While pluralists acknowledge that political structures are necessary to win political contests, the interest group, in particular, they fail to see the crucial role such structures play in helping make coherent the troubles people feel.

Bachrach also extends the scope of political interest to include the workplace and corporations. In doing so, he increases the range of issues and potential issues that should be included in any assessment of how extensive apathy currently is. When we combine his concerns about corporate authority and the need for greater participation, for example, we find that the legitimacy of current economic and political divisions of labor thereby also become potential issues. Thus, Bachrach maintains that before we determine how much apathy is present, we should

ask are there other issues currently or potentially important to the agents?; and are there social structures which inhibit or distort present self-definitions of "interest" and which themselves might become potential issues?

Finally, Bachrach begins to develop a significant motivational analysis for understanding apathy as a condition. With Dahl, apathy produced by poverty often means poor people lose interest in politics because they despair of continuing defeat. They know their interest but become apathetic because the opportunity costs (political inequalities) involved in continuing to press them become too great. Bachrach deepens our understanding of how structural pressures can affect political motivation by developing the relation between the mobilization of bias and apathy: the systematic exclusion of overt grievances from the realm of political issues and prevention of covert grievances and troubles from becoming overt and clarified can foster devolution into apathy. Part of that condition, for Bachrach, is a lack of capacity, energy and opportunity with which to articulate and press grievances in politically relevant ways, suggesting a deprivation of both structural and conceptual resources. For Bachrach, apathy as a condition <u>results from</u> structural pressures incapaci-

tating one from knowing and pressing one's interests and results in non-participation.

While Bachrach does develop some of the promising themes in Schattschneider and Dahl, he falls short of offering a fully satisfying explanation of non-participation, for several important reasons. While he does have some understanding of the dynamics of apathy as a condition, he does not adequately discuss apathy related to choice. I think, for example, it makes sense to say that X becomes apathetic about issue A because X has freely chosen between issue A and B and is more concerned with B. Thus, because A was once important to X, we might conclude that X's apathy may help X focus on the choice of B--apathy we can nevertheless hold X responsible for if we want to maintain that A should still be important to X, B notwithstanding.

Bachrach's discussion also has difficulties relating to his commitment to a reformed behavioralism. Therefore, while Bachrach begins to see apathy as a condition, he tends to overapply it--assuming that all who appear to be apathetic or ignorant actually are. He presumes, for example, that those in the lower strata who articulate no preferences are apathetic. Those with overt grievances apparently reject politics, while those with covert grievances and those with repeatedly thwarted overt

grievances become apathetic. It is surely possible, however, that some might have a coherent set of beliefs they choose not to articulate and press, perhaps, for fear of reprisal, or simply because they don't feel anything good will come of it. Although they are apparently apathetic, in reality they simply refrain on purpose from getting involved. While Bachrach's analysis of power, of course, allows for identifying such a relation, his statements on non-participation are unclear on this type of political withdrawal. This reflects a problem in some of Bachrach's work, a tendency to focus on appearances when in uncharted terrain.[39]

Of much greater importance, however, are inadequacies in his general treatment of the relation of power and interests. While Bachrach's views on covert grievances and troubles are an important improvement over Schattschneider, he doesn't fully explore the sources of these grievances and their relation to real interests. Are we to presume that the troubles a person feels reflect his or her real interests? Are we to assume that when troubles can be developed into issues, a person's real interests are more likely to surface? For example, a person may feel anxious because he or she has not been promoted along with one of his or her peers. Does the "real interest" lie within

being promoted and thus relieving the anxiety? Or is the point to do away, to the extent possible, with the hierarchy, which is part of the basis for the driving desire for promotion and thereby the anxiety? Certainly Bachrach is correct in suggesting that the articulation of troubles is an important step in determining real interests, but he understates the extent to which troubles, themselves, can be rooted in the ideology and practices of a particular social and political order.

Bachrach does move away from the crude need theory, however, by suggesting that participation can reveal interests (and, I might add, perhaps stimulate troubles) that could not be predicted simply form the ideas or grievances held prior to the involvement. For example, he notes that greater participation may foster in workers a greater desire and capacity to question current values of authority. His tacit understanding of real interests, then, seems to go beyond the analytical category of felt needs. However, because felt needs remain his primary analytic framework for determining real interests, he is open to the following criticism by Steven Lukes:

> It is here assumed that if men feel no grievances, then they have no interests that are harmed by the use of power. . . . Is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people from having grievances by shaping

> their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things?[40]

While Bachrach's article, "Interests. . .," is sensitive to this criticism, it does not completely avoid it. Nor is this problem merely academic. Consider that not only might the grievances people feel not reflect their real interests, but they might confuse attempts to come to know them more fully. For example, given the ideology of equal opportunity, a person may assume an inordinate share of individual responsibility for being out of work during a recession. Given the ideological context, the grievance illicitly may remain personalized, undermining political understanding and the development of one's real interest.

To rely on felt grievances as the indicator of real interests or to equate their absence with no existent interest may underplay some of the most important power relations in a society. With respect to apathy and non-participation, it is to miss several possibilities. People may be socialized into a condition of apathy, as when explicitly apathetic roles are important role models. People may become apathetic because the grievances they feel never lead them to develop political strategies either to overcome such grievances, or to overcome them without developing important new ones. Consider again the worker

anxious about promotion. Suppose he or she follows the need to succeed, only to find after advancement that there now exist a new set of peers to compete with and that former friends will no longer associate with him or her, creating anxiety once again.

Finally, if people have not successfully determined their real interests, they may become apathetic with respect to issues that should be important to them. This leads to the controversial aspect of apathy: for example, I might consider someone apathetic with respect to an issue which I feel he or she should care about, while the agent disagrees with my evaluation, denying that the issue is important. The problem is deepened because it still remains to be determined whether the "apathy" (if it is apathy) is the responsibility of the agent or if it results from the type of structural sources we have discussed. Three possibilities emerge. I may be incorrectly using the term "apathy" because, in fact, the issue under consideration is not, and will not become, of any consequence to the agent. Or apathy related to choice may be an apt characterization. My use of the term then may prod the person, who bears responsibility and therefore some degree of freedom to overcome the apathy, to become more conscious of the choices made and the consequences. Or, if apathy as

a condition obtains, my characterization is not likely to have immediate impact because the agent, in my judgment, is not in a position to assess freely what should be important to him or her. In this case, we have a subtype of "false-consciousness."

If the above arguments are sound, how do we locate responsibility for non-participation and apathy? As Lukes points out, Bachrach's methodology has an individualistic view of nondecisions. It follows that we would need to observe the relevant nondecision-making process before we determine responsibility for non-participation and apathy.[41] If corporations "authoritatively allocate values," for example, they should be considered political. If corporate allocation of values precludes decisions that could enhance democratic participation, such value distribution may be the responsible agency for fostering apathy. Because corporations are now viewed as the political agency inhibiting participation, it is legitimate to speak of augmented democratic control over the corporation.

What of the "value" of the corporation itself, however, and the ideology of capitalism which sustains it? Bachrach's method is weak here both in comprehending the reasons for apathy and non-participation and in locating the responsibility as well. For the ideological context in

which nondecisions occur is often crucial to making relations of power appear legitimate and removing them from scrutiny, thereby constituting a more important power relation, however subtle, than the nondecision itself.[42]

Consider the following: a dominant ideology may foster apathy by manipulating the wants of an agent, pressing him or her to adopt passive roles functional for the social system. Bachrach may miss these practices as examples of power relations because his concept of nondecision is predicated on the prevention of conflict and the necessity for observing, at the least, troubles. But the very point here is that conflict may not surface. In fact, the more successfully an ideology is established as a powerful value system, the less likely it is that any conflict will arise.

Not having the cue of conflict, Bachrach's method is likely to encourage an analyst to see such manipulation as the authoritative working of the system--supported by consensus--rather than as a specific application of power that supports a particular system of power. This method is also more likely to miss important structural sources and actors responsible, in part, for creating the conditions for non-participation and/or apathy. And by missing important agents and agencies, the analyst is likely to exagger-

ate the responsibility of those he or she does locate.

Perhaps most important, the analyst may misappropriate responsibility because he or she will fail to see that the logic, or the normal working, of a social system may be itself the most critical source of apathy and non-participation. Restricted by an analytic straightjacket, the observer fails to grapple with a fundamental question: when is the authority of a social system, apparently grounded in free consent, in fact illegitimate because it subversively fosters unnecessary apathy and non-participation, curtailing the interests and freedom of the participants without their consent or knowledge? To accurately assess levels of non-participation, degree of apathy, and the reasons for both, it is necessary to go beyond the category of "nondecisions." Not to do so, perversely, would relegate the study of a society that engendered "happy slaves" to the world of metaphysics, removed from immediate political practice and relevant social theory.[43]

There is, I believe, an implicit awareness of some of these problems within some of Bachrach's work, particularly in his article "Interests. . . ." This awareness points to the inadequacy of the paradigm of nondecisions, particularly as it relates to non-participation and apathy. As we

shall see, Bachrach's most recent work seems to agree with my critique. Note the tensions within his arguments in "Interests. . .":

> It is the central contention of this paper that a dual concept of political interest, which recognizes that not all expressed wants reflect real wants, is an essential standard for determining the degree to which a political system is democratic. In terms of this standard, a system is democratic to the extent it recognizes and enforces the right of the individual to participate in making decisions that closely affect him and his community. Such participation is an essential means for the individual to discover his wants through the intervening discovery of himself as a social human being.[44]

Up to this point, Bachrach is arguing that we can't be certain that the most important real wants of an agent are included in expressed preferences. For a society to be democratic, therefore, it must include participatory mechanisms to enable an agent to come to know his or her real wants. Discussion is particularly important here, not only because it helps catalyze opinion but because "it helps create it."[45] How are we to know, however, when the participatory structures we have set up enable or disable the translation from apparent to real interests?

> The presumption that people from the lower strata have real interests--interests which they are unable to express, let alone comprehend--does not imply that elites nor anyone else know what these interests actually are.[46]

If people from the lower strata are unable to express

their real interests and elites (and "anyone else") do not know them, when is a successful translation taking place? Bachrach's answer is only partially satisfying. Let us recall the following test, in which he retreats somewhat from the above statements, where it is unclear whether real interests must be based, at least, in unarticulated "feelings." When is the democratic "right" to participate is being violated?:

> . . . when there is a blockage in the conversion process from feelings to articulated preferences for a significant portion of the population, there is reasonable doubt that convergence between real and apparent needs is taking place.[47]

Recall also his requirement that "feelings" be present for us to ascertain that real wants may be lurking below the surface. The problem is this: Bachrach was unwilling to concede, at least at this stage of his work, that real interests may not be reflected in the agent's affect, because he fears that this position would introduce bias into the analyst's conclusion about what the agent's real interests are. Responding to pluralist analysis and criticism, his critique of pluralism does not go quite far enough. For how are we ever to know that the participation mechanism we put in place allows even the effective translation of "feelings" into real interests, without having some conception of what those real interests are?

Any participatory mechanism will advance certain interests over others and, for that matter, allow clearer articulation of certain feelings over others. How are we to know when a particular process allows all the important feelings of an agent to be conceptualized? According to Bachrach, it appears, we would have to ask the agent, certainly a proper place to begin. Yet, by Bachrach's own admission, the agent may not be fully conversant with the meaning of his or her feelings. The analyst and the agent, then, must decide, using the evidence of the agent's perception, whether the perception of effective translation is accurate. We are then brought back to the problem Bachrach states, that the articulated wants of the agent may not fully reflect his or her real interests.

The problem is deepened when we consider that the agent's most basic feelings may be so repressed that the agent can be said to be unaware of them. Moreover, there may be ideas and modes of life that the agent is unfamiliar with, which, if experienced, would ultimately prove to be more satisfying or normatively superior in the eyes of the agent. The agent's perception of the conversion process, then, is important evidence, but never a sufficient test, of the effective translation of apparent to real interest.

What type of participation will advance, then, the

ability of the agent to ascertain freely his or her interests and press for them? Just as we cannot fully ground the real interests of the agent upon the agent's articulated preferences, there is no "value-neutral" way we can establish what type of participation will advance the agent's freedom. Bachrach, for example, suggests that certain participatory schemes may be cooptative[48] and that equality of political power is an important standard to be brought to bear to determine whether full participation, in fact, obtains.

The discussion must be taken further. Any evaluation of what an agent's real interests are and what type of participation advances the agent's freedom is, at the same time, an argument in favor of certain participation schemes and a certain conception of interests. In fact, full participation would have as one of its standards the active involvement of all capable agents in precisely these types of discussions. Bachrach's conclusion that "in a democracy, each individual should have the right to participate in making decisions that directly affect his interests," begs an essential question: how do we know what the agent's interests are and therefore whether the decisions the agent is participating in do, in fact, "directly affect his interests"?

These issues can have practical implications for the study of non-participation. Let us take one example. According to Bachrach, if corporations "authoritatively allocate values," they should be subject to political control; if work-life occupies a preponderant amount of worker time and energy, workers should participate in control over their work. Bachrach concludes, however, that even after participation, workers are likely to remain status quo oriented. Certainly, this conclusion is not implausible, but there are certain weaknesses in the analysis used to arrive at it.

It is crucial, for example, that the type of participation Bachrach has advanced to this point remains within the confines of capitalist property relations. While he thinks that he is advancing the capacity of workers to develop their interest through democratic procedures, he misses that he is also advancing a particular schedule of interests, including some form of participation, but not including democratic ownership and probably not even serious control over work. The conclusion that workers may not become more "radical," therefore, may be determined more by the proposals and the structual constraints they will operate under than by an abstract conception of worker "conservatism." Some workers, it might turn out, will

remain "apathetic" with respect to worklife even with opportunities for greater participation, not because they don't care about who controls production and their work but because they might think it foolish to spend extra energy working on someone else's property. Or they might withdraw into "apathy" after being frustrated in efforts to achieve serious control. The combination here of the social structure and values of private property, and participatory reforms, can lead to conclusions supporting the conservative view that workers don't really want to govern themselves. On the other side, if participation were taken seriously, it might soon bump into the imperative of private ownership and decision-making over production and capital accumulation, leading to more radical demands.

The general problems discussed above are inherent in Bachrach's early method, although he does transcend them implicitly from time to time. They indicate his commitment to a reformed behavioralism, his fear of elitism, and ultimately demonstrate his mistaken presumption that we can set up neutral (and therefore "non-elitist") procedures within which workers can develop their real interests.

Partly misunderstanding the relation of consciousness to social structure, Bachrach thinks he can avoid the

positivist twin charges of elitism and emotivism by grounding his appeal for greater participation only within terms that do not themselves question the values participants hold. In doing so, however, he opens himself up to the charge that his methodology does not fully transcend dominant ideology and, therefore, may unwittingly support reformed, but still elitist, political structures. In order to overcome this charge, Bachrach would have to outline the capacities and interests his reforms would help foster and demonstrate how his reforms are likely to achieve these results.[49] Otherwise, the unfortunate result would be to develop a naive faith in participation, which might lead to the further domination and depoliticization of workers and the underclass, certainly not a result intended by Bachrach. Without a critical theory of the reforms he has proposed, we could not begin to know.

As part of that critical theory, we should admit that real interests may be harmed by the exercise of power even though no "feelings" are detectable, and thereby no blockage exists between feelings and interests. Once we do this, we can reject a curious assumption with elitist implications in Bachrach's own work. Bachrach fears that if we suggest certain interests may be present in the absence of felt grievances, we may commit the elitist error

of insinuating our beliefs into the agents we study. Therefore, he focuses on unarticulated troubles as well as overt grievances and the blockage between feelings and interests. As a result, he presumes that those who have difficulty articulating their feelings are also those who do not comprehend their own interests, and he locates this constellation in the lower economic and social strata.[50] I shall discuss in Chapters III and V whether political theorists, even radical theorists, tend to underplay the articulateness of workers and the underclass. For our purposes here, we can now ask: if the inability to articulate troubles into overt grievances and issues is not the only signpost of the suppression of real interests, is the present social system meeting the real interests of <u>all</u> of its constituents? In other words, are we all capable of misperceiving our real interests, no matter how articulate and introspective we appear to be?

The "democratic" nonelitism Bachrach supports at best privileges the hypothesis that, from a democratic point of view, we must presume that the values and feelings of workers (especially as developed through "participation") signal their real interests. Against this, we must maintain the possibility values and feelings themselves may be part of the subordination of all people (particularly

if we are uncritical about the nature of the "participation" engaged in). At worst, it misses that all political agendas have an attendant package of interests and capacities, and if having such agenda is elitist, so are all people directly or indirectly engaged in political affairs or analysis. The curious result is to label as elitist only those who explicitly acknowledge and take responsibility for the full scope of the proposals they make.

One can try to influence people to accept a radically different set of values and try to develop political structures to support such values without forcing or manipulating them into such practices. Because all political analysis is politically engaged, taking responsibility for the persuasive element of an analysis should not be mistaken for elitism. Quite the contrary, such is the hallmark of responsible inquiry. More directly, in politics, mistaking an effort to persuade with the practice of elitism can subvert democratic discussion of important power relations, which may themselves prevent a rational discussion of a radical political program or any unconventional ideas.[51]

In sum, Bachrach improves Schattschneider's explanation of non-participation by refining the concept of

covert grievance and restoring the developmental aspect of participation to a central place in democratic theory. His weaknesses result from an inadequate analysis of the relationship of consciousness to social structure, stemming from a tenacious commitment to a reformed behavioralism. Thus, his paradigm of power overstresses the role of decisions and subjective conflict; it overlooks the question of whether there may exist "objective" class conflicts that have not yet surfaced, in part, because of incomplete consciousness of our situation and our interests. As a result, he only begins to articulate the concept of apathy as a condition. Finally, he does not adequately discuss apathy related to choice.

Ultimately, the major weaknesses in Bachrach's analysis stem from the insufficiency of the paradigm of nondecisions. It is not just how the present allocation of values, present institutions, elites, etc., <u>prevent conflicts</u> from arising that is critical. For the present allocation of values, internalized and perhaps fully accepted by elites and underclass alike, could itself constitute the most important power resource of a political order and the most important impediment to the freedom of its constituants. To know when values and societal rules enhance or impede freedom, however, is to become involved

in the essential debate about how best can we organize ourselves politically. It is this debate that is the essence of democracy, and there are no neutral courts, not even for the political analyst, to which we can submit it for scientific adjudication.

Bachrach: a transitional theorist

I have emphasized the early work of Peter Bachrach because here he singularly displays the mode of inquiry of a theorist on the cusp of the reform paradigm, with internal tensions edging him toward what I will consider in the following chapters--a radical explanatory framework for the study of non-participation. In this chapter, reviewing Bachrach's early work has helped clarify the transitional elements between the reform and radical explanations, pointing to the strengths and inadequacies of the former and thereby grounding our exploration of the latter. In the last chapter, I shall consider some of the more explicitly radical elements of Bachrach's later work.

Before leaving Bachrach, however, I should note some important developments in his later work, which both provide an immanent critique of the work reviewed and substantiate some of the comments I have made. In his 1982 article, "Class Struggle and Democracy," Bachrach makes

certain arguments about the nature of participatory democracy which, I believe, imply a revision of some of his earlier discussion and its relation to the concepts, participation, grievances and class. Taken together, these provide him with the basis to extend the parameters of his concept of depoliticization and move his work closer to that of Mills and Marcuse, to which I will next turn.

Criticizing the work of Carole Pateman, Bachrach argues that workers' participation "separated from power" can have therapeutic benefits, while the workers remain "subjected as before to the will of others." Following George Kateb, Bachrach suggests that workers, under such circumstances, could be involved in "repressive participation." Bachrach writes:

> Some proponents of participatory democracy tend to be insensitive to this danger. Intent upon the value of self development gained through participation, Carole Pateman, for example, does not consider whether participation, in its various forms, can elicit recognition of an incongruity between feelings of well-being and a loss of individual autonomy; a sense of well-being might serve to mask the subordinate status of the participant and, in fact, might abet it. By participating, the individual may reinforce his or her own repression.[52]

Bachrach here extends his earlier work in arguing that participation can enhance the ability of the worker to know his or her interests and increase autonomy, *if* it increases

the freedom and power of the worker. He at once clarifies his earlier recognition of the cooptative potential of "participation"[53] and his suggestion that a fuller test of real participation includes whether the worker has greater power afterward. Moreover, he explicitly acknowledges that "feelings" are not the ultimate grounds upon which to base what is in someone's interest or, by implication, final determination about whether a person is freely pursuing his or her interests. In his earlier work, Bachrach, like Pateman, did not fully acknowledge the "incongruity between feelings of well-being and a loss of individual autonomy": our feelings may also be a resource for our subordination.

Now, Bachrach argues, the important question becomes:

> . . . what constitutes genuine workers' participation within the context of a relatively nonparticipatory, class dominated society such as the United States? Within this context, genuine worker participation may be said to exist when workers' demands and actions challenge the power structure of the corporation and thus produce the conditions conducive to raising workers' consciousness.[54]

Here Bachrach seems to acknowledge that some standard must be brought to bear to determine what constitutes a higher consciousness, and that real participation involves a grave challenge to the existing structure of power. Now the "allocation of values" itself, both as a social system and as the values held by the participants, is seen as a

bar to freedom; no longer is the emphasis just on how it is used through nondecision-making to prevent conflict from emerging. In shifting away from the paradigm of nondecisions, Bachrach's work suggests important differences between the reform and radical analysis of power. We now turn to explicitly radical scholars, where we will see how these differences manifest themselves in the explanation of non-participation.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL SUBORDINATION IN AMERICAN SOCIETY: C. WRIGHT MILLS' EXPLANATION OF NON-PARTICIPATION

Introduction

The pluralist and reform explanations of non-participation have informed our understanding of political quiescence in two principal ways. Berelson and Dahl remind us that individuals may bear responsibility for their withdrawal from politics. Yet, as Schattscheider, Bachrach, and, in some ways, Dahl demonstrate, the scope of politics can insulate the polity from the needs of certain groups and precipitate their withdrawal. Where pluralist theory places individual free choice at the heart of the analysis, conflict theory centers on the biases of prevailing institutions. Taken together, we are provided an interpretation that admits both of individual responsibility for non-participation and institutional constraints on participation.

Although a synthesis of these accounts surely would be superior to either alone, it would remain deficient in two crucial respects. First, it would still fail to investigate the relationship between individual will and conscious-

ness and the social structure in which they develop. Even the reform theorist, for example, does not consider adequately that the grievances, wants, or even troubles of non-participants (or participants) may not, in fact, represent their real interests. Ideological domination of consciousness, here understood as a power relation, is ruled out at the start. Neither does the reform theorist suggest the ways in which the exclusion of certain interests--and the need to depoliticize those citizens who have or potentially may have them--can be necessary for the normal working of certain political orders. For if certain interests are pressured out of political consideration because they contravene the parameters of the socio-economic system itself, it would not just be the present scope of politics that depoliticizes but the nature and logic of the political and economic order as such.

To pursue these issues, we shall examine how, in C. Wright Mills' view, "mass society" depoliticizes citizens into conformity, indifference and apathy. The strategy will be as follows: first, I will give an overview of Mills' description of mass society, following this with his analysis of the position of the white-collar worker--Mills' prototype of apathy, and labor leaders and intellectuals--his potential agents of change. I will then explore the

relation of his sociological method to his political writing, with particular interest in applying his ideas on the study of language and motivation to his explanation of non-participation.

I will conclude by suggesting that Mills' explanation of non-participation includes a two-pronged theory of apathy: apathy related to choice and apathy as a condition fostered within certain types of social structures. While the latter formulation will prove to be problematic, I shall argue it does advance our ability to comprehend the full range of concepts necessary in the explanation of non-participation.

Mills and the Decline of Publics

Do people today have the resources to employ reason in the interest of their own freedom? Or have centralized institutional forms undermined their capacity for political self-awareness? In pursuing these questions, Mills contributes to this study by suggesting that below non-participation and apathy may lurk unarticulated troubles and that these may constitute the most important problems and potential issues of modern American politics. Further, he argues, there may be kinds of political "contentment" that

are detrimental to reason and freedom and therefore to democracy. For Mills, the bottleneck of malaise and the faltering of reason spring directly from the development of "mass society" in America.

Mills' fear is that the community of publics characteristic of much of nineteenth-century America largely has been replaced by a "power-elite" at the top, stalemate in the middle and a "mass society" at the bottom. The effect of this transformation has been to reduce the quality of democratic participation and thereby the freedom and reason of most Americans.

At the top of the structure of power, Mills suggests there is an increasingly united and often willfully coordinated "power-elite." Comprised of the top echelons of the corporate and military establishments, with the executive branch of government as a junior partner (the "political directorate"), this elite has concentrated more power in its hands than "any small group of men in world history, the Soviet elite possibly excepted."[1] Gone is the political order characterized by a diversity of local publics, with power scattered among the several states held in coalition by a weak federal center. Instead, we now have an executive apparatus that reaches into most areas of social structure. The economy, no longer comprised of a

"great scatter of productive units" balancing one another, now is dominated by several large corporations. Similarly, military definitions of reality now loom large in all political and economic action, as the military order has overcome its meager origins colored by civilian distrust to become a full partner of the power-elite.

The decline in publics is, itself, directly tied to the ascendancy of these centralized political, economic, and military institutions. For as they widen their scope, they undermine four basic requirements of people as members of genuine publics. At the same time, people lose the opportunity to express their own opinions (now they receive those of others through the media), to immediately answer in public the statements of others and to base meaningful action on such public discussion. Moreover, they lose the ability to protect themselves from the intrusions of large organizations.

In a public, Mills argues, discussion is the major medium of communication and the mass media serve to link various primary publics. As publics dissolve into "mass society," people no longer have a primary community within which to discuss problems and clarify their ideas about society and their position within it. And even the middle level voluntary association--"the citizen's major link with

decision" in large democracies--is becoming remote from individuals and primary publics. Public opinion, thereby, no longer is sharpened by the kind of discussion necessary for democracy to survive, removed as it is from the context of debate within and among vital organizations that are accessible to the individual. Without publics within which to develop alternative ideas and strategies, people and their opinions increasingly are managed in the interests of the power elite.

A central feature of the social structure that has emerged, Mills argues, is a political economy dominated by military needs and "money-making" and the relation between the two. As corporate men have moved into government to direct the economy, the distinction between business and government has become blurred. As military definitions of reality and opportunities for huge profits loom large in political and economic decisions, legitimate questions of defense mutate into a full-blown militaristic posture. United by psychological similarities, "the structural blending of commanding positions and common interests," and, at times, "explicit coordination," the power-elite is able to effectively dominate the American social structure. The result is a permanent war establishment tied to a privately incorporated economy insulated by a

"political vacuum."

Below the elite and above the "mass" exists what Mills calls "the middle levels of power"--"the semiorganized stalemate." It is here that the classic pluralist notions of "balance," "veto groups," and "countervailing powers" come closest to capturing reality. Yet, Mills argues, these group conflicts represent second-rate provincial interests, not the great clash of dominant interests whose resolution yields the public interest in pluralist theory. It is in the middle levels that politics such as we have exists. Even here, however, there is increasing integration into the expanded state apparatus as bureaucratic administration displaces electoral politics in importance with the degeneration of the legislative function into a balancing of "sovereign localities and practical interests." In comparison to "modern totalitarianism," whose integration of autonomous forces is explicit, Mills finds in the "formal democracies" a less explicit, incomplete process:

> Yet it is well under way. Leaders of cliques, pressure groups and associations maneuver within and between the organs of the democratic state and become a central part of that state. They discipline those whom they represent; their chief desire is to maintain their organization, even if this requires them to lose sight of their ends in the effort to secure themselves as means, even if it results in their loss of independent action.

> They ensnare one another; such history as they make is history going on behind men's backs, including their own. The middle level of power in America is no moving balance; it is a semiorganized stalemate.[2]

In Mills' view, then, the pluralist analysis of power both confuses the top levels with the middle and underestimates the integration of the middle levels into a state dominated by the interests of the power-elite. The unions, the farmers, the small businesspeople and professionals vie with one another in the Congress and through the bureaucracy, each to protect its own partial interest. Yet such competition as exists does not yield the "public interest," even as an unintended result. For what separates the top from the middle is the scope of decisions within which elites decide, primarily war and economic slump, and the ability to gain access to elite positions of power. In these crucial domains, it is the interests of the corporations and the military that set the parameters for who shall act and what actions are permissible, and it is the interests at the top that set the institutional context within which the middle level struggles to protect itself:

> Within the elite as a whole, this coincidence of military domain and corporate realm strengthens both of them and further subordinates the merely political man. Not the party politician but the corporation executive is now more likely to sit with military men and answer the question, "what is to be done?"[3]

Below the politically weak stalemated middle, then Mills saw emerging a politically impotent mass society. In contrast to the pluralist image of vying interest groups, we find here millions of isolated individuals who have little opportunity for political action or even to develop political analysis. People in a mass receive information from relatively few "opinion makers," and the organization of communication makes "it difficult or impossible for the individual to answer back immediately or with any effect." Moreover, effective action based on considered opinion is difficult because both are controlled and channeled by authorities, and "the mass has no autonomy from institutions."[4] The individual, therefore, becomes an object of manipulation by the power-elite of the military, corporations, and executive branch of the government and its "agents," especially in the media, educational institutions and the leadership of voluntary organizations.

The media, for Mills, increasingly "have helped less to enlarge and animate the discussions of primary publics than to transform them into a set of media markets in mass society."[5] In helping develop identities, aspirations, techniques and escapes not "attuned to the development of the human being," the media create a "pseudoworld" abetting the development of mass society. Although they may provide

some information, the media fails to clarify the meaning of the narrow milieu of the individual in mass society.[6] In the end, the media become "among the most important of those increased means of power now at the disposal of the elites of wealth and power."[7]

Similarly, educational institutions have largely become centers for the vocational training for white-collar jobs at the public expense. The political task of enabling people to better judge public affairs has given way to the economic function of job preparation: perhaps the only "political" role left to educational institutions is the inculcation of nationalistic loyalties. The worst effect of the transformation of educational institutions into a "mass medium" is that:

> in the hands of "professional educators," many schools have come to operate in an ideology of "life adjustment" that encourages happy acceptance of mass ways of life rather than the struggle for individual and public transcendence.[8]

Nor, for Mills, are political parties or voluntary associations able to provide an effective link between the individual and "public decisions":

> Mass democracy means the struggle of the powerful and large-scale interest groups and associations, which stand between the big decisions that are made by state, corporation, army and the will of the individual citizen as a member of the public. Since these middle-level associations are the citizen's major link with

> decision, his relation to them is of decisive importance. For it is only through them that he exercises such power as he may have.[9]

Yet voluntary associations are caught in a paradox that undermines their performance. If they remain small, they are likely to be ineffective. But if they prosper and grow, as we shall see in the case of the unions, they become part of the general structure of power removed from the individual. Of course, at the very bottom of the stratification order, even the minimal protection voluntary associations provide is absent.

As a result of these changes in communication, education and political organization, the capacity to develop political understanding is weakened. With "administration from above and the political vacuum below,"[10] genuine debate cannot occur and there is little live political struggle. In order to resist the manipulation and drift of mass society, people must be able to interpret the "facts" that confront them.[11] Yet the development of interpretive capacity is dependent on dialogue within and between "publics" now on the wane. Even dramatic experiences, such as the structural shifts involved in a depression, are insufficient by themselves:

> . . . experience of such a structural shift has to be organized and interpreted if it is to count in the making of opinion.
>
> The kind of experience, in short, that might

> serve as a basis for resistance to mass media is not an experience of raw events, but the experience of meanings. The fleck of interpretation must be there in the experience if we are to use the word experience seriously.[12]

Non-Participation, Apathy and Agencies for Change

Throughout his career, Mills searched for a way people might break with the "main drift" of American society toward increasing state and corporate administration and ultimately war. Was it possible for Americans to overcome their political passivity, to interpret successfully the "facts" that confront them and build a political movement to regain individual freedom and societal sanity?

The problem of how to generate participation and overcome apathy was always, for Mills, the practical obstacle to his passion to see America, once again, become a place of reason and freedom. Mills maintained throughout his work that overturning "mass society" required a fusion of organization, structural conditions, strategic location in the social structure, leadership, vision and will-power. As he became more convinced of the solidification of "mass society," particularly in The Power Elite and The Causes of World War III, he tended to focus on leadership, ideas, and will-power as motors of political change. This outlook

reflected Mills' inability to find any solid hope in the 1950's of an alternate center of power in American social structure capable of spearheading a progressive political movement, and a fear that the decisive actors of our times had become exclusively concentrated within the power-elite itself.

Perhaps, for these reasons, it is in Mills' earlier work that we find a more subtle analysis of the societal conditions that lie in back of non-participation and apathy as the dominant political problems of our time, and how a "mass society" of subordinated people might be overcome. For this discussion I now turn, in some detail, to Mills' analysis of unions and white-collar workers.

Agency for change I: the unions

Writing in the economic climate of 1948, Mills suggested in The New Men of Power that unions could become a formidable agency of change to counter the "main drift" toward slump and war endemic to the American political economy. Hadn't labor leaders, through successful organizing, dramatically increased the economic leverage of workers, thereby demonstrating the political potential of organized labor? Backed by numbers and organization, union leaders were now in a unique strategic position both to

organize the unorganized and to unite the power of labor organization to the ideas "labor intellectuals" were proposing as alternatives to capitalist war and slump. Although most union leaders were undoubtedly disinclined to such a task, in 1948 it was Mills' conviction that a small but significant minority just might have the will and vision to lead the way. If the "character and timing" of the next slump created "appropriate conditions," Mills concluded, the "masses" could be moved.

Mills realized, of course, that there were both structural forces and limits of character and will that overshadowed his hope. An initiative by labor, first of all, would be bucking the "main drift" of economic forces, including the increased concentration of corporate power and increasing coordination amongst businesspeople to offset further union organizing. Unions themselves were focusing on narrow economic concerns and, like corporations, were becoming increasingly hierarchical.

The character of both union leaders and members reflected these changes. Since unions have become institutions with a narrow economic focus, their leaders tend to be judged and judge themselves by short-run economic criteria. The leadership selection process of unions, therefore, looks favorably on what Mills calls "the

last representatives of the economic man," thereby reinforcing the "apathy and lack of understanding" of members:

> who at the present time, are often politically passive and politically and economically illiterate, not yet realizing that they are not living in an economy separate from a political order but in a political economy.[13]

Moreover, as the potential for crisis inherent in the relationship between labor and management became national in scope, the state increasingly was taking over the function, previously performed by employers, of regulating the labor force:

> Contrary to the liberal theory of the state, the government is not a neutral umpire using its impartial wisdom to effect a fair balance, it is increasingly a political instrument of employers, or at least a new amalgamation of business and governmental power.[14]

In working to institutionalize through government, and thereby narrow, the labor-capital struggle, union leaders were eliminating important political and economic possibilities and serving both as discipliners of the workforce, and go-betweens for workers, owners and managers. Increasingly, Mills argued, labor leaders were looking to politicians and government officials, rather than to their membership or potential allies: in their search to stabilize their unions as viable interest groups, labor leaders were finding themselves "more deeply involved with

the national state." In spite of economic gains, therefore, the developing politicized union-employer relation was eroding the independent political power of the unions, forcing labor to become "as dependent upon the political authorities as it is upon the economic strength to withdraw the worker from the process of production."

The search for stability was having the direct political effect of blinding union leadership to the possibility of broadening the political understanding of their membership and developing a majoritarian strategy with which to reorganize modern society. Worse, within "an increasingly monopoly economy," "the economics of cooperation and the politics of compromise," made it likely that under increased threat to the economy, the unions would join forces with monopoly industry against their potential allies in the most unorganized sectors of the economy: small farmers, white-collar employees, consumers, small business people, and "underdogs."

Mills concludes that, given the character of both leadership and membership and their narrow concept of "union," the "new men of power" were now serving to integrate workers into the political economy and thereby, unwittingly "subsidizing the free enterprise system." In supporting a governmental and party system that they could

not decisively influence, union leaders were surrendering the potential of their political power. Only a majoritarian strategy would help break these trends, Mills argued--until then the important parameters for decisions would be set, and the important decisions would continue to be made, as it were, "behind the backs" of union leaders.

Yet Mills had a hope based on the bleak political and economic future he foresaw. American capitalism was heading for another slump, if not a full-scale crisis. The politicization of economic struggles was itself a symptom of these structural troubles and a potential for unions to press for a political solution to them--thereby breaking the cycle of boom, slump, and war. Most likely, he felt, America would continue along the "main drift" of "sophisticated conservatives." On this path, the ultimate answer to slump could only be the preparation for war and war itself.

Nevertheless, union leaders had a choice that would help determine whether the path of the "main drift" would be followed. In the political interlude between wars, they could ally themselves with dominant business interests and remain relatively ineffectual or attempt to win real power through a <u>majoritarian</u> strategy embracing workers, "underdogs," and many white-collar workers. The first

priority would be to allow the political space necessary by pushing back, as far as possible, the onset of the next war. Within this space, labor would face the next slump far more organized, and with more members, than during the Depression. And this new power could be used in the interval both to organize the unorganized, particularly the white-collar workers and farm employees and to stimulate debate on a political program to help solve the endemic problem of capitalist slump and war. In doing so, unions could broaden both their economic power and their political base.

The alternative Mills posed involved increased worker democracy in the economic sphere with an eye toward worker's control at the point of production and a socialization of the means of production. A party of labor was also needed to put forth a program geared not only to the needs of organized labor (e.g., wages), but also to the American public as a whole (e.g., prices and, of course, war and slump). The "left" strategy would involve an "economic underpinning," in part because political power rests on economic power. More crucially, however:

> A socialist political program could not be successfully carried through in this society unless training were provided in the more direct democracy of daily life, in the shop and in the unions. Those who are serious about democracy

> must begin by giving the impulses of a man a chance to realize themselves creatively at work. That is the basis for a politics of democratic socialism.[15]

The alternative Mills argued for required labor to recognize the increasingly political nature of "economic" relations, and develop a program and constituency with which to contest the changing power relations. Short of a radical strategy, however, labor would consign itself to being a junior partner of "sophisticated conservatives," while the tendency toward war and slump made problematic even those gains based on an "expanding pie." To the degree, therefore, that labor submitted to liberal shackling by the state or subservience to either party in the political sphere, it would limit its power and short-circuit its potential. Worse, it would become prey during uncertain times to the union busting of the "practical conservatives," the fickle cooperation of business elites, anti-union public reaction to its narrow self-interested program, and perhaps the specter of fascism.

The coming slump, then, was, in Mills' view, a decisive watershed--a "political interlude" in which union leaders could be the decisive actors. Economic conditions could not be relied on alone, Mills argued, "for simple deprivation may lead to apathy." Instead, there

must also be the rejection of old legitimations and the acceptance of countersymbols. It was here that labor leaders were uniquely in the position to unite alternative ideas to the power of organized workers. Their task was to organize the unorganized, unite the unions and develop a broad political program. Complete the task of developing an informed national union constituency, Mills warned, or the unorganized may be used against you:

> It is the task of the labor leaders to allow and to initiate a union of the power and the intellect. They are the only ones who can do it; that is why they are now the strategic elites in American society. Never has so much depended upon men who are so ill-prepared and so little inclined to assume the responsibility.[16]

Mills' analysis of the chance for a labor-led coalition, however, also depended on his belief in the potential of political participation of the "American public." Writing in 1948, Mills saw the "apathy" of the American people as neither the consenting abstainers of Berelson, nor as the "cheerful robots" he was to write about in <u>The Sociological Imagination</u>. Instead of a "compact reactionary mass," he saw a range of depoliticized citizens, some disgusted or despairing at the "liberal rhetoric" that was not speaking to their needs, while others were debased into a condition of apathy by the structural pressures and disadvantages of their position in society.

What was the consciousness of those from whom he hoped a coalition would emerge? First, the "underdog":

> The underdogs lack the hardy self-confidence and capacity for indignation common to middle-class people. Their indignation is short-lived and often concerned with moral trivia. They have not been defeated; they have never tried. Defeat presupposes the impulse to dare, of which underdogs know little. . . . The underdogs are not much interested in national or local elections, nor do they vote as regularly as do the middle and upper classes. . . . They are ignorant and often too timid to judge the weighty questions which polltakers and politicians offer them. Their withdrawal and isolation is literally of such an extent that they do not know what they might wish for. To endure this life requires a low level of aspiration which softens the will and creates apathy.[17]

While for liberals the "underdog's" position was a problem of "adjustment and participation," for Mills it was "an important aspect of class relations in America." The problem of their non-participation could be solved, he felt, through the development of a "new type of union community," in which they were likely to become "solid union members":

> . . . then they will be willing to participate. A type of man must be built into a human being outside the present system of society so that he may be able to shake it to its foundations.[18]

Similarly, the white-collar workers' numerical growth and bureaucratic indispensability had to be made politically relevant through union organizing geared to promote

their freedom and security. For as things stood, they had "neither political awareness nor rudimentary organization":

> Their occupational ideology is politically passive; they are not now engaged in any economic struggle except in a scattered way. In the various middle-sized cities, they form the rear guard of either business or labor, but in either case they are rear guard.[19]

Finally, the workers themselves had a "historic mentality of acquiescence," based on the "upward curve" of American prosperity between 1865-1929. Their "optimistic mood," although shaken, was not broken even by the slump of the 1930's.[20] Yet, after rapid succession of war-slump-war and the possibility of the next slump being truly devastating, it was not likely that workers would accept poverty again. For one thing, the optimistic mood had been shaken by the Depression, particularly since a war was required to rescue the business cycle. For another, America had undergone important changes that undercut historical and psychological bases of acquiescence.

The frontier as a "safety-valve" was gone. Also gone were immigrants who both compared their present lot to a pre-industrial past in Europe and whose ethnic diversity could be used to fragment the unity of the working class. Advertising slogans pushing business loyalty already seemed banal as contraction of the market helped undermine the

dream of success through hard work. Although education was expanding, the opportunity it brought meant less because of an insufficient number of appropriate jobs. Mills asks:

> The personalization of success has been possible, but how long will the personalization of failure into individual guilt continue?[21]

Mills' hope was that changed circumstances, given the necessary political space and organization, would help break the back of acquiescence:

> Political acquiescence and lack of organization and leadership are mutually involved. Political apathy is not a function only of leadership; certain conditions in the life of the worker, and in the history of the United States, lie back of it.[22]

Given changing circumstances, the capacity of workers for political action should not be underestimated. Mills points to the rapid success of past organizing drives as evidence of how apathy could transform into action:

> The political apathy of the American worker is an apathy about engaging in electoral politics when there are no issues about which he feels deeply or understands fully. He votes neither for Tweedledee nor Tweedledum. Yet on more stirring occasions, the U.S. worker may "vote with his feet." The American worker has a high potential militancy when he is pushed, and if he knows what the issue is. Such a man, identified with unions as communities and given a chance to build them, will not respond apathetically when outside political forces attempt to molest what is his.[23]

It was foolish, Mills argued, for labor leaders to complain about apathetic workers and support either of the

main parties. Such support helped reinforce the very conditions producing apathy and undercut the opportunity to educate and organize--to make politics come alive:

> The activities of these parties alienate people from politics in its deeper meanings and demoralize those on the edge of political consciousness.[24]

Mills concluded in The New Men of Power that a progressive mass movement led by labor, if unlikely, was indeed possible. Given the development of a labor-led program that spoke to white-collar workers, small farmers and farm employees, and "underdogs"; and given union, community, and national forums to formulate and discuss a radical national program against war and slump, the American people would conceivably respond.

In those "who suffer the results of irresponsible social decisions and who hold a disproportionately small share of values available," labor had potential allies. But labor leaders still had to choose to fight. For it was only through the leadership of labor that ideas of intellectuals, countering dominant legitimations, could be welded to organization that could vie for power. It was here that the best hope lay to:

> focus the deprivation politically, inculcate the truth about common interests and common struggles, and offer some hope of winning a better tomorrow.[25]

Prototype of apathy: the white-collar workers

By the 50's, however, Mills became disenchanted with labor and began to give up his hope that labor leaders would become strategic actors spearheading a progressive coalition. With the increasing stability of capitalism and the integration of the unions as another interest group within the corporate economy, Mills dismissed the "labor metaphysic" as a romantic illusion concluding, as Marcuse would also, that the working class was now a conservative political force standing against both revolution and structural reform.[26]

If labor's recent history had worked against Mills' hopes, the politics and consciousness of the white-collar worker met his fears. In this world, Mills found a "new little man," shaped by large centralized bureaucratic institutions, stuck in a dull routine of enervating work and leisure and devoid of participation and power. Although white-collar employees were faced with the adverse effects of the "main drift" of American society--war, recession and boom--they lacked the organization and personal capacity for a political response. As persons in a mass without community or tradition, the white-collar worker, for Mills, embodied the most profound apathy of his time.[27]

The apathy of the white-collar worker had its roots in the displacement of the old middle class by the new. The centralization of property, accelerating after the 19th century, had eroded the unison of property and work as a "basis of man's essential freedom," and the lost independence of livelihood altered the basis of one's life plan and the psychological rhythm of that planning.[28] With the change from "democratic property" that the owner works to "class property" that the employee works for the owner, the basis of political and economic security had fallen back from "individual independence in the old sense" to controlling the job in the centralized enterprise one is dependent on. Where the old middle class was comprised of the independent entrepreneurs of small business and small farmers, as well as independent professionals, the new middle class consisted largely of dependent employees in salesrooms or in offices, pressured small businesspeople and farmers, and salaried professionals. The idea of the independent old middle class, further blurred by an outdated "rhetoric of competition," now obscured the reality of a new dependent "middling class" of salaried employees:

> The broad linkage of enterprise and property, the cradle-conditions of classic democracy, no longer exist in America. This is no society of small

> entrepreneurs--now they are one stratum among others: above them is the big money; below them, the alienated employee; before them, the fate of politically dependent relics; behind them their world.[29]

The development of the "new middle class" was created by the need to solve the problem of turning increases in productivity into increased profitability:

> The immense productivity of mass-production technique and the increased application of technologic rationality are the first open secrets of modern occupational change: fewer men turn out more things in less time.[30]

Increasingly, therefore, more and more people were in the business of manipulating symbols (money and paperwork) and people, and fewer were manipulating things. Increased productivity, however, posed heightened problems of coordination and of getting rid of the surplus created. It was the "new middle class," characterizing this shift, that was making a living organizing and coordinating, however indirectly, people who make things and the things themselves, and turning the things into profit for owners.[31] As a result of the enormous increase in the coordination and distribution network and particularly the distributive occupations of trade, promotion, and advertising,[32] the bulk of the white-collar class that developed fell into either what Mills called the "great salesroom" or the "enormous file." For Mills, the political marginality of

the white-collar worker could not be understood without comprehending the type of work-life (and leisure) that helped shape his or her character and political orientation.

The great salesroom. Selling in the world of the small entrepreneur, Mills recalls, was "one activity among many," while in contemporary America, it has become pervasive, an activity "unlimited in scope and ruthless in its choice of technique and manner." Americans are living in a "time of venality" in which the "market now reaches into every institution and every relation," public and private, and in which the salesperson's perspective dominates--"in some part everybody has become a salesman."33

For those who actually are employed in sales, whether as "salesmen" on the road or "salesgirls" in the store, it is a world in which appearance counts more than talent (or rather talent is knowing how to appear) and manipulation replaces genuine interaction between employer and employee, as well as salesperson and customer. Further, it is a world in which personality, rather than high grades or experience, counts most in the employment process.

With the tightened organization of the market, the saleperson's range of prerogatives has been greatly narrowed from the world of the small entrepreneur. He or

she sells the goods of others and neither makes choices regarding product selection nor price. Even the "last autonomous feature of selling, the art of persuasion and the sales personality involved, becomes expropriated from the individual salesman." Indeed, employees themselves are part of a "personality market" servicing the shift in employer needs away from manual skills to the art of "handling," selling to, and servicing people.[34]

In this atmosphere, the salesperson becomes a "commercial mask" in which basic human characteristics such as kindliness and friendliness become transformed into instruments of the sale--a choice of tack for a particular customer from a repertoire of poses. While the as yet imperfect standardization of the consumer means that the salesperson will have some choices to make as how to handle the individual, they will remain within the frame of sales strategies mapped out for the salesperson.[35]

The result of this process, Mills argues, is the "self-alienation" of the salesperson. Consider the description of the "salesgirl" he recounts:

> She wears a fixed smile on her made up face, and it never varies. I never heard her laugh spontaneously or naturally. Either she is frowning or her face is devoid of any expression. When a customer approaches, she immediately assumes her

> hard, forced smile. It amazes me because, although I know that the smiles of most sales-girls are unreal, I've never seen such calculation given to the timing of a smile.[36]

Mills suggests that sales work, far from being a lofty promotion to the independence and dignity we often connect to middle-class life, piles additional burdens on the worker. Where the manual worker sells labor energy and skill, many white-collar service workers also sell their social personalities, involving an additional sacrifice of one's self to a multitude of consumers or clients or managers. He concludes that the use of personality in the service of the monotonous tasks performed is itself a major source of "occupational disability," so much so that any theory of the "increasing misery" of the working class must consider the "psychological aspects of white-collar work":[37]

> The personality market, the most decisive effect and symptom of the great salesroom, underlies the all-pervasive distrust and self-alienation so characteristic of metropolitan people. Without common values and mutual trust, the cash nexus that links one man to another in transient contact has been made subtle in a dozen ways and made to bite deeper into all areas of life and relations. People are required by the salesman ethic and convention to pretend interest in others in order to manipulate them. In the course of time, and as this ethic spreads, it is got on to. Still, it is conformed to as part of one's job and one's style of life, but now with a winking of the eye, for one knows that manipulation is inherent in every human contact. Men are estranged from one another as each secretly tries to make an instrument of the

> other, and in time a full circle is made: one makes an instrument of himself, and is estranged from it also.[38]

The enormous file. The alienated work-life of the "salesgirl," for Mills, had its parallel in the work-life of those who inhabit the "enormous file." In the office, as behind the counter, under the aegis of Frederick Taylor's "scientific management," the manager tries to fashion the worker into an instrument of production. Here the attempt centers on lowering the cost of producing paperwork by "rationalizing" the work process both through management and the use of newly developed machinery.[39]

The practical effect of the new management techniques has been to multiply the division of labor within the office and, in so doing, to reduce costs by eliminating some work and simplifying the rest. The fate of the bookkeeper typifies the changing nature of white-collar work described by Mills. Once central to running the office, the bookkeeper's authority is now usurped by the office manager, and his or her routine functions by the machine operatives. Similarly, secretarial roles have been reorganized for greater cost efficiency. For great pools of secretaries, the emphasis has become simply one of speed and accuracy with little need for initiative or hope of gaining intimate knowledge of some segment of the business,

or even the private contact with the boss that formerly added status to the secretary's job. Instead, the "white-collar girl" is replaceable in work that can be speeded up and regulated by nonexecutive personnel. "In short," Mills writes, "the prized white-collar spot for women is becoming more and more the job of a factory-operative."[40]

In the new office, Mills concludes, employees increasingly have become machine attendants, and work, as in the factory has become collective, standardized and "specialized to the point of automation." With the manager's increasing power to design and service office functions and with the introduction of ever more sophisticated machinery, the number of routine jobs had been increased while the amount of initiative required had declined. As a result, the worker now became part of a "uniform mass in a soulless place," daily regulated by an "impersonal time schedule," and easily replaced:

> Seeing the big stretch of office space, with rows of identical desks, one is reminded of Herman Melville's description of a nineteenth-century factory: "At rows of blank-looking counters sit rows of blank-looking girls, with blank, white folders in their blank hands, all blankly folding blank paper."[41]

In the store and in the office, a common theme emerges. White-collar workers are increasingly subjected to standardized work and have little chance either for contact with those in real authority or to learn the whole

operation. White collars notwithstanding, their labor is alienated.

Mills' analysis of the white-collar strata--the "new middle class"--was undertaken to help him locate the objective position and understand the subjective viewpoint of the "new middle class" in the American social structure. His conclusions about objective social standing, following Max Weber, are based on an analysis of class, status, and power and may be summarized as follows.

Class position, for Mills, is best analyzed in terms of both amount and source of income. When Mills wrote, white-collar workers were clearly earning more than wage earners although the difference between the two groups was steadily narrowing, and there was overlap between sales employees, office workers and skilled workers. Yet the source of their income dictated clearly that white-collar workers were "not 'in between Capital and Labor'; they are in exactly the same property-class position as the wage-workers."[42]

For a variety of reasons, prestige remained superior among the "new middle classes." They had superior income and the ability to "borrow" prestige from apparent similarities to the "old middle class" and from the status of the firm they worked for. Their educational levels were higher

and the style and, to some degree, content of work more prestigious. The greater proportion of native-born white-collar workers and their relatively fewer numbers compared to wage workers added further to their status. The basis of their prestige, however, was not solid and "show[s] no signs of being permanent," although white-collar prestige continued to have psychological importance.

Class, status and occupation, considered together, told Mills something of the power of white-collar groups. Chiefly, they exercised a "derived power"--they were the "assistants of authority." As a whole, white-collar employees had more power than wage earners, and those that manage the "white-collar masses" were similar in power to the old middle classes. However, Mills continued:

> It must be remembered that white collar people are not one compact horizontal stratum. They do not fulfill one central, positive function that can define them, although in general their functions are similar to those of the old middle class. They deal with symbols and with other people, co-ordinating, recording, and distributing; but they fulfill these functions as dependent employees, and the skills they thus employ are sometimes similar in form and required mentality to those of many wage-workers.[43]

In general, white-collar workers were for Mills more of a "middling" class whose title traded upon images of an independent middle class now on the wane. Far from independent, most white-collar workers were not only dependent

employees but isolated individuals sinking in the morass of an increasingly bureaucratized mass society.

Organized irresponsibility: manipulation becomes a dominant form of power

Just as the working person lacked ownership over and was controlled by the machine, so the white-collar worker had become a "cog" in the bureaucratic machine without ownership or control or any notion of responsibility for what the enterprise does:

> The bureaucratic enterprise itself sets the pace of decision and obedience for the business and governmental officialdom and the world of clerks and bookkeepers, even as the motions of the workers are geared to the jump of the machine and the command of the foreman.[44]

Viewing society as a whole, although the "bureaucratic ethos" had not yet become totally dominant, the "loose-jointed integration of liberal society was being replaced, especially in its war phases, by the more managed integration of a corporate-like society."[45] America was increasingly coming under the sway of a "managerial demiurge," led by men whose personalities fit the increasing bureaucratization of power.

The "managerial demiurge," however, did not reflect a shift away from private property in the power structure.

Instead, "a huge and complex bureaucracy of business and industry" had come into existence "under the owners of property," with its authority resting precisely on the "right of property ownership."[46] Moreover, business and government leaders and, to some degree, labor leaders, had become "interlaced by committee and pressure groups, by political party and trade association":

> The managerial demiurge means more than an increased proportion of people who work and live by the rules of business, government, and labor bureaucracy; it means that, at the top, society becomes an uneasy interlocking of private and public bureaucracies, and at the bottom, more and more areas become objects of management and manipulation.[47]

Therefore, state and corporate bureaucratization of property was protecting private power rather than eliminating class relations. Corporate bureaucracies were regulating employer-employee relations (as were those unions that existed) and their graded hierarchies fragmented class solidarity at the base of the power pyramid. Government bureaus were also regulating employment and were involved in class management through tax, price and wage policy, "administering who gets what, when and how." Schools were tracking potential employees based on class and ability in "pre-existing hierarchies." The bureaucratic context, then, was not only manipulative in that it

was hiding power relations within an enterprise but also in that it was hiding the class basis of property in America.[48]

Therefore, "the forms of power that are wielded, all up and down the line, shift from explicit authority to manipulation," a more insidious form of power than coercion because of its hidden nature.[49] Behind the shift stands the capacity for manipulation by the bureaucracies and the means of communication to extend the "managerial demiurge" to opinion and emotion and "even to the mood and atmosphere of given facts." In front stand the victims of mass society who are the objects of manipulation of the "managerial cadres" and their "manipulated and manipulative minions." It is not just that the managers of bureaucracies and of communications scheme, utilizing an explicit ideology of manipulation, to get people to conform to their objectives. It is, more importantly, that in modern "industrial societies everywhere," individuals are distanced, through cold abstractions and remote hierarchies, from the managers who wield power over them, and the managers from them. As a result, the individual feels helpless, and the manager, who is just "following the rules" of his enterprise, does not feel accountable for the total result of which his work is a specialized part.

Although Mills' description of the mode of manipu-

lation characterized by the "managerial demiurge" could be more precise, we can summarize it as follows: manipulation has become the chief form of power in twentieth century America, and its ascendancy is directly tied to the bureaucratic context of decision-making. In this context, there is an explicit ideology of manipulation to get people to do what the enterprise needs them to do, accomplished through the media and psychological techniques used in advertising, industrial psychology and personnel practices. More fundamentally, however, bureaucracy as such creates an object relationship between manager and individual. Mills here recalls Marx's claim that, for the bureaucracy, the world is an object to be manipulated.[50]

"Organized irresponsibility" results. One either hides behind or is dwarfed before a system of power in which responsibility seems impossible to ascertain. "Organized irresponsibility" is a manipulative form of power precisely because it gives the appearance that no one is wielding power when power is, of course, being wielded by living people. Unable to see clearly who is doing what and why, you follow the rules that regulate your behavior and may even come to internalize them. You are used for ends you cannot see, in ways you are unaware of, by people you do not know. You follow motives that are external to

you, not because you believe in them but because following them is how you function within the organization: the result is that you fit yourself in without clearly seeing how you are being fit in.

Both through explicit psychological manipulation and the obliteration of clear lines of power and responsibility, "organized irresponsibility" is largely an institutional context based upon and held together with the power of manipulation. And as I shall discuss subsequently, it not only manipulates individuals directly but also nurtures a character development whose lack of grounded sense of self is ripe for further manipulation.

The political meaning of white-collar work

In analyzing the social structure white-collar workers find themselves in, Mills aims to understand both the character formation and organizational push we may expect to see from the "new middle class." On both counts, Mills finds a stratum that will neither be able to objectively understand its position in American society nor press independently to improve it. The politics of the "new middle class," for Mills, is that of "rearguarders"--followers of those in business and labor who will successfully claim prestige and attain power. With regard to

their own lives as biographical examples of a collective historical experience, they are ignorant and apathetic. Individually, some will strive for success and even succeed, but collectively Mills expects little from them of political significance.

White-collar workers will not, in Mills' view, be independent political actors because they are alienated from their work, from their leisure and from their own personalities. As we have seen, like wage workers, white-collar workers have little effective control in the planning of work. The "manipulative grasp" of the managers is even greater with white-collar workers, however, because their very personalities are often essential parts of an alienated work proces.

Ironically, the result of stripping work, in this way, of intrinsic meaning also creates a morale problem which serves to undermine the self-compulsion of the Protestant work ethic. The problem is solved from management's point of view through the "human relations" of the personnel department. The broad hope here is to identify "job enthusiasm" with the "American way" and thereby bypass worker alienation and legitimize the growth in business power. "Sophisticated conservatism" of this sort updates Taylorism in asserting that to have happy, efficient,

cooperative workers, an enterprise must have intelligent, rational, knowledgeable managers:

> It is the perspective of a management elite, disguised in the pseudo-objective language of engineers. It is advice to the personnel manager to relax his authoritarian manner and widen his manipulative grip. . . . [The attempt is to] conquer work alienation within the bounds of work alienation.[51]

Yet, "they have not found a really sound ideology"[52] to replace the "work ethic" and belief in independence of the individual. The crisis of legitimizing work remains unsolved:

> In the meantime, whatever satisfactions alienated men gain from work occurs within the framework of alienation; whatever satisfaction they gain from life occurs outside the boundaries of work; work and life are sharply split.[53]

If the employer "solves" the problem of alienation through "human relations" techniques, the worker "solves" it in the sphere of leisure. As rationalization of the work process increased the worker's perception of work as a sacrifice of time to make money to live, the "leisure ethic" began to replace the work ethic. Yet, for Mills, leisure is debased as well, serving more to excite, astonish, or distract than to "enlarge reason or feeling or allow spontaneous dispositions to unfold creatively."[54]

And as the home declines in importance as the worker's psychological center, leisure takes over the task of

preparing people for work. Instead of relaxing us, however, as it did for the old bourgeoisie, or regenerating our creativity, as it did for the craftsman, leisure now diverts us from the "restless grind" of work to the "absorbing grind" of passive enjoyment of glamour and thrills. Our leisure thereby encourages a work image and a holiday image of the self: "The bright two weeks [of vacation] feed the dream of the dull pull." For the rest of the year, the most we can hope for is to live the cherished "holiday" role vicariously.

Mills' analysis of the work and leisure of the white-collar worker always has as its backdrop his image of work as craft. Where real craft would develop a person and "reveal him to the world," most white-collar work alienates the worker from himself and from the world. Where "work-as-craftsmanship" involves the "simple self-expression of play and the notion of ulterior value of work," as well as discipline, independence and hard work, much modern work is tedious, below the capacity of the worker and only a means to an end. The end, leisure activity, turns workers into spectators or thrill seekers instead of sensitizing them to better perform their craft. Lacking the chance for real self-development in work, the worker often loses interest in development outside it. Instead of developing a craft,

the pursuit of income becomes the major rationale for work, for work "has no other legitimating symbols, although certainly other gratifications and discontents are associated with it."[55] This state is most clearly embodied by the trade unions:

> The only significant occupational movement in the United States, the trade unions, have the pure and simple ideology of alienated work: more and more money for less and less work.[56]

White-collar workers, Mills argues, have not as clearly understood their situation. Instead, they work at jobs where their very characters become a means of production while their leisure provides few resources with which to creatively confront work, or with which to demand a creative worklife. Lacking the idea of craftsmanship as a contrast model, devoid of firm tradition, subject to the propaganda of communication while "relaxed of mind and tired of body," living in a community of strangers, the worker of the modern metropolis has few resources with which to comprehend the white-collar world he or she inhabits.

The white-collar world Mills describes is one of individual competition for success--and that means, largely, competition for status. It is an odd competition, however, based on insecure symbols--on a "tarnished image." The old image of success stressed entrepreneurship based on independent property and was shored up by continually expanding

opportunity and new groups on the bottom to lift the prestige of those who came before. The new image is that of advancement through a prearranged hierarchy, aided by more equitable educational opportunity, but based more on agility of personality and handling people than the development of ability and solid skill. And where education in the nineteeth century was, ideally, geared to turn out a "good citizen" within a democratic republic, in the 1950's it aimed to develop the "successful man" in a "society of specialists with secure jobs."57

Moreover, as competition for white-collar jobs increases, Mills predicts, the occupational structure will not be able to support the number of graduates turned out. Those jobs people do get will likely force them to work below their skill level, increasing boredom and disillusionment: as "the educational link becomes insecure, a consciousness of somethimg wrong with middle-class life becomes more widespread."58

Further, with the tightening of the stratification order, the status differential between white-collar and wage worker will decline, income differentials diminish and security of employment become more similar. Status, however, remains a very important ingredient of white-collar life. Unlike wage workers who have been more successful at

delimiting their aspirations, white-collar workers dream of the climb up the prestige ladder. In fact, Mills argues, prestige and social esteem are extremely important defining characteristics of white-collar workers and a major consideration in locating them in the social structure. However, the American prestige system is now very unstable and uncertain:

> the enjoyment of prestige is often disturbed and uneasy, . . . the bases of prestige, the expression of prestige claims, and the ways these claims are honored are now subject to great strain, a strain which often puts men and women in a virtual status panic.[59]

The problem of status ambivalence and anxiety is felt most acutely by white-collar workers due to the confluence of the following forces: the rationalization of the work process lessens the importance of experience and education, fragments skill and diverts attention from solidarity with other workers or the development of skill to status competition. However, as Karl Mannheim observed, those dependent on an authoritarian hierarchy for their self-image, as well as for their livelihood, will frantically grasp claims of status. The process turns out to be self-defeating because the status climb for the future is elusive, and the work of status seeking is self-alienating in the present:

> Striving for the next rank, they come to anticipate identification with it, so that now they are not <u>really</u> in their places. Like money, status

> that is exterior to one's present work does not lead to intrinsic work gratification. Only if present work leads to the anticipated goal by a progression of skills, and is thus given meaning, will status aspirations not alienate the worker.[60]

If white-collar work was subjecting the worker to "status proletarianization," white-collar life offered an insecure refuge. Instead of living within a cohesive community where prestige, whatever its level, is known and secure from one generation to the next, metropolitan living allows different arenas for the pursuit of prestige. Positively, this allows for increased mobility for the propertyless. Negatively, each individual must win anew status positioning and, in the process, cut him or herself off from past generations.

The larger the city, the greater the distance between areas of prestige claiming, particularly with the segregation of work-place and residence. With the decline of white-collar status in work, therefore, Mills argues, the claims of prestige are increasingly cashed in the sphere of residence, leisure and consumption. "Physically close, but socially distant, human relations become at once intense and impersonal--and in every detail, pecuniary."[61] People rely on appearance for their prestige in a "market of strangers" with whom one shares "interests" rather than descent or tradition, has "contacts" rather than relations,

and lives in a mass of "uniformity" rather than a cohesive community.

As ties become more superficial, then, self-respect is maintained through the display of the "token of economic worth." Thus, quoting Thorstein Veblen, Mills argues that the struggle for existence has, to a "very appreciable degree, been transformed into a struggle to keep up appearance."[62] But it is an unsuccessful and ultimately unsatisfactory struggle:

> Self-respectability is not the same as self-respect. On the personality markets, emotions become ceremonial gestures by which status is claimed, alienated from the inner feelings they supposedly express. Self-estrangement is thus inherent in the fetishism of appearances.[63]

As the gap grows between potential accomplishments and the forces that actually determine life chances, Mills suggests, ambition increasingly takes the form of the "conscientiousness of the good employee." Leisure becomes lost in "consumer dreams," a sphere the individual "knows how to converse in," for "here he can make no mistakes." Life itself appears accidental, as a game or lottery, and success seems dazzling, beyond the person's reach, something to be enjoyed vicariously.[64]

Popular culture augments this process by presenting success in movies and novels as either something to be avoided for the evil path it will take one on, or something

to be sought within oneself--as a spiritual value. In this, popular culture reflects the transformation of one's self-image in American society from that of a producer to that of a "relaxed consumer." But the relaxation is illusory:

> If men are responsible for their success, they are also responsible for their failure; if success is an individual specification of social progress, failure is an individual specification of declining opportunities. But regardless of its true source, failure in the literature of success is seen as willful, is imputed to the individual, and is often internalized by him as guilt, as competitive dissatisfaction. The imperative to keep trying, not to slacken off, results in anxiety. But in the literature of resignation, such anxieties are relieved, not by an external success but by an internalization of the goals of success themselves.[65]

American white-collar workers, Mills suggests, are caught in a crossfire. On the one hand, the American prestige system in which they live is now subject to such strain that there is a virtual "status panic."[66] On the other hand, the achievement of status is itself uncertain, with contradictory popular images on the idea of success. The retreat into consumption cannot solve this problem because consumption requires income which, of course, requires some success. The message to the white-collar world depicted by Mills is this: work hard but expect little enjoyment from work and don't expect to go too far. When you fail, you will still be blamed for your inade-

quacies, and you will blame yourself as well. In any case, don't worry because success, you will be told, is not what it's cracked up to be, so do as you are told at work and seek your success in spiritual fulfillment off the job. You will try to find your satisfactions in consumption and vicarious living, your self-respect in competition over appearance, and your craft in molding yourself into a happy person despite your life. But, Mills argues, you will fail because your position remains insecure, your relations transitory, and your self-esteem shallow.

The white-collar world Mills describes is one of anxiety, guilt, and "status panic"--a world resigned to giving up control over itself at work and, to a great extent, in leisure as well. In general, it reflects a society in which there is widespread insecurity as the average person is "expelled from the Horatio Alger dream." As Americans despair at what Leo Lowenthal called "penetrating the thicket of grand strategy in politics and business"[67] there develops:

> a curious contradiction about the ethos of success in America today. On the one hand, there are still compulsions to struggle to "amount to something"; on the other, there is a poverty of desire, a souring of the image of success.[68]

There is a change in that image, too. As collective insecurities become widespread, "collective" means to

establish individual security are developed: the "literature of resignation," trade unions, social security and government management of economics and the opportunity structure, increasingly managed education, in different ways all serve this function. However:

> The governmental pension is clearly of another type of society than the standard American dream. The old end was an independent prosperity, happily surrounded by one's grandchildren; the end now envisioned is a pensioned security independent of one's grandchildren.[69]

The political relevance of white-collar workers

In ascertaining the political relevance of the white-collar worker, Mills looks to the interstices of social structure, consciousness and organization. He rejects the liberal view that their unawareness of their propertyless condition and dependency means, in fact, that American workers, particularly white-collar workers, form a vast middle class. It is, instead, "the grand problem of the psychology of social strata" to explain the lack of correspondence between "political mentalities" and "objectively defined strata." Nor does he agree with what he considers to be Marxian analysis positing nonownership of property as the "only factor, or even the crucial one, determining inner-consciousness or political will." Finally, he rejects the view of some Marxists and "new

middle class" theorists such as James Burnham, who in different ways argue that if a class is indispensable, it will inevitably attain political power.

Instead, Mills expects us to see a leveling out of the life chances of most white-collar and wage workers, due primarily to the rise of the latter and the "status proletarianization" of the former. But against both "Marxists" and "new middle class class" theorists, he suggests that this process will take place within the political haggling of unions, farm blocs and trade associations in the context of a welfare state that will "manage class chances without modifying basic class structure."[70] Those who are vulnerable, given the likelihood of tightened opportunities, will try to protect themselves by advancing income and security advantages.[71]

What of the white-collar workers themselves? Will they be able to protect themselves through unionization--if not through class consciousness?

Mills argues that people join unions either for instrumental reasons or out of principle. Generally, media antipathy to unions makes the latter difficult although this problem can be mitigated by exposure to pro-union persons or political ideas. The neutralization of anti-union ideology might then make instrumental acceptance

possible, in which case the most salient job fact encouraging a white-collar worker to become pro-union is the feeling that he or she cannot get ahead otherwise. Unions themselves support an instrumental view by selling themselves as a vehicle of advancement.

Yet white-collar workers may still reject unions on instrumental grounds for fear that the boss will equate them with wage workers. Thus, status concerns will continue to play important roles in both instrumental and principled rejection of unions. For Mills, whether in or out of unions, white-collar workers are likely to remain psychologically the "little individual scrambling to get to the top" instead of a dependent employee banding with others for a collective ascent.[72]

What is the likely fate of white-collar unionization? Mills suggests that the prestige factors that increase resistance to unionization are being mitigated by the general decrease in white-collar prestige. However, the emergence of white-collar workers as a broad identifiable stratum, after the solidification of the welfare-warfare state, denies them the period of autonomy farmers and wage workers had. Whether they win out in broad numbers, therefore, is likely to be determined by the various struggles between labor and business. In this

confrontation, white-collar workers will attempt to follow ascendant interests, whether in business or labor.

To the extent white-collar workers organize, however, they will likely become merely another interest in the administrative state, following the example of the trade union experience. In doing so, they will take their place within the politics of the "main drift" of a war economy in which unions and "sophisticated conservatives" vie for advantage within a powerful absorptive state. While white-collar unionization may enlarge the labor constituency, it will, in a broader sense, follow the patterns established for wage workers:

> Trade unions, after all, are the most reliable instruments to date for taming and channeling lower-class aspirations, for lining up the workers without internal violence during times of war, and for controlling their insurgency during times of depression. There are no reasons why unions should not perform the same services among white collar groups.[73]

Where may we expect white-collar workers to move politically? Comprised of diverse groups whose needs are often contradictory,. white-collar workers lack a common material interest around which to organize, Mills argues. Dependent on large-scale institutions for work, they have the psychology of people who are given standardized work but retain illusions of status. Not forming a homogeneous

class, they lack symbols around which to rally, and those symbols they have are losing meaning for them.

For a stratum to accumulate power, Mills writes, it must have a favorable interplay between:

> will and know-how, objective opportunity, and organization. The opportunity is limited by the group's structural position; the will is dependent upon the group's consciousness of its interests and ways of realizing them. And both structural position and consciousness interplay with organizations, which strengthen consciousness and are made politically relevant by structural position.[74]

Mills finds Marxist and liberal analyses of "the new middle class" wanting in not paying sufficient attention to all these factors. When one considers them, he suggests, white-collar workers will remain "dependent variables" in the context of business and labor. Psychologically anxious, sociologically under crosspressures and status ambiguity, economically divided, and politically devoid of organization or ideology, they have no "public position" and do not know which way to go privately as individuals. Thus, they remain vacillating and confused:

> They are worried and distrustful but, like so many others, they have no targets on which to focus their worry and distrust. They may be politically irritable, but they have no political passion. They are a chorus, too afraid to grumble, too hysterical in their applause. They

> are rearguarders. In the shorter run, they will follow the panicky ways of prestige; in the long run, they will follow the ways of power, for in the end, prestige is determined by power.[75]

As a stratum relevant to historical change, Mills suggests, they are merely waiting. As a stratum relevant to the present, they are politically passive.

Agency for change II: the intelligentsia

By the close of the Eisenhower decade, Mills had concluded that neither the "working class" nor the white-collar worker was psychologically or politically predisposed to becoming what he so desperately sought--a way out of the "conservative mood." Yet, before he died in 1962, Mills did entertain moments of hopefulness that a young intelligentsia could spark a New Left, perhaps throughout the world, and break the drift toward war. "From Turkey to South Korea, to England, Okinawa, Japan, the American South, and even Poland, Hungary and Russia itself," he saw students and young professors breaking out of the post-war apathy. And in "Cuba, a genuinely left-wing revolution begins a full-scale economic reorganization of U.S. corporations. Average age of its leaders: about 30--and certainly a revolution without any Labor as Agency."[76]

Events, the desire to combat his own despair, and his elite theory of power had helped Mills return to his roots: the best hope, however remote, now lay with the ability of people of ideas to utilize the opportunities for history-making he saw as a potential of the centralization of political power after the war. The chance to appropriate "history-making" from the "grip of fate," of course, was being squandered now by the elites of power. The task was for legitimate publics to form out of the drift of mass society, to replace responsibly and democratically elite power with an enlightened public will. Although the "NATO intellectuals" had clearly defaulted in this responsibility, it was nevertheless to the intellectuals that Mills once again turned to help create the ideas, the ideology, necessary to grab the new opportunity for real "history-making" now being so irresponsibly wasted.

The real job of intellectuals, Mills asserted, was to develop a "politics of truth," based on responsible analysis of society. Structurally, intellectuals were isolated, lacking independent organization or a political party to provide the institutional support for this work, or the historical agency to test their theories through action. They were faced, therefore, with the choice of becoming

"abstracted empiricists," "grand theorists," or simply people who became part of "pragmatic politics"--all these meant adopting the "liberal rhetoric" that concealed the "conservative mood." Of three roles Mills saw open to intellectuals--philosopher kings, advisers, or independent critics--the times demanded that intellectuals adopt the last. Their isolation might mean that they would appear utopian; but this utopianism--"the politics of truth"--was the only available antidote to the "crackpot realism" that was moving us toward World War III.[77]

It was for intellectuals, as Mills saw it, to clearly state the important problems and thereby help people understand and act responsibly in the times they lived in. If society was fraught with troubles of milieu and potential issues of social structure, it was to the intellectuals that Mills turned to state these troubles and issues as problems and to discern when troubles of milieu had at their base structural causes and should be discussed as vital issues of the day. If the "grand theorists" and "abstracted empiricists" had fetishized theory and fact, it was nevertheless the job of the real intellectual to relate the two in such a way that they would inform and test each other, and provide greater clarity and the basis for a program of action. Finally, clarification meant neither

acceptance of given perceptions of reality nor imposition of what intellectuals thought ought to happen:

> If we take the simple democratic view that what men are interested in is all that concerns us, then we are accepting the values that have been inculcated, often accidentally and often deliberately by vested interests. These values are often the only ones men have had any chance to develop. They are unconsciously acquired habits rather than choices.
>
> If we take the dogmatic view that what is to men's interests, whether they are interested in it or not, is all that need concern us morally, then we run the risk of violating democratic values. We may become manipulators or coercers, or both, rather than persuaders within a society in which men are tying to reason together and in which the value of reason is held in high esteem.
>
> What I am suggesting is that by addressing ourselves to issues and to troubles, and formulating them as problems of social science, we stand the best chance, I believe the only chance, to make reason democratically relevant to human affairs in a free society, and so realize the classic values that underlie the promise of our studies.[78]

American intellectuals were faced with the problem of being isolated from independent organizational support. But they had behind them a strong tradition of freedom--however banal and empty the content of that freedom had become. It was for intellectuals now to give content to the hollow form of American democracy by spearheading the structural clarification that would enable enlightened publics to form and vie for power.

In turning to intellectuals, and particularly the

young intelligentsia, Mills may, indeed, have been trying to break out of the despair of what Peter Clecak calls "radical paradoxes"--the discontinuity between what ought to happen for society's sake and what is likely to happen given structural realities. Nevertheless, Mills' analysis of the role intellectuals ought to play in shaping events had never really changed. In the late 40's, it was the labor intellectuals who would be critical in formulating the ideas the "new men of power" might be able to advance because of their structural position. The problem in the late 50's was that no clear agency, rooted in a pivotal position in the social structure, could be found. Intellectuals for Mills were, at least potentially, a last refuge of truth--if only they had the will to play this role. Moreover, as dissent mounted worldwide, they were the potential guides for the emerging "new left" based in the young social activist: "help them to focus their moral upsurge in less ambiguous political ways; work out with them the ideologies, the strategies, the theories that will help them to consolidate their efforts: new theories of structural changes of and by human societies in our epoch."[79]

Mills himself doubtless understood that youth as an agency of change lacked the structural position that Marx

had argued formed the basis of labor's pivotal role in "history-making." Indeed, Mills even wondered whether the hope he sometimes saw in youthful rebellion was justified. "What's missing?" his assistant Saul Landau recalls asking him. "The New Left, that's what's missing," replied Mills.[80]

Yet "the 60's," most of which Mills never saw, proved his hope justified, at least up to a point. The upsurge of students as a political force driven by moral outrage demonstrated that Mills' turn to youth as an agency for change was more than mere wish--more than a self-delusion with which to escape "radical paradoxes." Peter Clecak is certainly right when he suggests that Mills would have been upset and even appalled at some aspects the "cultural revolution" took in the West--particularly in its self-indulgent and anti-intellectual forms.[81] Yet Mills would himself have been deeply influenced by the events of that period that he died too young to see, events that would have undoubtedly broken his heart. Is it possible to see clearly what politics Mills himself would have advocated had he lived through ten years of the Vietnam war?

Students, young intellectuals, and youth, the antiwar, feminist, and antinuclear movements, however, have had a profound influence on the 20 years since Mills died. They

have been an agency of change. Unfortunately, they were not powerful or wise enough to be the agency Mills hoped could break the "main drift" of a society continuously gearing for war.

Non-participation and apathy as troubles of mass society

For Mills, then, America was facing a serious dilemma. Structural changes had undercut the very institutions which could enable Americans to understand those changes. Worse, no solid new agency of change was on the horizon which could enable us to comprehend our lives (and our troubles) as biographical examples in the epoch of mass society and help point a way out.

Instead, the tendency toward elite-centralized power, bureaucratic structures encouraging adaptation and the manipulative techniques of modern communication were serving to keep individuals stuck in the milieu of a mass society. Without a "community of publics" to provide a "context in which reasonable opinions may be formulated" and a genuinely liberal education to "help produce the disciplined and informed mind that cannot be overwhelmed . . . or sunk by the burden of mass life," people are able to discover few practical means through which to discern and press their political interests. Instead,

people drift under a regimen of top-down administration. Whether in military service, corporate job ladders, middle-level management, or menial work, the person in the mass is left with no transcending view, no project truly his or her own--"only routines that exist." In the end, people are not in a position to know what they really want for they do not truly observe their real experience, and their desires "often are insinuated into them":[82]

> Men in masses are gripped by personal troubles, but they are not aware of their true meaning and source. Men in public confront issues, and they are aware of their terms.[83]

Unable to forge interepretive links between their life and their times, people in a mass feel vaguely anxious, isolated and pointless, losing "the self-confidence of the human being"--if they ever had it.[84] Common sense is one of the few resources left but ripped from firm social tradition through administration and manipulation, it too is likely to be debased.[85] For Mills, then, mass society alienates people by manipulating their wants and by curtailing their ability to confront critically its social structure.

Non-participation and, at its worst, apathy are the result of the structural isolation people suffer in modern "metropolitan" America. Physically impeded from easy access to discussion and organization, intellectually

manipulated by modern communication, and ideologically restricted by the decline of publics, people tend to follow projects supportive of the drift and purposes of the power elite. While the reciprocal relation between milieu and social structure must be understood for genuine political awareness, mass society serves to prevent precisely this kind of knowledge. For Mills, the absence of political debate indicates pathology more than consensus:

> It is not merely paradoxical to say that the values of freedom and reason are back of the absence of troubles, back of the uneasy feeling of malaise and alienation. In a similar manner, the issue to which modern threats to freedom and reason most typically lead, is above all, the absence of explicit issues--to apathy rather than to issues explicitly defined as such.[86]

In Mills' view, the advent of the apathetic person, "the cheerful robot," means that democracy and freedom are on the wane. Worse, we can no longer be content simply to believe that deep within people resides "an urge for freedom and a will to reason." We must instead ask, he warns, can a person indeed be made into a "cheerful and willing robot":

> Can he be happy in this condition, and what are the qualities and the meanings of such happiness? It will no longer do to merely assume, as a metaphysic of human nature, that down deep in man-as-man there is an urge for freedom and a will to reason. Now we must ask: What in man's nature, what in the human condition today, what in each of the varieties of social structure

makes for the ascendancy of the cheerful robot? And what stands against it?[87]

Truth and Method

Writing in the quiescent 1950's and early 1960's, Mills offered us tools to penetrate the silence. Bachrach and other critics of pluralism reveal their indebtedness to Mills in their discussions of grievances. Yet it is Mills' work that often remains richer and more suggestive, both politically and methodologically.

Essentially the difference is this: Mills is unwilling to be confined by the paradigm of "nondecisions" and is unwilling to equate quiet with happiness, or happiness with virture. His idea of the modern polis and his American pragmatism forbid any compromise between truth and dispatch of method. It is a very sad commentary on modern life that people's self-understanding, because blunted, might stand against their freedom and reason. But it is a theoretical possibility and a practical matter that has to be faced squarely. To retreat from it, as Bachrach and Dahl did, to overlook it as Schattschneider and Berelson had done, solves nothing. The questions Mills poses are these: Can people be socialized against their interests by manipulat-

ing their wants or by derailing issues that might spark heightened political consciousness of their interests? Might the very rationality of a social structure inhibit the motivation and restrict the reason and freedom upon which a democratic society depends?

While Mills' political writings pose these questions as practical issues, much of his work, particularly on method, language and motivation, undergird their validity. His methodological warning might be as follows: any analysis concluding that people are free is weakened (indeed, any analysis would be weakened) if it ignores, at the outset, the influence of social forces on the language, culture and political orientation of a people. An analysis would also be deficient if it did not admit the possibility that certain forms of societal organization, by their nature and logic, stand against democracy. These methodological concerns are the backdrop of Mills' political critique of "mass society."

Mills' view of persons

Behind Mills' method and analysis stands a radically social view of persons that emphasizes the central role of language as mediation between persons, between persons and

social structure and within persons as "thinking." For Mills, language is "the ubiquitous string in the web of patterned human behavior." It can be viewed functionally as a system of social control because a symbol, "an event with meaning," produces a similar response for utterer and hearer:

> A vocabulary is not merely a string of words; immanent within it are societal textures--institutions and political coordinates. Back of a vocabulary lie sets of collective action.[88]

Following G. H. Mead, Mills argues that thinking follows the pattern of conversation. The process of thought has as its base an internalized organized set of attitudes, the "generalized other," with and against which we carry on an "internal conversation." The individual, presumably, explores his or her world by comparing daily experiences with such cultural preconceptions.

Within the process of symbolic interaction, therefore, lie possible seeds of discord, for our reflection does not <u>simply</u> mirror dominant values: we consider the meaning of language in terms of social behavior; and we understand our reflection in terms of meaning and language.[89] Thus, while both the language of the self and the generalized other are both socially derived, the former is based upon the point of view of experience, while the latter upon cultural

precepts. Because the person thinks through dialogue, the socialization process has a dynamic quality built into it.

The psychological processes, therefore, which signal contentment or despair at our political situation, themselves are based on the interplay between experience and cultural expectations. Mills criticized Marxist and non-Marxist theory alike for missing the social basis of individual psychology and thereby confusing the psychological with the personal. While an individual's psychology may be more or less his or her personal problem, it remains rooted in the relation between experience and expectation mediated by language.

Moreover, behind social behavior and interpretation lie basic values and vocabularies of motive which, especially in complex societies, can yield discrepant meaning, mixed motives, and motivational and value conflicts. While such conflicts certainly occur between region, class or race, we might infer from Mills that they could even occur within the same person. These are highlighted when changing functional requirements in a society exacerbate the tension between behavior and understanding: old behaviors become dysfunctional because, as their utility declines, their meaning changes. For all these reasons, the very process of socialization, especially in complex

societies, can bring about revision of meaning, and consequently of understanding and action.[90]

Understanding motivation: situating persons

In Mills' view, social interpretation should explore the situational patterns within which people form motives and intentions:

> For men live in immediate acts of experience and their attentions are directed outside themselves until acts are in some ways frustrated. It is then that awareness of self and motive occur. The "question" is a lingual index of such conditions.[91]

The motive has a dual function: it is a "name" for a consequential situation, and its choice is part of an attempt to influence others (and perhaps ourselves). For example, as we influence people by "naming" their acts or prospective acts or imputing motives to them, we also describe what we, in fact, believe the action to be. Motives, then:

> stand for anticipated situational consequences of questioned conduct. Intention or purpose (stated as "program") is awareness of anticipated consequences; motives are names for consequential situations, and surrogates for actions leading to them.[92]

Understanding human behavior, then, requires making judgments about a person's motivation. Although we can't "plumb behind" a person's verbalization to directly check

our motive imputation, we can't understand human motivation except with the aid of the vocabulary of the actor. In Mills' view: "motives are circumscribed by the vocabulary of the actor." The terminology of motives we employ in the explanation of conduct, therefore, must find its source in the "vocabularies of motives actually and usually verbalized by actors in specific situations."[93] Psychological terms like "desire" and "wish" fail to help us explain intentions and actions because such terms must themselves be explained socially.[94] Instead, we can construct "typical vocabularies of motive" that exist in given historical situations, types of situations and actions and refer "to the typical constellation of motives which are observed to be societally linked with classes of situated actions."[95] Such constructions can help us control our imputation of motives:

> As over against the inferential conception of motives as subjective "springs" of action, motives may be considered as typical vocabularies having ascertainable functions in delimited societal situations. . . . Rather than fixed elements "in" an individual, motives are the terms with which interpretation of conduct by social actors proceeds. The imputation and avowal of motives by actors are social phenomena to be explained. The differing reasons men give for their actions are not themselves without reasons.[96]

Understanding language and, through it, motivation, is

central to Mills' social psychology, methodology, and political analysis. People require language to mediate themselves and their environment. Their language develops as they probe outside themselves, thereby creating issues about which they are uncertain. They must then answer the question, "Why?," which in its nature requires them to learn, interpret and formulate a vocabulary admitting of intentions and motives. This is why Mills claims his analytic model for explaining motives "is based on a sociological theory of language and a sociological psychology."[97] While explaining why people impute motives to others is important for understanding the development of language, action, and social control, the discovery and explanation of motives must be rooted in language available to the person.

Mills' conception of motives and language have important implications for research methodology. Instead of depending on abstract questions asked of individuals, as is the common research practice, the researcher can "tentatively delimit the situations in which certain motives may be verbalized." This approach allows the construction of "situational questions" and consequently allows us to test deductions from out theory.[98] Thus, both methods which impose non-situated questions and theories which impose

schemes of motive development on the person are likely to founder for similar reasons: both run the risk of explaining the behavior of people in a vocabulary that could not have motivated them because it was not their own. For example, in Mills' view, the motivational principles of Freudian theory are themselves specific to sexually repressive societies and are applicable only to them.[99]

On the other hand, imputation of motives need not be sheer guesswork nor involve complete autobiographical reconstruction:

> The variable is the accepted vocabulary of motives, the ultimates of discourse, of each man's dominant group about whose opinion he cares. Determination of such groups, their location and character, would enable delimitation and methodological control of assignment of motives for specific acts.[100]

Therefore, societal structures, historical periods and culture are reflected in the individual's vocabulary of motives. In terms of structure, for example, the study of motives along strata defined by occupational lines we would presume to be important. So too would be basic cultural and political explanations.

If, for example, we take the terminology of motives that constitutes hedonism, we find pleasure and pain to be unquestioned motives for human action. One form this response takes is for pleasure, during our own period, to

be often equated with "the good" and have the prima facie force of that concept. Instead of accepting hedonism as a principle of human nature, we need to determine the social patterns and vocabulary of motives attendant to typical situations during our period. We might ask, for example, what are the structural sources and the meaning within particular situations of the good being equated with the pleasant? In the study of non-participation, this warns us against assuming that because people refrain from political activity, participation is a cost human nature rebels at bearing. It will be recalled that this idea is an important ingredient in the pluralist account of non-participation.

Similarly, overt behavior cannot establish independently for us the meaning of an action. The same behavior can be differently motivated[101] and therefore be a different act. Presumably, different acts can be similarly motivated. In the end, determining the meaning of an action, including the real reason for it, involves ascertaining what was reasonable to expect in a given situation by a particular person. And knowing what is reasonable involves situating the action in time and place and comprehending the actor's intentions. Appearances, therefore, never suffice in explaining political behavior, and

analyses that suggest motive imputation is "unscientific" are bound to founder.

Mills summarizes his discussion of human motivation in the explanation of action when he suggests:

> What is needed is to take all these terminologies of motive and locate them as vocabularies of motive in historic epochs and specified situations. Motives are of no value apart from the delimited societal situations for which they are the appropriate vocabularies. . . .
>
> Rather than interpreting actions and language as external manifestations of subjective and deeper lying elements in individuals, the reasearch task is the locating of particular types of actions and socially situated clusters of motive. . . . The languages of situations as given must be considered a valuable portion of the data to be interpreted and related to their conditions. To simplify these vocabularies of motive into a socially abstracted terminology is to destroy the legitimate use of motive in the explanation of social actions.[102]

Ideology and apathy

There is an important disjuncture between Mills' writings on methodology and his political writing on "mass society." This principally takes the form of great sensitivity to the "vocabulary of an actor" when discussed abstractly as methodology, and far less concern when discussed concretely, particularly in White Collar, The Power Elite and The Causes of World War III. I will discuss this issue in greater detail when we evaluate Mills' explanation of non-participation.

Nevertheless, Mills' theoretical writings have practical importance in his political writing on apathy. For Mills, the link between thought and action also suggests a link between political understanding, political action and freedom. The more we are able to act responsibly with clear intentions and the more our actions help clarify our intentions and the nature of our responsibility, the freer we are: both in terms of political thinking and political activity. These views implicitly loom large in Mills' writing on non-participation: the less able a person is to form clear political intentions, the more likely he or she is to be manipulated, confused, and/or drift.

On the other hand, Mills does not believe that clear motivation is achieved independently of social structure, beliefs and even habit. While self-conscious self-location within the social structure may require breaking with habitual or ideological ways of thought, ideas of any kind are always more than mere sensory experience:

> The value interest implications [ethos] of a social structure are the guiding threads along which problems emerge. Problems are relative to an ethos.[103]

Ideas, then, are meanings which have collective habits behind them, and reason must be grounded in such ideas and their development through dialogue.

In emphasizing the social nature, rooted in language of human interaction and motivation, Mills' methodological writing suggests a link between ideology and political motivation and action. If a person believes a certain course of action correct, such beliefs in themselves constitute a fundamental pre-condition for the action. People also commit themselves to certain courses of action by positing motives they or others might hold in certain situations. Similarly, "trying on" roles begins to commit people to attendant beliefs and motives.

Given this background, the political problem of ideology that Mills poses is twofold. In the first place, America lacks both a conservative and a radical ideology with which to "converse" with dominant modes of thought. Mills finds it ironic that those ideologies which would allow people to make their own history are on the decline in the U.S. at the same time that "history-making" is in the hands of elites and not subject to fate. The result is that we are confused by a "liberal rhetoric" that provides the terms of issues and conflicts: ". . . political decisions are occuring, as it were, without benefit of political ideas; mind and reality are two separate realms."[104] In part, Mills has in mind here a "scientific" administrative approach that asks only questions of technique.

As a result, two specific problems of non-participation and inadequate ideology are raised: the disjuncture between "troubles" and our ability to interpret them; and the development of the apathetic person--"the cheerful robot." Malaise and troubles for Mills emerge out of the ethos and milieu one is in. Their source seems to lie more in a discontinuity between the values one holds and their utility for interpretation than result from historical or structural contradictions. Basically, troubles now result from the inability of contemporary symbols to explain the new problems emerging from elite-centered power. Denied the dialogue necessary to develop such symbols, we sense a threat to our values but don't understand the source of the threat. As a result, we develop malaise or feel troubled:

> To formulate any problem requires that we state the values involved and the threat to those values. For it is the felt threat to cherished values--such as those of freedom and reason--that is the necessary moral substance of all significant problems of social inquiry, and as well of all public issues and private troubles.[105]

Here Mills' work appears to be the forerunner of Bachrach's with the emphasis on <u>felt</u> troubles. Yet, for Mills, these troubles are structurally rooted in the logic of mass society and can result not only in acquiescence but in <u>acceptance</u>.

Americans, for example suffer from "anxious obsole-

scence," rooted in the need of the system to create a "panic of status" necessary for the industrial and commercial apparatus. Yet without the institutional support and interpretive alternatives to "liberal rhetoric," the individual remains stuck in milieu. Personally unable to transcend such troubles:

> The market apparatus transforms the human being into the ultimately saturated man--the cheerful robot--and makes "anxious obsolescence" the American way of life.[106]

Individually isolated, people sense the threat this problem poses to their own values, but they cannot understand the source of the threat:

> Great and rational organizations--in brief, bureaucracies--have indeed increased, but the substantive reason of the individual at large has not. Caught in the limited milieu of their everyday lives ordinary men often cannot reason about the great structures--rational and irrational--of which their milieux are subordinate parts. Accordingly, they often carry out series of apparently rational actions without any ideas of the ends the serve. . . . Rationally organized social arrangements are not necessarily a means of increased freedom--for the individual or for the society. In fact, often they are a means of tyranny and manipulation, a means of expropriating the very chance to reason, the very capacity to act as a free man.[107]

I will explore later the tension that remains both between Mills' concept of "troubles" and of the "cheerful robot" and his notion of mass society and methodological concerns with the "vocabulary of the actor." Even given

these problems, however, and others I shall subsequently discuss, Mills provides excellent insight into the explanation of non-participation and the fact of apathy. The troubles of modern times, unanswered by analysis and action, result in social and personal drift. Problems are not formulated because the values we hold and the threat to those values are not successfully articulated. Mills sums up his analysis when he writes:

> The values involved in the cultural problem of freedom and individuality are conveniently embodied in all that is suggested by the ideal of the Renaissance Man. The threat to that ideal is the ascendency among us of The Cheerful Robot, of the man with rationality but without reason. The values involved in the political problem of history-making are embodied in the Promethean ideal of its human making. The threat to that ideal is twofold: On the one hand, history-making may well go by default, men may continue to abdicate its willful making, and so merely drift. On the other hand, history may indeed be made--but by narrow elite circles without effective responsibility to those who must try to survive the consequences of their decisions and of their defaults.[108]

In the absence of explicit formulation of troubles and issues, we are left with what Mills calls the "conservative mood." The heart of this mood is not an ideology or a vision but a feeling of powerlessness resulting from the inability to trace the source of troubles. It is a surrendering of the central Western goal of controlling one's own fate through reason. Shorn of ideas or coherent

ideology, political decisions appear arbitrary:

> The psychological heart of this mood is a feeling of powerlessness--but with the old edge taken off, for it is a mood of acceptance and of a relaxation of the political will.[109]

Mills' explanation of non-participation:

a summary of his political and methodological concerns

Mills' sociology, methodology, and political analysis taken together constitute a radically social interpretation of political life. Sociologically, Mills' theory centers on the role language plays for understanding, both between persons and within the individual. Yet, language contains the seeds of change in that it allows the possibility of discrepant meanings. The human need to ask, "Why?"[110] requires ascription of motives, for the self and for the other, in the language of the person questioning. Because such "naming" of actions simultaneously serves to influence, the potential for change is built into the nature of language. Furthermore, with changing functional requirements and increased societal complexity, old interpretations falter, troubles emerge, and the need to answer the question, "Why?" becomes more acute. Both in its nature and use, therefore, language allows discrepant meaning.

The need to comprehend one's environment also implies

a link between thought and action. Understanding requires ascertaining motives and intentions, which help explain and justify ("name") conduct. Similarly, to hold a viewpoint begins to commit one to the action it prescribes and, conversely, certain actions commit one to the roles and explanations of the action. To understand, then, also involves the incipient formulation of a plan of action, actual for oneself or presumed for others.

Language is also the mediation between persons and social structure. Society, and particularly the individual's subculture, reside "within" an individual to the extent that person incorporates its language. Society is composed of structures that are in part constituted comprehended and legitimized by its language. At the base of Mills' social theory, then, is his view that people through language create society as society through language creates people.

Several methodological rules follow from Mills' sociology. First, the explanation of action involves claims about what is reasonable to expect, given a particular situation with specified actors and their vocabularies.[111] Secondly, he is adamant in his opposition to abstract method and, we would presume, favorable to research instruments most capable of "situating persons,"

such as depth interviews. Thirdly, understanding the meaning of action involves, in part, an internal comprehension of the motives of the actor: motives that can't be restated in the vocabulary of the actor would, therefore, have no explanatory power.

Finally, because language is the medium of self-constitution, both individual psychology and values are socially based. We see this most clearly, perhaps, in Mills' greatest contribution to sociology, his exploration of the emergence of troubles for persons. For Mills, troubles signify a discontinuity between old meanings and new situations. Whether they truly are personal or potentially public (and thus fodder for issues) depends on the extent to which social structure is responsible for their development, not whether they reside "in" or "outside" the person. However, Mills' measure of public vs. private at times tends to be somewhat crude, relying on the number of people feeling similar troubles.

At the root of modern troubles is the threat to the Enlightenment values of reason and freedom. This is the political heart of Mills' analysis of mass society and the power-elite, the failure of voluntary organizations, and the default by intellectuals. The political problem is to clarify the troubles resulting from this threat as politi-

cal issues and then to act.

The failure to accomplish this has resulted in what Mills variously calls "anxious obsolescence" and "the cheerful robot," in personal and political drift and a relaxation of political will--or simply put, in apathy. The essential cause of apathy, however, is structural and not personal. Political apathy results from the inability of the person to locate the source of his or her troubles and develop them into public issues. It can devolve into the inability of the person even to be troubled by the increasing erosion of freedom.

In modern America, this condition takes the following form. Subject to "one-way communication," and lacking institutional forms to help break that pattern, the individual is unable to understand, let alone counter, domination by the power-elite. Instead, he or she remains trapped in a personal milieu, while administrative rationality and consumerism dominate political consciousness.

With old values failing and no new replacements, Mills sees a deterioration of the human mind and spirit. The main symptom of this deterioration is a mistaken notion that increased "rationality" means increased freedom--this

in the face of troubles signaling a decline in our freedom.

The result is a social psychology of unresolved troubles, augmented by a "status-panic" (in the interests of business elites) that encourages adaptation to administrative rationality and adoption of consumerist mentality. Within this context, the tendency is for persons to become "cheerful robots," or remain personally troubled. Although Mills is not clear as to which form dominates, or as to what the relation is between them, he implies that the two are not contradictory: unresolved personal anxiety and troubles can feed conformity, and conformity, involving a denial of freedom, can lead to anxiety and troubles.

One thing is clear, however, Lacking institutional support, counterideology, common sense based on tradition, and public issues, people in mass society are often anxious, or compliant, or both. As a result, they are ripe for manipulation. Instead of a public outcry at elite power, a "conservative mood," fed by a social psychology of powerlessness, dominates American consciousness. Americans don't act--they drift.

Mills' Explanation of Non-Participation

Mills' work, taken as a whole, contains an explanation

of non-participation that goes beyond the reform conception in two principal ways. First, non-participation may result not only from particular institutional constraints against participation but also from the logic of the social structure itself (i.e., "mass society"). Here Mills provides an example of the third face of power described by Lukes. Let us recall that an exercise of power

> can occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted--though there remains here an implicit reference to potential conflict. This potential, however, may never in fact be actualised. What one may have here is a latent conflict, which consists in a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude.[112]

Secondly, as Lukes notes, people may be socialized against their interests. Therefore, conflict is not for Mills, as it is for Schattschneider or even Bachrach, the ultimate determinant of whether power is being exercised.

In Mills' view, the power-elite institutional nexus serves to create a mass society which solidifies its own position. A mass society, however, requires "one-way communication," a decline in voluntary organizations and administration from the top. It is abetted by a "status panic," "anxious obsolescence," "consumerism" (and other aspects of dominant ideology), and, therefore, induces adaptation to elite power. In a word, then, mass society

requires non-participation and can, at best, allow symbolic participation. Both through an ideology of acceptance and the social psychological fruits of unresolved troubles, a mass society induces non-participation and apathy, both of which are functional for the structural requirements of mass society.

However, while Mills gives an analysis of consciousness formation, rooted in developments in the soical structure, he continues to assign an important role to human responsibility. Not having a theory of the "progressive march of history," Mills sees mass society as the result of human intention and human default. With the institutionalization of the power-elite, however, primary responsibility for the maintenance of centralized power falls on the shoulder of elites, and secondary responsibility on intellectuals and religious leaders.

Yet, in not relegating the development of consciousness and the logic of mass society merely to the logic of an historical stage, Mills sharpens for us the connection between individual responsibility and political non-participation. Whatever the faults of his analysis of social structure, his explanation of non-participation allows for the liberal emphasis in individual responsibility, the reform concern with constraints and the radical

connection between social structure and consciousness.

Paradigm of apathy I:

apathy related to individual and group responsibility

In Mills' view, abdication of responsibility can lead to a relaxation of political will. Political decisions will then increasingly appear arbitrary, reinforcing the apathy. Apathy, therefore, can result from personal and group responsibility, as well as from structural sources. People can be held reponsible individually and collectively for allowing their will to wane and for the acceptance they then allow illegitimate projects. This is the heart of Mills' critique of the "intellectual default." People can, in principle, then, be held responsible for some forms of political apathy. Recall, for example, his warning on the decline of the Renaissance Man as an ideal:

> The threat to that idea is twofold: On the one hand, history-making may well go by default, men may continue to abdicate its willful making, and so merely drift.

To the extent, then, that people have power with respect to their political interests, they can be held responsible for their apathy. Mills' paradigm of apathy related to choice can be represented as follows:

> X (a person, group, sex, stratum, subjective or objective mass or society) can be considered

> responsibly apathetic with respect to Y (something important, of which knowledge is available, and something X could conceivably influence *if* X could *choose* to) if X does not care or demonstrate care about Y.[113]

Note that, for Mills, the sign alerting us to apathy does not necessarily have to be anything X does or does not do with respect to Y. The stipulation is simply that it was reasonable to think that X was capable of caring and didn't. To be useful, however, such a stipulation must also indicate that it is not reasonable to believe that even the most committed citizens can sanely care about everything at once. Apathy, then, we presume, might result from X deciding not to decide on Y or something relevant to it, with consequent weakening of the will, passivity, *or even* eventual personal inability to decide. Or one might become passive to one concern, thereby unwittingly becoming apathetic to a related issue. For example, one might become passive with respect to scientific matters, thereby becoming apathetic with respect to the political issue of nuclear power. Also note that while Mills doesn't say so, his formulation leaves room for apathy related to other choices a person makes. For example, some people might have become apathetic with respect to the internal policies of Pol Pot's Kampuchea because they opposed the Vietnam war.

Paradigm of apathy II:

apathy as a condition fostered by social structure

For Mills, apathy can also result from the suppression of the ability to use freedom and reason to make explicit those troubles and issues that threaten cherished values. In the modern world, freedom is itself directly threatened--and this threat is the main "trouble" left unarticulated, and about which current malaise revolves. Instead we are left with the person in a condition of apathy, often happily pursuing unfreedom:

> The advent of this man points to freedom as trouble, as issue and--let us hope--as problem for social scientists. Put as a trouble of the individual--of the terms and values of which he is uneasily aware--it is the trouble called "alienation." As an issue for publics--to the terms and values of which they are mainly indifferent--it is no less than the issue of democratic society, as fact and as aspiration. . . the issue to which modern threats to freedom and reason most typically lead is, above all, the absence of explicit issues--to apathy rather than to issues explicitly defined as such.
>
> The issues and troubles have not been clarified because the chief capacities and qualities of man required to clarify them are the very freedom and reason that are threatened and dwindling.[114]

In the above formulation, Mills articulates a notion of apathy that is opposite in image to that of Berelson. Where for Berelson apathy results from contentment having at its base a freely arrived at assessment of one's

position in society, for Mills it is rooted in a mistaken assessment (if one at all) unfreely arrived at. But Mills goes further. His description of the "cheerful robot" is not merely a vision of false consciousness by which a historically malleable subject is socialized into a repressive dominant ethos. It is a glimpse of "1984," where not only does socialization against one's interest take place, but where one's very ability to reason and to act freely in pursuit of a political interest is threatened.

Mills here implies that apathy is not only a particular form of political consciousness, but a condition whereby contemporary consciousness is incapable of political reason. Yet his formulation is vague. Is he implying that the human spirit is under assault? Is this assault so basic as to alter the structure of the human mind?--changing, for example, in current Marxian terms, the fundamental human capacity of praxis, or intentional activity?

Mills does not provide the answer, although I think we can take a reasoned guess based on his work. Human sociality, through the medium of language, implies a capacity to reason and the potential of self-conscious freedom. These potentialities were highlighted as values in the Enlightenment concept of freedom, practiced in precorporate American politics and are currently under

assault as values. Because of the human capacities for intention, reason, and self-consciousness mediated by language, human sociality implies the capacity for publicly reasoning about "the good." Political democracy is the form the public expression of these potentials has taken, where "the political" is recognized as a distinct sphere of human activity.

The modern threat of apathy, then, is a direct assault on the actualized potential to form political intentions and act upon them. Apathy as a condition signals not that people will merely act against their political interests by not participating--but that they will be in a state of drift. It is the modern capacity itself to form political intentions and carry out political activity that is on the wane. By denying people not simply an ideology to counter liberal rhetoric but a mode of life that admits of the development of political reason, the democratic political form is threatened. Mills fears, therefore, not only that people will develop the wrong ideology but that the modern historical form of the capacity for political interpretation will disappear. Because Mills sees the political form as having attained some independent legitimacy within capitalism, its disappearance signals more an epochal shift than mere socialization against one's interest. In his own

way, Mills fears the end of ideology.

Mills' paradigm of apathy as a condition may be reproduced as follows:

> X (a person, group, sex,[115] stratum, subjective or objective mass, society) is in a condition of apathy with respect to Y (something important, e.g., freedom) if X is unable to care about Y. Inability to care involves a lack of capacity to formulate issues relevant to Y, form intentions relevant to Y and act in their terms. Political apathy as a condition is the inability to form political issues and programs out of the malaise and even "happiness" that characterize alienation as latent trouble. Lack of political freedom is both cause and effect of political apathy as a condition.

Dimensions of apathy as a condition: political subordination and political mortification

The above paradigms represent Mills' two-pronged theory of apathy. In distinguishing between apathy related to choice and apathy as a condition, Mills clearly separates himself from the other theorists we have looked at. He also enriches our understanding of how political issues may be deflected and broadens the scope of our study of apathy by suggesting the political form itself may be in trouble.

For Mills, apathy as a condition can be created when potential public issues are derailed from forming. There are several ways this occurs. The first is through the

kind of nondecision-making and limitation of participation that Bachrach insightfully discusses. Here, the cycle of confusion, despair and suppressed troubles begins as certain issues and troubles are pressured out of politics, and the knowledge and ideas, and necessary participation and discussion, are limited.

Apathy can also be induced when the social structure, ideology, and rationality of the present system mutually serve to inhibit the formulation of issues from troubles and of troubles from malaise. Here Mills goes beyond Bachrach in claiming that it is not just the scope of politics that derails issues but the nature of the political and social order itself. The way in which participation is constricted is, then, a functional constituent of mass society and not merely a byproduct of it: democratic participation can only develop as mass society is overcome.

More directly, Mills suggests how socialization against one's interest can involve directing or constricting the range of what legitimately should count as politics. The role of women as "darling little slaves," the structure of work, the quality of leisure, for Mills, are all latent political problems of contemporary social structure.[116] Yet, to the extent individuals are stuck in personal milieu, such socialization practices are unlikely

to be overcome.

Finally, Mills suggests, postmodern society has the techniques with which to manipulate wants. This power is insidiously used to insinuate into people the "drift" and purposes of the power-elite. The result is apathetic, aimless people with no projects of their own. In claiming that wants can be manipulated and that the rationality of the social structure can block reason and thereby limit freedom, Mills clearly distinguishes himself from the reform concept of depoliticization.

Mills' analysis is also richer in its description of how apathy may develop. For Mills is the only theorist we have looked at who captures important relations between the society's structure and the social psychology that radiates through individuals. Here he goes beyond the claim that bias of conflict merely allows the dominant scope of politics to go unchallenged. Instead, he implies, the rationality of the present bias sets up a social psychology that is supportive of it and helps it dynamically reconstitute itself.

Similarly, Mills tacitly suggests how people in a mass might socialize themselves into an apathetic posture. The clearest example involves his discussion of personal milieu. Systematic inability to clarify troubles and

create issues may press us to personalize inherently political problems. In fact, personalization of this sort encourages drift and thereby hides itself as a latent issue of social structure. While these ideas remain incomplete in Mills, we can infer that mass society both structurally fosters apathy and encourages individuals to perpetuate it in the way they think about their own malise and troubles.

Where with Schattschneider we were shown how certain needs are left out of politics, with Mills we have seen how the political interest of coming to know what we need, both as individuals and as members of a community, is itself subordinated to mass society. Such political subordination is a complex form of depoliticization, hinging on the way mass society inhibits or channels political knowledge and the reasons it must do so to preserve itself as a social structure. The dominant outcomes of political subordination in a mass society are unresolved troubles, malaise, and ultimately apathy. Non-participation is both the result and the cause of entrenched subordination.

However, as we have seen, Mills goes further and also suggests that the political form may itself be in trouble. Here Mills implies two things. First, political understanding and politics as a way of establishing the public good have been forces for reason in American

history. Secondly, mass society, particularly with the development of manipulation techniques, is moving toward the eradication of any reasonable conception of politics. In this view, he suggests an epochal shift that goes beyond simple changes in the scope of political subordination.

Erving Goffman has described as mortification of the self the way in which mental hospitals stunt the self-concept of inmates.[117] Borrowing from Goffman, we could reasonably propose that Mills' notion of the "cheerful robot" suggests mortification of the political self and the political mortification of American society. This development seems to take the form of an historic shift away from political questions to questions of power maintenance and technique. Yet, in his darker moments, as we have seen, Mills seems to suggest that the human potentials of reason and freedom, basic to the emergence of the political sphere as a historical form, are themselves in trouble:

> We know of course that man can be turned into a robot, by chemical and psychiatric means, by steady coercion and by controlled experiment, but also by random pressures and unplanned sequences of circumstances. But can he be made to want to become a cheerful and willing robot? . . . It will no longer do merely to assume, as a metaphysic of human nature, that down deep in man-as-man there is an urge for freedom and a will to reason. Now we must ask: what in man's nature, what in the human condition today, what in each of the varieties of social structure makes for the ascendency of the cheerful robot? And what stands against it?[118]

Mills here implies not only that the contemporary historical form of democratic political reason is on the wane but also the human potential of reason itself. While this idea is vague and undeveloped, Mills raises the theoretical possibility that political mortification may take an absolute form as well as one relative to our the historical period of "mass society." In the relative form, people are socialized to utilize their human capacities in ways that ignore their political interests. In the absolute form, the potential for freedom and reason inherent in human sociality is under assault because the capacity for intentional action is itself threatened. However, even in the case of relative political mortification an important element of socialization is altered: explicitly political argument and indoctrination would recede as important constituents of dominant ideology.[119]

Evaluation of Mills' Explanation of Non-Participation

In evaluating the work of C. Wright Mills, a critic is faced with two choices. Aspects of Mills' work can be isolated from the rest and, sometimes easily, made the target of smug criticism. Mills' later work, in particular, is boldly written and can lend itself not only to sharp

criticism but to easy distortion.

When taken as a whole and read sympathetically, however, Mills' work is richly suggestive and sometimes prescient: of all the theorists considered, Mills clearly provides the greatest insight into the relation between apathy, non-participation, responsibility, and social structure. In differentiating between personal and structural sources, Mills sharpens our explanation of non-participation by more precisely locating responsibility for apathy, a concern that should be central to any theorist exploring the democratic nature of society.

Moreover, while Mills suggests that apathy may be a condition that people in mass society suffer, he is not a crude false-consciousness theorist. His argument is not that people are simply indoctrinated but that they are also denied a mode of life, and particularly real communication, that would allow them to ascertain their interests and act in their terms.[120]

Further, Mills' exploration of troubles, malaise and issues provides the notion of false consciousness he develops with a social-psychological basis. Explicitly, Mills shows how unfree integration in one's situation can foster individual isolation and anxiety as well as public acceptance. Implicitly, he leaves room for the wedding of

structurally initiated anxiety to ideologies that require insecurity. Consumerism surely benefits from a "status panic" and both are abetted by the malaise and anxiety of the person stuck in personal milieu.

Mills also distinguishes himself by exploring the relationship between daily life and political culture. For non-participation is generated not only by the inadequacy of the public forum but also by the defective quality of work-life, culture and leisure: his argument is therefore partly an attempt to politicize areas of life now not normally thought of as political.

For example, a particular work-life (e.g., "sales-girl") fosters certain roles and presses us to accept motives attendant to those roles. The structures within which we find ourselves thereby become important parameters for the commitments we are positioned to make and the way we think about them. We may imply from this that our active re-creation of roles, through the commitments <u>we</u> make (because of the position we are in), is a crucial resource for legitimating beliefs and ideologies. We not only <u>learn</u> ideologies that harm our interests but we <u>pursue</u> modes of life that in both thought and action also do so.

Moreover, we shall see in the last chapter, it is important for us to consider explorations of concepts of

depoliticization with the richness of Mills. For as the state tries to rescue itself from fiscal crisis while the economy tries to regenerate its competitive position in world markets, neither will be in a position to meet the demands citizens are likely to make of them. This is particularly true since increasing austerity is proving to be necessary to accomplish the required system readjustments. Even greater depoliticization, therefore, may soon become an urgent system imperative: those interested in preserving and extending the democratic form will need to know if and how greater depoliticization might be insinuated into American political life. It is important to note that while apathy is not today a fashionable concept among political theorists, it is still an important self-interpretation of citizens for their non-participation and a common description used by journalists.

Perhaps more importantly, apathy as a condition is the sturdiest form of depoliticization, short of new legitimations, particularly because of the tendency for the individual to blame him or herself for what is a structural effect. Nothing would calm the nerves of elites fearing an aroused public as much as a return to the apparent "apathy" of the 1950's. And should further depoliticization be sucessful, we may expect that some social scientists may be

more than willing to characterize severe political subordination and mortification as individual apathy (if not happiness), shifting responsibility once again to the victims.

If human action can only be understood fully with the help of the language of an actor, glibly equating apathy with happiness or indifference, without ferreting out the motivational background of the quiescence, may reflect the theory of the observer more than the reality of the observed. In the end, Mills argues for an analysis of apathy that transcends the appearance of personal happiness or indifference and suggests important structural sources of passivity.

The urgency for comprehending what is sound in Mills' theory equally presses us to discover where it is deficient. For Mills' analysis of the development of non-participation is, I believe, at times misleading, and certain of his prescriptions can themselves lead to further depoliticization. It is with these concerns that I shall here confine the discussion.

There are two general problems in Mills' writing relevant to the study of non-participation. The first has to do with his analysis of social structure and the second with the way in which he leads us to believe individuals

accomodate themselves to it. Both point to problems with his extreme formulations of apathy as a condition of persons within a mass society "drifting" toward war.

In Mills' analysis of social structure, there are several important areas where he does not focus sufficient attention on why Americans did not combat the purposes of the power-elite. Mills, for example, does not pay enough attention to either the direct repression of Blacks nor to the subordination of women as aberrations of the democratic ideal. Nor does he sufficiently analyze the way in which the repression of workers' struggles or the segmentation of workers through job hierarchies and ethnicities has served to break down potential vehicles for social change. Mills, of course, is aware of these concerns and at different points in his writings makes reference to them. Nevertheless, their importance and continued relevance as crucial factors contributing to depoliticization get lost in the descriptions of mass society he offers in his later writings. Instead of a history torn with violence and struggle, one often comes away from Mills with the idea that Americans have lost a recent Golden Age to the moral debasement of corporate society.

Similarly, in The Power Elite and The Causes of World War III, he tends to move away from the dynamic economic

analysis he offered in The New Men of Power and accepts too easily the success of American capitalism in the 1950's and early 1960's. This point should not be belabored, of course, because Mills was far from alone in worrying (on the left, or celebrating on the right) that the economy itself would offer few opportunities for a new political thrust. His greatest concern was that the success of the corporate economy was inextricably coupled with a "military ascendency," the two together creating a "permanent war economy." The result, he feared, would be World War III.

Yet the economic mini-crises of the 1970's and early 1980's indicate that significant repoliticization of the type he suggested for the late 1940's might still be possible. The growth of the state in the twentieth century has reflected, as Mills knew, the organizational needs of capitalism. As a result, however, the seeds for the politicization of certain "economic" and "administrative" relations have been sown. While capitalism is partly legitimized by state responsibility for social welfare and economic growth and stability, it also faces structural problems of capital shortage and stagflation that put pressure on welfare programs and can't be solved by limited state planning. As people continue to hold the state responsible for social welfare and planning, latent polit-

ical issues of the state's relation to the economy and the economy itself can become overt--"economic" and "administrative" problems, therefore, may take a directly political form.[121] If the state can no longer deliver what people have grown to expect of it, then, and if no new legitimations are available to counter what will appear as a broken social contract (e.g., reductions in social security), some political space may become available to move against what Mills called the "main drift" of "moneymaking" and war.

As Mills saw the American economic system entrenching itself, he also began to view social change as a process that elites could increasingly influence. In The New Men of Power, Mills gives a coherent analysis of how labor leaders might fashion a break with the "main drift," and in various works, he intelligently suggests how intellectuals might, if nothing else, speak "truth to power." Yet he also sometimes seems to indicate that members of the "power-elite" themselves might work to fashion a new way. Because elites had concentrated so much power in centralized institutions, they were potentially able to use that power to properly manage history. The knowledge, Mills felt, was available; what was needed was the will.

Now Mills, of course, knew that he was not really

speaking of independent elites but of elites who were also part of a class system and who must necessarily respond to system imperatives. Paul Sweezy, for one, takes him to task for slipping too glibly into "elite" analysis and forgetting the evidence Mills himself offers of a class system in operation.[122] Mills does, however, talk at times as if both elites and intellectuals have more independent power than they actually have, without raising the essential question of what reforms we might be able to expect of enlightened elites at particular times. When he does so, he puts forth a simplistic analysis of power in twentieth-century America: elites have the choice of manipulating us for the ends of the corporate-military nexus or leading us out of our collective morass. Although they choose to do the former:

> Far from being dependent upon the structure of institutions, modern elites may smash one structure and set up another in which they enact quite different roles. In fact, such destruction and creation of institutional structures, with all their means of power, when events seem to turn out well is just what is involved in "great leadership," or, when they seem to turn out badly, "great tyranny."[123]

When Mills' analysis shades into voluntarism of this sort, it can itself aid unnecessary depoliticization. In his passion to find a way back to freedom, reason, and democracy, paradoxically, Mills' analysis implicitly

encourages us to believe that elites could act better, if they would, and that such actions could be decisive in altering the current course of history. Yet, to the degree we believe this and attempt to pressure elites into such behavior (as Mills at times also implies we can do if we overcome our "civilian hesitations"),[124] we may be setting ourselves up for disappointment, despair and eventual withdrawal. We may wind up, then, complaining about "corrupt officials" or politicians who don't do what they say they'll do and miss important constraints operating on these elites at the start.[125]

If the "labor metaphysic" was, as he claimed, a Marxist illusion, Mills also knew that those in a position to change things--the power elite--were very unlikely to do so for the better. And while he had prophesied and later celebrated the emergence of the new left, it was more difficult for him to ground it as a viable agency for change, given its uncertain position in the social structure.

This reveals an ambiguity in Mills' work. The young intelligentsia was spearheading a "moral upsurge" that was helping break down the apathy of the 1950's. "Who is it," he asked, "that is getting disgusted with what Marx called 'all that crap'?: . . . it is the young intelligentsia."[126] But to play the historical role of people of

ideas, as an agency of change, it needed to be connected to actors whose decisive position in the social structure could facilitate change. And his analysis did not reveal the existence of such actors, except to suggest that "alert" people were responding. Yet, in articulating his thesis of the power elite, he pointed to whom he considered the decisive actors, underlining their responsibility and thereby bolstering the politics of moral upsurge and protest at their default. How was the new left to sustain such protest, and how would change come about? No definite answer was given, but Mills chided:

> . . . Let the old men ask sourly, "Out of Apathy--into what?" The Age of Complacency is ending. Let the old women complain wisely about "the end of ideology." We are beginning to move again.[127]

Nevertheless, in Mills' account, the impact the developing new left might have remained unclear. For on the one hand, they could spark an enlightened political conscience, while on the other they would inevitably bump into the objective realities of an entrenched social structure. What then could they accomplish within these parameters?

This reveals a deeper tension within Mills between his voluntarism and his conception of structural constraints. As we have seen, he discusses the system needs of money-

making and preparation for war and the need for a compliant consumerist society that will not question the moral baseness of its work, leisure, and circumscribed political realm. Thus there remain powerful constraints on what the system can bear, creating a structural condition fostering and needing widespread non-participation. His exhortations do not always suggest the strength of these constraints, however--especially when directed at the power elite itself--and he does not show that their strength has diminished.

Of course, he was trying to harness the moral and political activism, in part, of young students, to the experience at devising sound theory of those older intellectuals who were still relevant <u>and</u> progressive. The theory of the future openings for structural change had still to be developed and he hoped he could play his part. He died too young. It remains an open question, then, if he would have been able to help clarify and incorporate into relevant theory the constraints under which the students of the 1960's did operate during the political odyssey of the new left. The taste for voluntarism, unaccompanied by such theory, could and did become a vehicle for depoliticization as well as immediate action. In retrospect, given a society which proved to be neither

static nor pre-revolutionary, there was perhaps an essential ambiguity to the role the new left could play. It could spark change, but it could not bring about social transformation.

It may be true, as Peter Clecak writes, that Mills' attempt to find hope in the despair of America heading toward world war led him to focus too much on what elites and particularly intellectuals and students might do. In his search for reason and freedom, Clecak writes, Mills tended to look to undemocratic means to re-establish the democratic form. For this study, the more important point is that when Mills' work focuses too narrowly on leadership he ironically lures us into further depoliticization: important avenues of mass action may be missed and our faith in democratic decision-making tacitly undermined.[128]

Furthermore, Mills did admire the new form of power insofar as it could potentially break the "grip of fate." The problem was a lack of knowledge and moral vision, which he hoped intellectuals could provide publics, who could then, ideally, pressure or take power from elites. Yet, without significant concentration of power, it is unclear that the type of history-making he now saw as possible could be accomplished. Within Mills' own conception of how public decisions can best be made, therefore, there is an

implicit discord between the need for elites as history-makers and the democratic ideal of publics as images of what a future polity should include. To the degree one takes from Mills the former impression, however, the need for maximum participatory involvement recedes even before the priorities of the social system are altered. Certain aspects of Mills' images of both the means and ends of social change, therefore, can be depoliticizing to the extent they are internalized by the publics he is trying to influence.[129]

In criticizing Mills' elite theory of power, Peter Clecak concludes that:

> In his desire to perceive the making of history as an increasingly conscious activity, Mills probably assigned too much weight to the elites at the top. Having done this, he was committed to overexplaining the powerlessness of other groups. The myth of consolation appealed to powerless individuals [e.g. intellectuals], but implicitly subverted the creation of a new politics.[130]

As we have seen, Mills' focus on elites, students and intellectuals, in part, did tend to "subvert the creation of a new politics": questions of capitalism as a system and the need to democratically organize publics often drop into the background of exhortations to elite and intellectual responsibility.

Clecak is a bit off the mark, however, in suggesting

that Mills' emphasis on elites forces him to "overexplain the powerlessness" of other groups. The more important problem is that Mills tends to misexplain the nature of their powerlessness, alternating between suggestions that the great mass of Americans are either "morally insensible" and "indifferent," or "cheerful robots" following the lead of the "power-elite." In fact, as he shows in The New Men of Power, there exists a range of depoliticized citizens, many of whom are neither completely indifferent nor laden with the apathy or cheerful "idiots."

In Mills' early writings on methodology, he suggests that to explain social behavior we must attempt to reconstruct the typal vocabularies of social actors in order to aid our understanding of how behavior is motivated. Yet in some of his political writings, he does not pursue this concern. Robert Bohlke points out, for example, that in Mills' chapter on work in White Collar, there is "not one reference to the feelings expressed directly or indirectly by white collar workers."[131]

Indeed, in Mills' later political writings, political withdrawal is explained largely in terms of indifference or apathy induced mainly by "mass society" as social structure, and lack of will and moral vision, themselves, symptoms of the type of person mass society produces. Had

he followed the precepts of his early methodology, he might have deepened our understanding of powerlessness by suggesting richer explanations of why persons adapt to mass society.

In Mills' earlier work, human intention and the connection between thought and action are crucial ingredients in helping to explain why people behave as they do. Yet in The Power Elite and White Collar, Mills focuses on how individual intentions are preempted in mass society. As we have seen, he often does this quite suggestively.

Yet powerlessness cannot be understood unless we also explore how intentional action and commitments on the part of the person, himself or herself, are part of the process whereby people adapt to the constricts of a system of power. Let us consider some ways this occurs.

Recalling Schattschneider's work, I might boldly suggest that people sometimes understand the political order better than Mills often allows: people may rationally withdraw from political involvement because they accurately perceive that their needs are not being met and are not likely to be met within it.[132] Exhortations to toughening the political will or comments about "cheerful robots," really accomplish little here, because people often must make concrete choices about how to spend their

limited time and energy in the struggle for economic and social survival. While Mills greatly aids our understanding of how political "non-actors" may misperceive their needs, it is presumptuous to assume that they all never do. Non-participation may then appear from the outside to be motivated by apathy or indifference, but from the point of view of the non-actor, it may be self-conscious political withdrawal. While Mills' framework is capable of including Schattschneider's insight, his later political writings do not adequately do so.

Consider now the person whose comprehension of social structure is weaker than those in the above example. A person may become a good "consumerist," for example, not simply because he or she is indoctrinated or manipulated into such a role but because consumerism is the most feasible arena, given constraints of social structure, in which to pursue freedom and dignity. The person's desire for both is partly rooted in and defined by the American ethos of democracy and Western culture in general. But the pursuit of freedom and dignity is displaced from political and ethical arenas onto the economic (narrowly construed), not simply because of consumerism as ideology or dominant consumerist roles but due to a series of resolutions (perhaps daily) of the following tension between thought

and action: I think I am free and worthy of dignity. I act in situations in which my freedom and dignity are limited. The resolution comes when the person finds areas of life, in this case consumption, where he or she can, in fact, act in ways that protects the self-image of a free and dignified person.

This type of tension may be resolved differently, of course, for people of different classes, ethnic groups, sexes and personal backgrounds. For a lower-middle-class worker trying to resolve his or her aspirations for freedom, given a clearly instrumental work-life (with limited advancement possibilities), and a society whose self-image is meritocratic, an "ideology of sacrifice" for one's family (and especially one's children) may prove the best resolution.[133]

For a Black mother on the margin of economic existence, it may be necessary to revise completely dominant ideas about freedom to protect what little dignity one may hope for in life and to survive:

> Here is what a mother says correcting what her children have been told in school--not because she is a social critic or a radical but because she is scared to death that if her children do not learn to swallow their anger and keep it down every day, they will not survive:
>
> "Once a while back, maybe two years it was, my girl came home and said the teacher made them say that everyone born here in the country of America is born equal and we're all the same. . . .

> I was preparing their supper and I kept on thinking to myself how I could let my children believe that when that's not they way they're going to live. So, I called my girl over, and the other children too; and I told them that there is the white man and the black man, and the rich man and the poor man, and the sheriff and the rest of us, and there's the ones who have got a say and the ones who don't. That's what I told them, and you know what, I had them repeat it to me, out loud, and they did; and I told them they should listen to what they just said, and they'd better keep repeating it to themselves, saying it, until the end of their lives like we all do."[134]

There are many variations in the way persons will reconcile the beliefs they bring to a situation and the lives they can, in fact, live. It may be possible to generalize some of these from biographical sketches of types of persons. Frank Parkin, for example, suggests that the American political order may contain not only a dominant value system, based on aspirations for improvement within a framework of equal opportunity, but a subordinate system as well. The latter helps people understand their position in a social structure when the facts of inequality are clearly not comprehensible within the dominant system. The subordinate system would be clearly an accomodative one in which:

> its representation of the class structure and inequality emphasizes various modes of adaptation, rather than either full endorsement of, or opposition to, the status quo.[135]

Within the subordinate ideology, Parkin, argues, the

". . . dominant values are not so much rejected or opposed as modified by the subordinate classes as a result of their social circumstances and restricted opportunities."[136] We must go beyond Parkin, however, and also insist that persons do not just modify roles to help them understand their situation but do so to preserve and extend their dignity and self-worth. People, then, <u>become committed</u> to such roles as ways of resolving conflicts about their identity and to find meaning in their lives.

Mills, unfortunately, tends to play up either manipulation into apathetic roles, drift, or, at his best, connectives between the psychology of self-blame for failure, anxiety, and lack of alternate institutions to help clarify troubles. In doing so, he misses the import of his early work stressing the need to understand the "internal conversation" of an actor in order to adequately explain behavior.

As a result, in his later work, he both exaggerates the degree of uniformity of mass society and the degree of apathy prevalent and misses not only other forms of depoliticization but a vital element in the resiliency of depolitized roles: the person's commitment to that role because the self-conception is partly carved by the person out of a concrete life situation in the search for identity

and meaning. Ironically, Mills also misses the way in which contrasting self-conceptions can divide different groups who may have more in common than is apparent to either, thereby helping create the fragmentation that looks like a "mass society" at the bottom of the power pyramid.

Let us take another look at the example of the worker. Success is based upon sticking with an unsatisfying job to help the worker's family succeed. If the worker is white and confronted with a Black welfare recipient whose implicit claim is that unemployment is caused by structural inequality based on race, rather than personal failure, the worker finds his or her sacrifice demeaned. In this situation, as William Connolly argues: "the worker's very possession of a job may appear to be more a matter of luck than of self-discipline and desert." Furthermore:

> The worker is caught in a bind. To repudiate the ideology of sacrifice is to lose the claim to respect available under present circumstances, but to affirm it is to set the worker against the very constituencies with whom he must be allied if significant changes in this undignified life-situation are to be generated. The ideology of sacrifice generates political orientations that help to perpetuate the worker's plight while the plight itself generates powerful pressures to perpetuate the ideology. Yet this bind itself cannot be acknowledged without undermining the identity available to the worker. The worker is thus under a double pressure, first, to accept the ideology and, secondly, to resist the suggestion

> that its role in securing his identity outstrips its truth value.[137]

Moreover, as evidence piles up demonstrating that the worker's desires are based on a mistaken notion of what is worth sacrificing for, the workers may suppress those doubts rather than give in to them. Confronted with middle-class students who reject the life the worker wants for his or her children, the worker may become filled with rage rather than question the value of middle-class life.[138]

Writing in reaction to the mood he percieved in the 1950's, Mills tended to assume that the American public was being manipulated into a massive deception. He saw all around him signs of immorality, loss of values, debased work and culture and tried to explain why people would live under these conditions. Suggestive as his explanations are, they miss an important element of depoliticization: people are not only deceived, but in their attempt to create a life of meaning and worth and self-consciously establish their identity within that life, they deceive themselves. They do so, to be sure, because their self-consciousness operates within the confines of ideological and structural constraints. Nevertheless, it is as actors with intentions and with specific vocabularies of motive and as persons trying to maintain dignity by pursuing integrity of thought and action, that their commitment to

"mass society" to whatever degree, is maintained--even in the face of evidence of its lack of worth.

Mills' explanation of non-participation, then, falters primarily because he does not incorporate into his later writing the concerns he brings to sociological methodology. In this, he falls prey to the opposite trap of the pluralists: instead of accepting the appearance of contentment, he too often accepts glibly the appearance of "cheerful robots" as the reality of persons subordinated to mass society.

As I have argued, however, Mills' notion of political subordination does extend our ability to analyze non-participation by suggesting an important explanation of the way that people may devolve into a condition of apathy. However, when he advances his bleaker formulations, which I have termed political mortification, he does little more than posit a negative ideal-type: his own analysis lacks the rigor and, I believe, the conviction to sustain such a notion, and his language theory is, at best, in serious tension with it.

If Mills were to have successfully developed a concept of political mortification, he would have had to follow a strategy like the following. First, he would have had to show why people were becoming automatons in a society that

was transparently harming their interests. Secondly, he would have had to determine how transformations of social structure become rooted in character structure, to erase the potential for rebellion at this condition.

The first stipulation would be met if Mills could show that people were successfully being socialized with inherently apolitical new legitimations devoid of critical content. However, while Mills discusses the "bureaucratic ethos" and "rationality without reason," he seems to doubt that these types of "values" could become the centerpiece of a new ethos. This is why, I believe, he so often talks about people in a state of drift with no new values to replace the old. In fact, it is the lack of solid values, for Mills, that makes people in mass society so ripe for manipulation.

The second stipulation would require Mills to adopt a social psychology that would "capture" the "cheerful robot" as a type in the character structure and insulate it from the vicissitudes of social change. If, for example, persons' introjected apathetic personalities, as well as learned apathetic roles, their character as well as the social structure would become formidable reservoirs of passivity. As he leaves it, alterations in social structure would quickly modify the character structure once

again: in Mills' formulation, the individual does not hold up his or her end of the dialectic between "mass society" and the "cheerful robot" as a quasi-independent source of acquiescence. The person merely reflects the needs of the society.

If Mills were able to show powerful new apolitical legitimations and a social psychology of intractable apathy, along with his analysis of mass society, he would then have given us the ingredients of a powerful theory of relative political mortification. Had he gone further and demonstrated how even the potential for critical thought itself was being rooted out of language and sociality itself, he would have successfully inititated the bleakest notion he alludes to: absolute political mortification.

In the end, he neither shows why the once powerful legitimations of freedom and democracy fall so quickly before the onslaught of mass society nor why the "cheerful robot" as social type is so intractable. Perhaps the reason is this: to have filled out the range of apathy as a condition that he alludes to, Mills would have had to confront the hopelessness he would be describing. Although he often wrote as if the struggle against "mass society" were hopeless, he always worked to find a way to break through the despair. Taking Mills' work as a whole, it

would probably not be inaccurate to say the "cheerful robot," for him, was more of a fear than a reality of twentieth-century life.[139]

Mills fails, as we have seen, to establish a viable concept of political mortification. He does so, primarily, because he does not show us what language actors in such a condition would speak and what character structure they would exhibit. To complete our study of the range of explanations, we may use in examining non-participation, therefore, I now turn to Herbert Marcuse's study of One-Dimensional Man, which I take to be an explicit attempt to establish a paradigm of political mortification. Marcuse does describe for us a person whose language, values and social psychology span both the concepts of relative and absolute political mortification I have suggested": for Marcuse, people increasingly were speaking a one-dimensional language, in a one-dimensional society, legitimated by technological rationality, with passivity embedded in the character structure through what he calls "repressive desublimation." The result of this composite development was to rob thought and action of all potential for criticism and progressive change. I now turn to the question of whether he makes his argument successfully.

CHAPTER IV

THE THESIS OF ONE-DIMENSIONAL SOCIETY

Introduction

In the last chapter, we saw Mills raise the question of how well people could be conditioned to adapt uncritically to "mass society." I now take that issue as our starting point by turning to Herbert Marcuse's work: Marcuse's paradigm for explaining depoliticization centers precisely on the theoretical possibility of the total integration of the people of advanced industrial society and their inability to comprehend this circumstance.

Marcuse's work is important, as Jurgen Habermas points out, for he helps us answer a question vital to explaining how modern capitalism may legitimize itself in a post-free market era. Shorn of the legitimations based on the "free exchange of equivalents," how will state intervention into the economic and social order necessary to correct system "dysfunctions" and the depoliticization required for state intervention to proceed unimpeded, be made plausible to the inhabitants of advanced capitalist society?

In this chapter, therefore, I shall locate and articulate the essential elements of the "one-dimension-

ality" thesis, draw out certain underlying assumptions and suggest how these may extend a conceptual map necessary for comprehending contemporary depoliticization. Ironically, as we shall see, Marcuse's work is both explicitly an attack on technocratic theory and modes of social organization and implicitly an argument that technocratic social theory can, in fact, become human practice. In the next chapter, I will criticize this line of thought by suggesting that there are inherent limits to the degree to which technocratic rationality can integrate people into "mass society."

As we shall see presently, there are more and less extreme statements of the "one dimensionality" thesis: the moderate Marcuse focuses on technological rationality as an ideology with which corporate capitalism and state socialism can be legitimated; the extreme Marcuse focuses on the eclipse of subjectivity itself within advanced industrial society.

My strategy, then, will be to fully articulate the one dimensionality thesis by examining, in turn, Marcuse's analysis of: advanced industrial society as social structure indefinitely able to contain qualitative change; technological rationality as legitimation; the ideological character of contemporary science and technology; one-dimensional language; one-dimensional character structure;

and the prospects for liberation. In exploring these, I shall explain how they relate to Marcuse's less and more extreme statements on the thesis of technological hegemony, laying the groundwork for the critique of these arguments I will undertake in the next chapter.

Marcuse: A Theorist of Political Mortification

Can men and women be made into "cheerful and willing robots"? This question, posed by C. Wright Mills as a pessimistic aside in his analysis of "mass society," is the principal departure point for Herbert Marcuse's analysis of American society. Whereas Mills' answer remained tentative, Marcuse boldly put forth the following thesis: American society of the 1960's was rapidly becoming "one-dimensional" due to the indefinite suspension of structural contradictions within American capitalism and the eradication of the critical dimensions of thought, action, and character structure of its people. As a result, only the dimension of the given social order remained, insulating the theory and practice of "advanced industrial society" from transcending critique and liberation.

Before exploring how and whether Marcuse deepens our

ability to explain depoliticization, we need to be clear about what he is and is not saying and what I am attempting to do here. Marcuse is arguing that there are tendencies within all advanced industrial societies, pointedly including the Soviet Union,[1] toward becoming one-dimensional. He is not arguing that all advanced industrial societies, in particular capitalist America and communist Russia, are becoming the same, although he does point to the egregious domination of technological rationality in both.[2] He is suggesting, he claims, only tendencies, although he writes much of his work as if the fact were complete or nearly so.

This brings us immediately to a severe complication that we face in reading Marcuse. His writing is at times very difficult to comprehend. He often places a near total burden on the reader to discern whether his ideas are difficult because they are complex and insightful or simply confusing and perhaps confused.[3] As we shall see, particularly in Chapter V, Marcuse's writing contains both kinds of ideas. His theory suffers for it, and his style has both won him followers who don't understand him and critics who can too easily dismiss him because of it.[4]

We are, of course, here interested in only the content of Marcuse's analysis. In his view, advanced industrial

society will be able to contain qualitative change into the indefinite future, ironically through the very technological advancement that could potentially liberate people from the "realm of necessity." Whatever potential for liberation exists in technology or in human nature, both are now being used to reinforce domination. Yet, if people only could understand their situation, they might be able to break the lockstep of "one-dimensional" society.

As with Mills, much of Marcuse's fervor (and theoretical excesses) can be understood as a reaction to what he considered to be a very dangerous world situation and perhaps the ultimate irony of contemporary life. Instead of technology being used to "pacify existence," as he would say, it was serving to threaten human survival through nuclear holocaust. Read sympathetically, Marcuse often provides a compelling moral critique of social systems that foster such social insanity.

Yet Marcuse's work must stand or fall on his political and social analysis. Just as some of his colleagues of the Frankfurt School devoted themselves to understanding why socialist revolution did not occur in Europe, even when "objective conditions" seemed to be present, Marcuse tried to comprehend specifically why the advanced "forces of production" of the 1960's did not unmask the "relations of

production" that held them back. How, in short, had the forces of production--technology and science, themselves--become a mode of domination instead of a vehicle for liberation? Much of his work from the 1930's on, in one way or another, is devoted to this problem.[5]

For the purpose of exploring competing theories of depoliticization, I shall focus here almost exclusively on Marcuse's concept of "one-dimensional man." It would be difficult to find a clearer paradigm of political mortification. Through our examination, we will be better able to ascertain whether, and in what way, such a notion can aid our ability to explain depoliticization.

Political mortification: relative or absolute?

Marcuse offers, I shall argue, a theory of both relative and absolute political mortification, and his work vacillates throughout between them. Although I shall explore these theories later after discussing Marcuse's analysis of American society, let me preview them as follows.

Technological rationality, Marcuse argues, has become a powerful new legitimation, replacing the ideology of fair exchange of market capitalism. Although it is inherently a political ideology, in that technology now sustains a par-

ticular form of domination, its categories are apolitical, focusing only on how to manage efficiently an industrial system geared to ever-increasing productivity. Questions of value are, therefore, suppressed. Left at this level, Marcuse is suggesting a model of relative political mortification based on the simple false-consciousness of technological rationality: if we define the political as that area of human interaction concerned with discerning and acting on the proper way to organize public life, technological rationality eliminates political discourse from public consideration.

If Marcuse had left his formulation at this level, he would have been suggesting political mortification only relative to the domination, into the immediate future, of people's consciousness by technological rationality as ideology. However, he goes much further by suggesting that political mortification may be unlimited in scope and duration, that is, absolute. The link between his two attitudes to the future of political discourse turns on the fate he sees for human subjectivity. Is technological rationality simply false consciousness in which political domination masquerades in apolitical categories, or does it portend the end of human subjectivity itself and, with it, the capacity for political thought? Consider the following

from Marcuse:

> I have just suggested that the concept of alienation seems to become questionable when the individuals identify themselves with the existence which is imposed upon them and have in it their own development and satisfaction. This identification is not illusion but reality. However, the reality constitutes a more progressive stage of alienation. The latter has become entirely objective; the subject which is alienated is swallowed up by its alienated existence. There is only one dimension, and it is everywhere and in all forms. The achievements of progress defy ideological indictment as well as justification; before their tribunal, the "false consciousness" of their rationality becomes the true consciousness.
>
> This absorption of ideology into reality does not, however, signify the "end of ideology." On the contrary, in a specific sense advanced industrial culture is more ideological than its predecessor, in as much as today the ideology is in the process of production itself. In a provocative form, this proposition reveals the political aspects of the prevailing technological rationality.[6]

In this statement, as in much of his 1964 One-Dimensional Man, Marcuse is arguing three things. First, technological rationality has become ideology. Secondly, individuals identify themselves so closely with advanced industrial society that any ideological indictment of it is, for practical purposes, all but impossible. Thirdly, alienation "has become entirely objective," meaning that the human subject as we know it ceases to exist and instead becomes an object (and not just treated as one) in the technological ensemble. The latter would

actually be beyond alienation and beyond false consciousness because both concepts are predicated on the capacity of real subjects to be able, at some point, to come to know that they don't accurately understand their situation. The first notion falls within what we have termed relative political mortification, while the third is a form of absolute political mortification. However, a problem immediately emerges. If technological rationality is ideology, it must be held by subjects (as false consciousness); if humans have become completely objectified in the technical apparatus, they cannot hold any ideology because they cease to be subjects. As he often does, Marcuse also stakes out a middle ground all within two paragraphs: subjectivity exists in theory but is channeled and rendered impotent for all practical purposes. He elaborates this position when he writes shortly after:

> Thus emerges a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behavior in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of this universe. They are redefined by the rationality of the given system and of its quantitative dimension.[7]

Read simply as descriptive statements, the above propositions could be understood as different degrees of political mortification now in existence. The real Marcuse

could then be simply thought of as occupying the middle ground between complete objectification of persons and technological rationality as ideology. However, even this strategy would fail to address an important dilemma in his work. For it may be that these different empirical statements about the degree of political quiescence now existing really should have in their foundation different and perhaps incompatible concepts of subjectivity as well. And it could be, therefore, that while some of his empirical propositions are useful, the basic concept of subjectivity he professes remains flawed.

I shall ask, therefore, does Marcuse's basic notion of subjectivity enhance or detract from our overall ability to explain depoliticization? Are there portions of his milder empirical statements (as insights that require modification) on one-dimensional society that we can adopt while rejecting a common and unsatifisfactory notion of subjectivity.

In the next chapter, I will argue that in Marcuse's work there is both a primary concept of subjectivity that remains unsatisfactory, as well as aspects of an implicit richer concept in tension with the primary one. When the former is emphasized, it dramatically understates the potential for criticism inherent in human sociality.[8] At

times, misunderstanding the nature of human sociality itself, Marcuse's "subject" as analytical category tends to facilitate exaggeration, in empirical analysis, of the degree and severity of apathy prevalent, reducing all depoliticization to political mortification in one form of another. This tendency is further aggravated by the problematic analysis Marcuse gives to contemporary social structure, particularly the stability of American capitalism.

The essential problem is this: Marcuse's subject allows for the theoretical possibility of absolute political mortification, which, I shall argue, is an impossible concept, at least as pursued by Marcuse. Moreover, it betrays a social anthropology, which, if true, would give no grounds for any reasonable notion of human freedom or liberation, Marxist or otherwise.

In the end, Marcuse's analysis of depoliticization will compare unfavorably with the concept of political subordination extracted from Mills and elaborated in Chapter III. From the forthcoming critique of Marcuse, I shall be able to further develop this concept and suggest more fully its power in the explanation of depoliticization. But first, let us turn directly to Marcuse's analysis of political mortification in America as an

"advanced industrial society."

One-dimensional persons: an overview

As I have suggested, Marcuse attempts to explain why people passively acquiesce to domination just at that time in history when the technical potential for liberation exists:

> The most advanced areas of industrial society exhibit throughout these two features: a trend toward consummation of technological rationality, and intensive efforts to contain this trend within the established institutions. Here is the internal contradiction of this civilization: the irrational element in its rationality. It is the token of its achievements. The industrial society which makes technology and science its own is organized for the ever-more-effective domination of man and nature for the ever-more-effective utilization of its resources. It becomes irrational when the success of these efforts opens new dimensions of human realization.[9]

How is it, then, that the social relations are able to "hold back" the forces of production by preventing "new dimensions of realization" from opening up?

Marcuse's investigation can be analyzed on at least two different levels. At the more obvious level, Marcuse, like Mills, describes a system of elite power of administration and domination of communication, culture, economics, and politics. This power is dependent on modern technology and communication techniques which allow elites both to manipulate needs and to provide material abundance

to meet those needs, ensuring quiescence and even "happiness." Any criticism that occurs either appears irrational or is harmlessly channeled, in safety-valve fashion in pseudo-oppositional activity. Marcuse writes, for example, "One-Dimensional thought is systematically promoted by the makers of politics and their purveyors of mass information."[10]

At a more profound level, however, Marcuse is offering much more than an analysis of simple elite manipulation. For one thing, elites themselves are subject to the technological ensemble. "The world," he writes, "tends to become the stuff of total administration, which absorbs even the administrators."[11] To be sure, the privileges of some are "veiled" and protected within one-dimensional society. More importantly, however, the limits of technological rationality "appear in the progressive enslavement of man by a productive apparatus which perpetuates the struggle for existence and extends it to a total international struggle which ruins the lives of those who build and use this apparatus."[12]

Basic to Marcuse's thesis is that the "productive apparatus" of advanced industrial society, in dialectic with technological rationality as a closed universe of meaning, both projects a society of total domination and

establishes the material preconditions for overcoming the repression heretofore made necessary by scarcity. In this process, the forces of production of science and technology, geared to the sole principle of ever greater productivity, have themselves become the primary relations of domination. Much of the very high level of repression that still exists is, therefore, in Marcuse's judgment, unnecessary repression. Accordingly, the possibility exists at least in theory, however remote in "one-dimensional society," of creating a liberated technology and productivity that can meet "true" human needs and transcend the unnecessary lack of freedom that now prevails.

With such a "specter of liberation" haunting advanced industrial society, Marcuse argues, the subjugation of the masses to unnecessary repression cannot merely result from simple manipulation of wants but must correspond to some deeply felt need. Otherwise the pointless character of contemporary domination would become too transparent. His specific contribution, then, is his attempt to show how one-dimensional society creates the immediate and unreflective identification of the needs of the individual with those of the technical apparatus. As we have seen, at his most extreme, Marcuse suggests that people actually lose their status as subjects and become merely functional

units of advanced industrial society. In this way, "one-dimensional" persons are created, shorn of the capacity to comprehend their situation.

In order to understand how individuals can become what amounts to a mere reflection of the needs of the technical social structure, I will examine four closely related aspects of Marcuse's theory. For Marcuse, contemporary economic and social structure has produced stability and affluence and is able to contain qualitative change indefinitely. It has as its bedrock technological rationality as ideology--but one with a fundamental difference from previous ideologies: it creates a universe of discourse consisting of only one dimension, the dimension of the "positive," lacking "negative," critical or oppositional concepts. Moreover, the development of technological society has created a character structure of such weakness that it is susceptible to adaptive socialization right down to the instincts. For Marcuse, the eradication of the potential for criticism from thought and language and the incorporation of the needs of technological rationality directly into the character structure are the hallmark characteristics of "one-dimensional man." I shall therefore examine, in turn, the social structure, the ideology, the language and the psychological profile of

"one-dimensional society." Once I have completed this task, we will be in a better position to see what kind of sense to make of Marcuse when he boldly writes of contemporary America:

> . . . domination--in the guise of affluence and liberty--extends to all spheres of private and public existence, integrates all authentic opposition, absorbs all alternatives. Technological rationality reveals its political character as it becomes the great vehicle of better domination, creating a truly totalitarian universe in which society and nature, mind and body are kept in a state of permanent mobilization for the defense of this universe.[13]

The Social Structure of Containment

In an important respect, Herbert Marcuse's analysis of social structure can be viewed as an attempt to explain a fundamental anomaly in Karl Marx's theory of revolution. For Marx, the capitalist mode of production created both alienation and technological progress. It was able to do so because it prevented workers from apprehending a fundamental truth: it was they who were creating the value of society through a mode of production, which they also "created," that denied them freedom. The genius of capitalism was that it would someday provide the material basis for freeing workers from the grind of using their

very beings as instruments to overcome raw necessity. When the material and technological base of capitalism became sufficiently advanced, the way the social relations of capitalism "held back" the potential of the forces of production would become transparent. This "contradiction" would issue in revolution as a decisive historic move toward freedom and away from what would then become completely unnecessary exploitation. Thus, Marcuse tries to explain why, given substantial technical mastery of nature, the revolution has not arrived.

In Marx's time the laborer was fooled, essentially, by what Marx called the "fetishism of commodities." Because the activity of producing was reduced to mere labor-time so that the work output could be exchanged in the market and because production was reduced to production for exchange with no regard to the need fulfilled, both became commodities of the marketplace:

> A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labor appears to them as an objective character stamped on the product of that labor: because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labor is presented to them as social relations existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labor. . . . There it is a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things.[14]

Commodities are therefore fetishized in that they take

on human attributes, appearing to interact with one another while the relations between persons become reified, appearing as relations between things. What Marx called derisively "Monsieur le Capital" "acts," while people become objects under his laws--in reality, of course, they acquiesce to market social relations.

As capitalism develops, "dead labor" in the form of machines and technology increasingly replaces and dominates living labor. As the worker becomes more and more an "appendage of the machine," the product of human labor increasingly dominates the worker, intensifying alienation, commodity fetishism and reification.[15]

However, Marx argues, once the laborer's toil ceases to be the essential condition of productivity, "surplus labor" "ceases to be the condition of the development of social wealth . . . the mode of production which rests on the exchange value collapses." At this point, the worker will be ready to replace "labor-time" as the measure of wealth and "exchange value" as the measure of use with "the appropiation of his own universal productivity, i.e., his knowledge and his mastery of nature through societal existence--in one word: the development of the societal individual."[16]

Marx's hope, however, turns into Marcuse's despair.

For while Marcuse never abandoned "orthodox Marxism" on basic "contradictions" within capitalist production, particularly the liberating potential of science and technology and the pivotal role of the working class as revolutionary agent, he argues strenuously that both are now being contained, perhaps indefinitely.

In classical Marxism, Marcuse argues, there is a "political revolution" in which "the proletariat destroys the political apparatus of capitalism but retains the technological apparatus, subjecting it to socialization." The "immediate producers" would then introduce qualitative change: "production toward the satisfaction of freely developing needs." However, a revolution is predicated on the "negation," the liberating forces as a class that understands its alienation and <u>needs</u> to end it, existing within the society prior to the change:

> Now it is precisely their new consciousness, this "space within," the space for the transcending historical practice, which is being barred by a society in which subjects as well as objects constitute instrumentalities in a whole that has its raison d'etre in the accomplishments of its overpowering productivity.[17]

In twentieth-century America, Marcuse argues, "the more technology appears capable of creating the conditions for pacification [of existence], the more are the minds and bodies of men organized against this alternative."[18] The

technological base for revolutionary change appears to exist while the agency for change is absent. In fact, the technological base itself must be altered, for it is the present "technical continuity" that integrates workers into advanced industrial society. Marcuse argues:

> . . . to the degree to which the established technical apparatus engulfs the public and private existence in all spheres of society--that is, becomes the medium of control and cohesion in a political universe which incorporates the laboring classes--to that degree would the qualitative change involve change in the technological structure itself.[19]

For Marcuse, then, it is the present <u>technological structure itself</u> that is the basic "fetter," the most important mode of containment of the freedom from alienating labor that technology promises. The irony Marcuse suggests for Marxian theory is acute. Technological rationality clouds both optimistic moments of the Marxian dialectic: in becoming a force for social cohesion, it integrates the working class <u>and</u> removes itself as an immanent critique of capitalist social relations. I shall shortly discuss how, in Marcuse's view, technological rationality has come to have substantive ends (productivity and domination) and become the main legitimation of monopoly capitalism. Before we turn to technological rationality as ideology, however, let us

explore its practical workings in contemporary America.

The premier and incontrovertible fact about the technological apparatus of "one-dimensional society" is that it demonstrates its efficiency and utility through "overwhelming productivity." For the great majority, Marcuse argues, American industrial capacity has removed material need, making protest appear utopian if not downright foolish, given the promise of an "ever-more comfortable life." Certainly, there remain those whose "life is the hell of the Affluent Society," who "are kept in line by a brutality which revives medieval and early modern practices." For the rest, however, "society takes care of the need for liberation by satisfying the needs which make servitude palpable," through the production process itself.[20]

Marx wrote in the Grundrisse that: "Production thus creates the consumer. Production not only furnishes the object of a need, but it also furnishes the need for an object."[21] One-Dimensional Man can be read as an attempt to explain the contemporary significance of Marx's statement: while the ever-growing need for commodities is certainly created, the primary need developed is for an irrational production process itself.

The achievements Marcuse catalogued appeared awesome.

Long-term economic stability seemed assured, with record levels of affluence and increasing employment opportunities. Business and government partnership was successfully managing potential economic crises. Technical development and innovation had vastly accelerated and become primary in the production process, marginalizing the power of the traditional working class, which was totally integrated anyway.

Internationally the interimperialist rivalry between capitalist powers had been frozen, with communism serving as an "enemy" all productive and psychological forces could be mobilized against. Writing before the Vietnam war was at its height, Marcuse believed that national liberation struggles were being successfully contained, protecting capitalism abroad. The confrontation with communism also gave greater rationale to government integration with the economy and accelerated defense spending, greatly spurring the development of technology.

In fact, the state had become so closely identified with the technical base of production that it could no longer generate ideological principles able to unify a class-divided society and had transcended its role as a set of "mediating" institutions, capable of establishing a general interest out of partial interests. The state, in

short, was tending toward becoming a mere reflection, as were all other institutions and people, of the technological base.[22]

Marcuse called the state that had developed a "welfare-warfare" state: a state of "total administration." Its genius was to repress the majority by providing for its manipulated needs while reserving coercion for a relatively small minority. As such, it created "unfreedom" by restricting (1) real free time (not administered leisure) that was now technologically feasible; (2) production to meet "true" human needs; and (3) critical intelligence.[23] Because of the "technical" availability of each of these, the welfare state was, for Marcuse, an exercise in unnecessary repression.[24]

The welfare-warfare state, therefore, served the function of promoting and containing productivity within the bounds of capitalism:

> . . . the prospects for a streamlined containment . . . depend primarily on the ability of the vested interests to adjust themselves and their economy to the requirements of the Welfare State. Vastly increased government spending and direction, planning on a national and international scope, an enlarged foreign aid program, comprehensive social security, public works on a grand scale, perhaps even partial nationalization. . . .[25]

However, the welfare-warfare state was engaged

primarily in raising an administered standard of living in which the decline of opposition became "an objective societal process insofar as the production and distribution of an increasing quantity of goods and services make compliance a rational technological attitude."[26] Instead of freeing people, therefore, the state was helping to stabilize a socioeconomic system geared toward ever-greater productivity, depending heavily on the production of "junk" (and the need for it), planned obsolescence, and the production of fear of the enemy. Furthermore, keeping production within the bounds of capitalism not only required increasing administration but also advertising, public relations and indoctrination to ensure consumption and fealty to the system.

In Marcuse's view, however, the need for products and productivity itself was not the result of simple manipulation such as media advertising. Marcuse was extremely concerned that media such as television and radio helped close off the mental space available for reflection, largely through their pervasive intrusion into most corners of a person's life.[27] In particular, the media seemed able to project a pseudo-objective universe of meaning devoid of critical content.

The more fundamental problem, however, was that people

were no longer capable of any reasonable conception of autonomous action. With the change from competitive to monopoly capitalism, the traditional family, and particularly the father's role within it, had been greatly weakened. The family lost its role as the primary vehicle of socialization, particularly to the mass media. In "advanced industrial society" there was little need for the strong personality characteristic of the entrepreneur--the need now was for persons capable of complete adaptation to the technological milieu.[28]

The father, then, as ego-ideal and principal force, according to Marcuse, in creating the super ego through the resolution of the Oedipal situation, was not available to help shape an autonomous individual.[29] Instead a very weak ego developed, incapable of mediating the personality with his or her environment and incapable of reflection. And a weak superego was unable to direct the forces of the id, particularly allowing increased aggression in this new world "without fathers."[30]

I shall discuss subsequently fuller implications of Marcuse's psychological profile of "one-dimensional man," and particularly the fate of subjectivity. For our purposes here, the crucial element of this transformation is the way people <u>immediately identify</u> with the needs of

advanced industrial society. In a world without fathers or real leaders, the weak ego adopts technological rationality and its representatives as the ego-ideal for all. That is, it adopts ever-increasing productivity for its own sake as the only important value. Television and other media loom large here, encouraging people to identify with a variety of "institutional fathers," who in one way or another represent technological rationality. Private critical mental space is, thereby, closed off.

Against this backdrop, manipulating consumption for its own sake is a relatively easy task, ensuring with the "defense" economy disposal of ever-increasing surplus production. As Morton Schoolman points out, people become technicians of consumption as well as production.

For Marcuse, it is basic that the change in character structure, along with the new "ego-ideal," allows advanced industrial society to immediately harness newly released instinctual drives to perpetuate the society and contain change. The aggressive energy of Freud's "death instinct," in his view, is channeled into labor, providing the production necessary for ever-increasing manipulated consumption. However, because rationalized labor does not satisfy aggression in its "primary form," frustration results, relieved by ever-greater need for rationalization and produc-

tion. The outcome, which Marcuse calls a "vicious cycle of progress," results in "repetition and escalation," in the form of ever-increasing need for channels in culture and production through which to release aggression.[31]

The "enemy" enters here, once again, as a critical means of stabilizing advanced industrial society. It provides an important target for all the aggression being released, displaces concern with the domination one is subjected to, and provides a psychological underpinning for the "defense" economy, resulting in greater production, more rationalization and more "totalitarian" control. In this way, rationalization leads to increased aggression and further rationalization.

The decline in the need for direct instinctual repression, made possible by the economic and technological obsolescence of the need for a strong superego, also issues in functionalizing newly released energy from the libido. Where formerly repression would preserve libidinal energy in the unconscious and release it in imagination, sublimation and fantasy, technical success has now made such repression obsolete. At this juncture, Marcuse claims, "The Pleasure Principle absorbs the Reality Principle [of Freud]. . . . This notion implies there are repressive modes of desublimation."[32]

Sexual liberation now becomes functional for the established order. People can dress as they please, say what they want, relate to each other in hitherto prohibited ways. For with the decline of the ego and superego and, therefore, the critical faculties, the hook-up between intellect and instinctual energy is disengaged.

The media with their overwhelming power can therefore easily manipulate such desublimation to seek the objects made available by the production machine. Desublimated libidinal striving makes the individual ripe for intensely manipulated consumption. Moreover, the media foster a pseudo-objectivity, appearing detached in the face of horrifying events and juxtaposing "sense" and "nonsense," the serious news interspersed with frivolous "news" or commercial advertising. The result is to erode critical intellectual and emotional faculties, and, coupled with the sheer power of the media, to close off the person's mental space for reflection.

Culture is also vitally affected. It was the connection between the intellect and the instincts, particularly through sublimation, that preserved critical content of thought in earlier stages of capitalism. Even apparently nonrevolutionary art preserved this potential. Whether in music, literature, art, most particularly pop

entertainment, immediate release of instinctual energy robs culture of its transcending value. Even "beat" ways of life are an effective safety-valve for desublimated energy. Moreover, as even the fine arts become more available as a commodity at one's fingertips with the television knob or in the store, they become diffused, turning into "cogs in a culture-machine which remakes their content."[33] Whether cultural creations begin, therefore, as genuine works of art with transcendenting value or whether they begin as desublimated works like Lolita (with immediate "desublimated" gratification possible), they end up as the stuff of mass culture. In either case, they lose their alienation from a reality of domination, their capacity to state what Marcuse calls "The Great Refusal." Culture thereby becomes functional for mass society.

A similar fate befalls philosophy, social science, education, and politics. In the hands of positivists and particularly analytic philosophers, Marcuse argues, philosophy becomes primarily a mode of therapy. By accepting ordinary language without attempting to penetrate its ideological meaning and by ruling out as meaningless oppositional concepts that attempt to transcend "ordinary language," this kind of philosophy helps to coordinate thought with the needs of established social structures.

Similarly, a social science committed to "operational definitions" of reality commits the analyst implicitly to the current form of social organization, undercutting the important critical role of universities. Educational institutions at all levels conform to the role for which they are needed, as vocational training grounds for various aspects of production.

In the political world, potentially oppositional concepts like freedom are redefined in terms favorable to technological rationality. Politicians may prattle on about democracy, justice, freedom, and the like, but they are really talking about preservation and extension of the going order. Similarly, union leaders and businessmen work together for the "national interest." Even potentially oppositional political parties, whether socialist or communist, have chosen to vie for power within the parliamentary systems of capitalism, rather than struggle for qualitative change. Although they do so primarily to retain a fundamentally conservative mass base, not simply out of default of leadership, Marcuse argues, the result is that no serious political opposition exists to challenge advanced industrial society.

The ideology of pluralism is therefore free to hide the fact that countervailing powers "cancel each other out

in a higher unification--in the common interest to defend and extend the established position to combat the historical alternatives, to contain qualitative change."[34] Politics within advanced capitalism thereby becomes reduced to "choosing" between masters at election time, and this is called "democracy." The function of those elected is primarily to redefine political problems in technical terms, predetermined by experts, which the "masses" cannot understand. The division of labor is thereby extended to the political world: there are those who set the technical rules, those who administer them and those who choose the administrators. In this way, technological rationality cancels politics as a separate function--political problems become technical problems.[35]

For the worker, the classical agent of change, an entire sociocultural world is thereby established, promoting adaptive behavior and uncritical thought. There are no institutional or personal resources capable of producing a social being able to comprehend the extent of domination. The decisive element of the worker's complete integration, however, depends on the structure of the technological work world. Marcuse claims: "Assimilation in needs and aspirations, in the standard of living, in leisure activities, in politics derives from an integration in

the plant itself, in the material process of production."[36]

Here we have a twofold process at work. The worker is increasingly under the power of management, through scientific management and industrial psychology, speed up, higher levels of job training, worker isolation, a faster rate of obsolescence, declining chances for promotion due to preference for college graduates, and "worker participation" that fosters an eagerness "to share in the solution of production problems." At the same time, management loses its character as responsible "boss" of the enterprise; managers become "bureaucrats in a corporate machine," themselves subservient to technique. With the ascendancy of technological rationality and the sundering of the "master-slave" dialectic, there appears to be no one to hold responsible.

Moreover, as machines become decisive in determining productivity, the worker loses his or her "professional autonomy." The "rhythm" of the process of production itself, Marcuse argues, further integrates the worker. The workers "in the most successful areas of automation" have instilled in them a "drugging rhythm"--they get in "the swing of things" with, as Trent Schroyer describes Marcuse's view, a "mimetic adjustment to a technical process." While tension and mental effort are increased,

replacing physical drudgery, these too contribute to the overall effect of inhibiting criticism and the complete integration of all workers into the production process. Standardization and routine engulf the white-collar "unproductive" jobs of typists, bank tellers, and salespeople, just as surely as they do those of the automated and semiautomated production worker. And even the "new working class," which is in a position to promote change because of its pivotal position and knowledge of the production process, is well rewarded and well integrated.

Contemporary American social structure, therefore, seems able to contain change into the foreseeable future. With the integration of the worker at the point of production, the worker as the historical negation, "the beast of burden" of capitalism is itself transcended. Moreover, capitalists become subservient to managers who, themselves, must listen carefully to the experts on productivity in research institutions and universities. Management itself, therefore, becomes a functional unit subservient to technological rationality.

With the contradictory positions of capital and labor collapsed within a technological totality, Marcuse sees the decisive break away from monopoly capitalism to "advanced industrial society." In its ability to contain contra-

dictions, the social structure of advanced industrial society ushers in a qualitatively new mode of alienation: the worker no longer is used by an alien power against his or her own interest. Instead the worker's interest, right down to the instinctual level, has become harnessed to and identified with the production process as he or she becomes merely a functional unit within it.

As the worker's needs become ever more closely identified with those of society, alienation itself appears simply to be an abstract idea, denied practical expression and reserved for the little critical theory that survives. With the total integration of the working class, advanced industrial society circumvents the problem of alienation, in Marcuse's eyes, leaving "no ground on which theory and practice, thought and action meet."

Yet a fundamental contradiction remains. Within even the most advanced capitalist societies, profit and private appropriation remain the regulators of the economy, thereby keeping technological rationality working for partial interests. Advanced industrial society of the capitalist variety, therefore, "continues to face the conflict between the growing potential of pacifying the struggle for existence and the need for intensifying the struggle; between the progressive "abolition of labor" and the need

for preserving labor as the source of profit." Although much of the value of society is no longer created by labor but by machines and the application of knowledge, the liberation this change portends must be denied expression to maintain private appropriation. Similarly, in communist societies, "the enemy without, backwardness, and the legacy of terror" help maintain an oppressive bureaucratic structure geared, not to the liberating potential of technics but to "'catching up with and surpassing' the achievements of capitalism."[37]

In both types of society, therefore, technological rationality emerges in dialectic with a system of domination and becomes itself the primary form of domination. Moreover, it becomes the method by which partial interests are protected in each society, protected so well, in fact, that there is no agency capable of exposing this circumstance. In the United States, Morton Schoolman suggests of Marcuse's view, "as technological rationality organizes social relations around technical logic, technical rather than class status, the ideology of production rather than the ideology of producers, determines all goals. Capitalists become bureaucrats, and political domination becomes administrative rule."[38]

Technological rationality as legitimation

Before the development of capitalism, production systems were legitimized by political authority, myth, religion and culture. Capitalism, however, decisively confronted traditional authority of this sort with the means-end rationality of the market through its ability to develop an economic system of "self-sustaining economic growth." According to Jurgen Habermas:

> The rationality of language games, associated with communicative action [in traditional authority], is confronted at the threshold of the modern period with the rationality of means-ends relations, associated with instrumental and strategic action.[39]

The ability of capitalism to sustain growth "guarantees the permanent expansion of systems of purposive-rational action and thereby overturns the traditionalist 'superiority' of the institutional framework to the forces of production."[40] As a potentially liberating industrial base develops, therefore, it also provides its own legitimation--the fair exchange of equivalents in the market (reciprocity)--to protect the newly emerging private appropriation of the capitalist mode. However, in adopting the category of "reciprocity," Habermas continues, the bourgeois ideology "still employs a relation of communicative action as the basis of legitimation."

Values, in other words, still provide the legitimating force behind means-end rationality.

The essential difference is that "reciprocity is now the organizing principle of the sphere of production and reproduction itself":

> Only with the emergence of the capitalist mode of production can the legitimation of the institutional framework be linked immediately with the system of social labor. Only then can the property order change from a political relation to a production relation, because it legitimates itself through the rationality of the market, the ideology of exchange society, and no longer through a legitimate power structure.[41]

The justification for the structure of power thereby becomes reversed, with the economic system now legitimating the political system: with the emergence of capitalism, society's institutional framework becomes "only mediately political and immediately economic (the bourgeois constitutional state as 'superstructure')."[42] Thus, capitalism both provides for the permeation of "subsystems of purposive-rational action" preoccupied with economic growth and the legitimation necessary for the political system's adaptation to this development.[43] It also provides the material basis for liberation, which will only become manifest, as Marx put it, once its "mystical veil" is stripped off by "freely associated men" consciously regulating production "in accordance with a settled plan."[44] This

will necessarily happen, Marx believed, because the "bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production and thereby the relations of production and, with them, the whole relations of society." The very process of capitalist development continuously upsets political authority and legitimation including, ultimately, its own "and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind."[45]

As we have seen, Marcuse suggests that the development of the dialectic of liberation as outlined by Marx has been derailed by the transition of capitalism, not to socialism but to advanced industrial society. Essential to this process is technological rationality as a replacement for market ideology.

Jurgen Habermas points to two changes in capitalist political economy, discussed here earlier, that lie at the heart of Marcuse's analysis of technological rationality as ideology. First, dysfunctions within liberal capitalism produced a need for stability that was met by increased state intervention in the economy. Secondly, the maturation of capitalism brought with it the institutionalization and interdependence of research and technology to the point that they became the leading production force.

The implications for Marxist theory are manifest, in Habermas' view, in that these changes render inoperative both the orthodox view of the relation between the base and superstructure, and the theory of surplus value.

With the development of state-regulated capital, the relations of production could no longer serve as the primary legitimation for private appropriation. Instead, the need to regulate the business cycle undermined the basic ideology of just exchange, thereby making implausible legitimation based in the "unpolitical" economic order. Indeed, the economic base "has to be comprehended as in itself a function of governmental activity and political conflicts."[46] With the state no longer simply a function of, or legitimated by, capitalist social relations, both it and the institutional framework at large become repoliticized. Thereby arises a need need for legitimation, to protect private appropriation and conceal the function of the new political order.

Habermas suggests that the free exchange market is replaced by a "substitute program" of a particularly "negative character" designed to compensate for the dysfunctions of the market. Utilizing the bourgeois ideology of achievement, with the school replacing the market as the locus of status, it guarantees a "minimum

level of welfare," offering an increase in privatized rewards in the form of commodities, secure employment, stable income, and social security. This program, however, mandates a latitude for state manipulation that can both "secure the private form of capital utilization and bind the masses' loyalty to this form." The repoliticized state, therefore, becomes oriented not toward developing, in Habermas' idiom, "practical goals," but to solving the "technical problems" involving capital dysfunction and the need for growth.

However, state intervention cannot allow democratic decision-making to question whether, in fact, the tasks performed by government are primarily "technical." The repoliticized institutional framework, devoid of adequate legitimation, therefore requires a depoliticized mass to allow the politics of state interventionism to proceed.

Depoliticization is partly assured by the changing function of the traditional working class, due to the increased role of science and technology in producing value and increasing productivity. Workers at once become less central to production and are better rewarded and thereby integrated, along with capitalists, managers, and the "new working class" into advanced industrial society. Workers, therefore, no longer develop within capitalism as a

potentially autonomous class and provide no leverage with which to criticize the real role of the polity.

Moreover, the dominance of science and technology, along with state interventionism, enlarges the scope of organizations geared to "purposive-rational action," as against those that practice political or cultural values. Issues of purpose and meaning therefore give way increasingly to questions of techniques. Habermas argues that while the social interests rooted in capitalism still determine the pace and direction of technical progress, defining the system as a whole there:

> . . . arises a perspective in which the development of the social system seems to be determined by the logic of scientific-technical progress. The immanent law of this progress seems to produce objective exigencies, which must be obeyed by any politics oriented toward functional needs . . . then propaganda can refer to the role of technology and science in order to explain and legitimate why in modern societies the process of democratic decision-making about practical problems loses its function and 'must' be replaced by plebiscitary decisions about alternate sets of leaders of administrative personnel. . . . It is a singular achievement of this ideology to detach society's self-understanding from the frame of reference of communicative action and from the concepts of symbolic interaction and replace it with a scientific model. Accordingly the culturally defined self-understanding of a social life-world is replaced by the self-reification of men under categories of purposive-rational action and adaptive behavior.[47]

For Marcuse, then, the role of science and technology had come full cycle from that envisioned by Marx. They now

became the basis of the new ideology that would legitimate state intervention in the economy to protect private appropriation. By providing a system of concepts that excused state (and, I might add, corporate) behavior as fulfilling technical needs only, science and technology helped make plausible the depoliticization borne by the inhabitants of advanced industrial society:

> At the stage of their scientific-technical development, then, the forces of production appear to enter a new constellation with the relations of production. Now they no longer function as the basis of a critique of prevailing legitimations in the interest of political enlightenment, but become instead the basis of legitimation. This is what Marcuse conceives of as world-historically new.[48]

There is, however, a qualitative difference between technological rationality and previous ideologies. Bourgeois ideology engendered support by appealing to normative principles based on an illusory fairness of market relations. This obscured the reality, in Marx's view, that two classes stood in opposition to each other. The pervasive changes brought about by the technological domination of society, however, also alter both the ideology and the reality.

Habermas suggests that with the development of technocratic consciousness, the "reified models of the sciences migrate into the sociocultural life-world and gain objective power over self-understanding."[49] Technocratic

consciousness does not engender loyalty by appealing to normative principles but rather by providing an explanation of how society may best function to ensure privatized rewards. Its acceptance, therefore, depends on advanced industrial society's ability to provide rewards, inculcate adaptive behavior, and cast a social world in which the appeal to normative principles is suppressed. In this context, the forces of production cannot provide a critical standard for the relations of a production, as the latter now appear to be the technically necessary organization of society. Indeed, the very idea of rationality becomes debased to the idea of system "adjustments."[50]

Acceptance of technological rationality, however, is accomplished not only by creating an ideology of technique but also by increasingly creating in Morton Schoolman's interpretation of Marcuse, one "monolithic technical class" out of the opposing classes that Marx described. This development provides structural underpinning for suppressing questions of fairness, and supports a technological model of self-understanding by transforming questions of class domination into questions of administration. Technological rationality, therefore, does not have the appearance of ideology.

In Habermas' view, this development can ironically be

called post-historie because the productive forces now legitimate existing society, rather than spearheading the critique by which people could see the possibility of the "practical mastery of previously ungoverned processes of social development."[51] They do so, essentially, by suspending the ethical dimension of life. It is, however, post-historie also in a related sense described by Morton Schoolman: with the development of advanced industrial society, Marcuse would argue, all individual behavior becomes increasingly adaptive, and human subjectivity itself recedes.

With the related suppression of subjectivity and ethics, technological consciousness shows itself not to be an alternate system of belief so much as a state of mind. In the end, one follows technical roles not because one believes in them but because there is no ethical or political standard or cognitive ability to question them. As subjectivity and normative judgment recede as categories of human life, individuals become mere functional units following technical rules in a society geared simply to ever-greater productivity. Technological rationality is, then, less a legitimation in the old sense, than a description of and reference point for behavior in technological society.

Yet technological consciousness remains ideological in two important senses. It obscures the fact that even if advanced industrial society creates one "technical class," it still operates in the interest of an elite. According to Schoolman, in Marcuse's analysis, "the interests of the ruling class are newly embodied in technics precisely at that moment when that class's rule is abolished by technics."[52] At the most fundamental level, however, Habermas writes:

> with the veiling of practical problems it [technological consciousness] not only justifies a particular class's interest in domination and represses another class's partial need for emancipation, but affects the human race's emancipatory interest as such.[53]

Technological rationality as domination

Marcuse's argument, however, goes one problematic step beyond that of Habermas. The ideological aspects of science and technology are rooted in the contemporary nature of science and technology themselves and not just in the way their categories are misapplied to obfuscate deeper questions of value. Technological rationality is not just a value-neutral mode of organizing work that has been illicitly applied to the organization of people. Instead, for Marcuse, it is a system of values whose content and ends are marked by systematic domination over people and

nature. By creating a social world in which technical reason is the only available form of reason, the ends of technology, such as efficiency, productivity and technologically determinined growth, become the unquestioned goals of people adapted to this society.

Marcuse arrives at his position from several directions. In studying Nazism, Marcuse became convinced of the potential for domination of technology through willful political manipulation.[54] He also discovers, however, that technics can itself become a process of social organization. Technology, then, can be used for political ends, and it also contains ends of its own. While in Nazism the former predominated, in societies where technological rationality is relatively unfettered, as in the United States, it can become the mode of domination.[55]

Marcuse criticizes Max Weber for confusing the rationality, or formal reason, developed under capitalism with reason as such. The impact of this error is to allow political domination to masquerade as rationality and thereby to remove the possibility of a liberated rationality based on a liberated technology and science from pointing the way to a truly rational reconstruction of society.[56] Because the "formal rationality" Weber discussed, in fact, developed under capitalism, it reflects

much more than neutral technique. Marcuse writes in his essay, "Industrialism and Capitalism in the Work of Max Weber":

> . . . the very concept of technical reason is perhaps ideological. Not only the application of technology but technology itself is domination (of nature and men)--methodical, scientific, calculated, calculating control. Specific purposes and interests of domination are not foisted upon technology "subsequently" and from the outside; they enter the very construction of the technical apparatus. Technology is always a historical-social project: in it is projected what a society and its ruling interests intend to do with men and things. Such a "purpose" of domination is "substantive" and to this extent belongs to the very form of technical reason.[57]

Marcuse is, then, not just arguing technological rationality is ideological because it protects decisions about the actual application of technology from public scrutiny, although it does do that. His argument at its most fundamental level is that technology and science, as we now know them, are themselves modes of political domination.

Marcuse traces these flaws back to the Enlightenment attitude toward nature as an object for human control that required a calculus of predictable relationships among identifiable entities. Nonquantifiable qualities, on the other hand, would "stand in the way of an organization of men and things in accordance with the measurable power to

be extracted from them." Instead of a dialectical conception of the relation between persons and nature, reason was viewed as a property of the subjective consciousness and nature as a separate "subject" (with laws) and object (to be controlled). In this way, reason itself became viewed as the pursuit of knowledge for instrumental control over nature.[58]

The way in which nature and persons dialectically transform one another is, however, lost with this mode of apprehension. The Enlightenment concept of reason, therefore, laid the groundwork for viewing the modern organization of material existence as itself independent of the particular way in which human subjects constitute themselves at this historical phase. Reification of nature, then, became ipso facto self-reification of persons. For in thinking of material existence as an abstract object for instrumental control, scientization closes off reflection on both the way in which people transform nature and the way in which nature (as transformed people) transforms them as well. If nature is viewed abstractly as an object, the other side of the dialectic--self-constituting subjects--will lose consciousness of the human subjectivity inherent in their organization of nature. In discovering the "laws" with which to assert instrumental control over nature,

therefore, persons become subservient to the mode of apprehending and technical structure of the nature they have created. The idea of reason as control over nature turns full cycle and becomes reason as control over persons.

Even pure science is not free of Marcuse's indictment. Adopting the functional form "How . . . ?" over the metaphysical "What . . . ?", science distorts reason as conceived in classical philosophy by focusing on control over substances to the exclusion of questions of the purpose of substances. Science is, therefore, constitutionally incapable of pointing toward transcendence, indifferent to questions of quality, focused on discovering the "laws" of a universe it thereby helps objectify and control:

> In this reality, matter as well as science is "neutral," objectivity has neither a telos in itself nor is it structured toward a telos. But it is precisely its neutral character which relates objectivity to a specific historical subject--namely, to the consciousness that prevails in the society by which and for which this neutrality is established.[59]

Marcuse concludes, therefore, that the neutrality of science is of a "positive character." Because modern science developed in dialectic with the rationality of capitalism, it denudes nature of inherent ends in the same way that the market creates relations of abstract labor power between persons, replacing traditional authority.

Marcuse agrees with Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer when they suggest, "by virtue of the rationalization of the modes of labor, the elimination of qualities is transferred from the universe of science to that of existence."[60] "Operationalism," "verification," "formalization," "functionalization," all of these, are aspects of a science which is tied to the single purpose of controlling nature. Science, as presently constituted, may vary considerably as to the practical ends it may be put to, then, but not with respect to its attitude and relation to nature and people:

> The principles of modern science were a priori structured in such a way that they could serve as conceptual instruments for a universe of self-propelling, productive control; theorectical operationalism came to correspond to practical operationalism. The scientific method which led to the ever-more-effective domination of nature thus came to provide the pure concepts for the ever-more-effective domination of man by man through the domination of nature. . . .
>
> The point which I am trying to make is that science, by virture of its own method and concepts, has projected and promoted a universe in which the domination of nature has remained linked to the domination of man.[61]

In fact, Marcuse suggests the possibility of a new science that would provide a liberating rather than a repressive mastery of nature.[62] If the "fatal link" between the domination of man and nature could be broken through a fundamental change in the "nature of progress," the very structure of science would be altered:

> Its hypotheses, without losing their rational character, would develop in an essentially different experimental context (that of a pacified world); consequently, science would arrive at essentially different concepts of nature and establish essentially differents facts.[63]

Science would then develop a transcendental framework, replacing itself as a functional system of instrumental action. Liberated science would work to preserve, foster and release the potential of nature, rather than strive to control it technically.[64]

In the above description, I have avoided the ambiguities (and confusions) in Marcuse's position in favor of his strongest thesis: technology and science have become, themselves, modes of domination. At times, Marcuse writes as if he means technology and science are apolitical and become political only because of the uses they are put to. He also sometimes suggests, in "orthodox" fashion, that modern technology as it is can, after all, point the way to liberation. He would certainly be hard pressed to deny that it is, of course, present science and technology which suggest to him the emancipatory potential of a liberated science and the way to a liberated society.[65]

We have been looking at his stronger thesis, however, not because it is the most sensible, for it is not, but because it is most central to the idea of "one-dimensional

society." If persons are to be deprived of the faculty of critical thought, the core of the one dimensionality thesis, they must have a mode that is, in principle, acritical of apprehending the world. If technological rationality remained only a means to attaining political ends brought in from the outside, however, there would also have to remain a language open to critical reflection and not restricted to the goal of functional control. For a strict thesis of one dimensionality to be coherent, technological rationality cannot be dependent on any ends other than those it establishes itself.

What is needed is that the essential characteristics of universal technical processes come to prevail, limiting mental powers to the rationality they circumscribe. For example, the technical goals of regimentation of production, specialization of work, and standardization of the material and human aspects of work, are geared to increased precision, calculability and efficiency of production. These ends of technological rationality require not a subject who acts with discretion or takes initiative but one who reacts in predictable, "objectively quantifiable" ways that can be charted for future planning. In this way, the goal of technical mastery of nature becomes technical control over people, and technological rationality becomes

the mode of contemporary domination:

> It is my purpose to demonstrate the internal instrumentalist character of this scientific rationality by virtue of which it is a priori technology, and the a priori of a specific technology--namely technology as a form of social control and domination.[66]

In the end, domination is complete when people become mere objects in the technological ensemble. A fully one-dimensional society, therefore, requires the complete eclipse of subjectivity, which, in turn, mandates domination based on a ubiquitous rationality of technique, in principle immune to reflection. Technology itself, then, is for Marcuse "the great vehicle of reification--reification in its most mature and effective form." "The web of domination has become," he argues, "the web of Reason itself and this society is fatally entangled in it. And the transcending modes of thought seem to transcend Reason itself."[67]

The reification of thought: one-dimensional language

As we have seen, Marcuse views technological rationality as the dominant mode of perception of advanced industrial society.[68] This mode is the form of the official language of government and business, of the social sciences and philosophy, and, as such, is the cornerstone of produc-

tion and consumption, work and leisure. The very ability of American society not only to "deliver the goods," but to continuously grow and increase productivity enables it both to project and to validate its own definition of reality: the administered standard of living of the welfare state results in a decline of oppositon as "an objective societal process in so far as the production and distribution of an increasing quantity of goods and services make compliance a rational technological attitude."[69]

The pressure toward ever-greater productivity and the ability to grow thereby produce ever-greater rationalization of production and consumption and the need and ability to increasingly rationalize society as a whole.[70] Marcuse argues that, due to the power of the production system, a language geared to the adaptation of individuals to the technical "project" is being promoted through the media, government, academia and the organization of the production system itself.[71] He calls this "one-dimensional language" and suggests that it is an inherently apolitical reified language, incapable of conceptualizing criticism of the established order.[72] In particular, it is powerless to unmask and, in fact, supports a technical world of domination, in which subjects and objects alike are viewed as instrumentalities. Instead, one-dimensional language

works to subvert the twin threat to the system: communism as a historical alternative (or liberalism in Stalinist countries), and the technological capacity to overcome the need for alienated labor and administered society. As such, Marcuse views it as a language with which advanced industrial society suppresses history and subverts the possibility of freedom:

> As long as this constellation prevails, it reduces the use-value of freedom; there is no reason to insist on self-determination if the administered life is the comfortable and even the "good" life. This is the rational and material ground for the unification of opposites, for one-dimensional political behavior. On this ground, the transcending political forces <u>within</u> society are arrested, and qualitative change appears possible only as a change from <u>without</u>.[73]

<u>The one-dimensional language of contemporary American society</u>

Language is the medium by which persons comprehend their life situation. For language to serve adequately as a liberating <u>mediation</u> of experience, however, it must be capable of doing more than providing simple conceptual reinforcement of the immediate life of the person. It must, for example, have the potential to interpret that life in terms of its historical context. If language is to be a true mediation of experience, it must, in Marcuse's

terms, be able to maintain the potential for a critical distance between the language used by the subject and the dominant definition of the object the subject is thinking about.

Marcuse argues that the "official" language of contemporary society is one-dimensional precisely because it does not mediate the person's experience; rather it produces an immediate identification with established society. Although Marcuse does not discuss other forms of language in history that may have been completely uncritical of their society, he does pinpoint the egregious fault in one-dimensional language: the operational nature of its concepts render them, in principle, incapable of aiding transcendence beyond the established order. One-dimensional language is in style and form a functional language on the model of technological rationality. As such, it is a pseudo-therapeutic language that abets the adjustment of individuals to a repressive social order.

One-dimensional language "hammers away" at people through the media, government, education and business until they acquiesce in (if not always accept) functional definitions of reality. The power of dominant institutions to communicate their message, thereby, literally overwhelms criticism.

In contrast to two-dimensional dialectical modes of thought, Marcuse describes a universe of technological behavior of social "habits of thought." Here, he claims, we find the disappearance of "the tension between appearance and reality, fact and factor, substance and attribute";[74] the immediate identification of essence and existence and between the thing and its function. As such, the "language of total administration" finds within itself the same kind of identifications which are essential to the theory of operationalism. Discovery, demonstration and critique are replaced by designation, assertion, and imitation, thereby undermining autonomy. Language becomes magical and ritualized as images replace concepts. Unable to conceptualize repression or point the way to freedom, language becomes authoritarian.

Operationalism, in science, Marcuse argues, refers to identifying a particular set of operations by which we determine the property of a concept: according to P. W. Bridgeman, "<u>the concept is synonomous with the corresponding set of operations.</u>"[75] In Marcuse's view, this type of "reasoning shapes the expression of a specific social and political behaviorism."[76] The form of the language of "politicized and standardized usage," and the power of the dominant institutions to propagate this

language, together are able to project a discourse in which the defining characteristics of concepts and persons become identified with their functions in the system. In this process, the power of dominant institutions emanates not just from the propaganda machine but also from the ability to show that predominant concepts work--that is, they meet the requirements of their "abridged definitions":

> the functionalization of language expresses an abridgment of meaning which has a political connotation. The names of things are not only "indicative of their manner of functioning," but their (actual) manner of functioning also defines and "closes" the meaning of the thing, excluding other manners of functioning.[77]

If the form of one-dimensional language is functionalism, the political and commercial style, while varied, mirrors that form in suggesting definitions that also close off criticism. Predominant is the tendency to force together unlike terms, thereby unifying what were previously antagonistic historical categories. Contradictions that once would have been considered an insult to logic are now taken as "a principle of the logic of manipulation," in a "realistic caricature of dialectics." The "beneficial destructiveness" of one-dimensional society allows for a "total commercialization" in which there is a "smooth linguistic conjunction of conflicting parts of speech." For example, we hear (or heard when he wrote) of "luxury

fall-out shelters," "clean bombs," "harmless fall-out" --constructions which, using the "syntax of abridgment," reconcile the meaning of opposite terms "by welding them together in a firm and familiar structure."[78] As a result, opposition forces are denied a language with which to develop criticism.

Perhaps the best example he gives of this tendency is the following. Although peace and war are opposite concepts, the current tendency is to propagandize that we work for peace by preparing for war. However, when peace no longer is a conceptual negation of war, criticism of war loses the frame of reference of the oppositional concept, peace. Thus, the thesis: we prepare for war; and the antithesis: we work for peace, are synthesized as: preparing for war is working for peace. This synthesis, however, redefines oppositional concepts by forcing a false unification. Shorn of concepts that could provide critique, oppositional ideas:

> are immediately evaluated . . . in terms of the public language--a language which determines "a priori" the direction in which the thought process moves. Thus the process of reflection ends where it started: in the given conditions and relations. Self-validating the argument of the discussion repels the contradiction because the antithesis is redefined in terms of the thesis.[79]

Sometimes the contradiction is not explicit in the sentence but is concealed directly within the noun. We

have, for example, "socialist" governments which work for capitalism, despotic governments which are called democratic, rigged elections which are called free.

At other times, distinctions are concealed by forcing together different spheres or qualities. There is a tendency to fuse a person and his or her function in an "authoritarian identification." For example, Israel's Begin, New York's Koch, England's Thatcher would create the impression that individuals are mere appendages or properties of their job. Alternately jobs can be humanized by constructions such as "Georgia's high-handed, low-browed governor," creating "personalized and hypnotic" images--the stuff of a human interest story. In fusing the governor with his function, features and politics, "one indivisable and immutable structure" is created, "which in its natural innocence and immediacy, overwhelms the reader's mind."[80]

Similarly, speaking of Edward Teller as the "father of the H-bomb," joins together the spheres of family procreation and military destruction. Or a "scientific-military dinner" unites "the efforts to reduce anxiety and suffering [science] with the job of creating anxiety and suffering [the military]." The effect is to project magical and hypnotic images that unite formerly distinct and often contradictory concepts or spheres of life and force them

together "into a solid, overpowering whole":

> The imposing structure unites the actors and actions of violence, power, protection and propaganda in one lightning flash. We see the name of the thing in operation and only in operation--it cannot be otherwise.[81]

To the degree acquiesced to, these fixed images project a closed definition of the thing or person in terms of their current function. Furthermore, the ability to produce enticing, "realistic," action-oriented images enhances the attractiveness of the images and their acceptance. The result is an ascendent political and commercial style of "overwhelming concreteness."[82] The idea of a thing-in-itself gives way to the thing-as-its-function: lost is the capacity of the concept to mediate the difference between the real nature of the thing and its current definition. Instead, the image fosters immediate identification with the operational definition of the thing and thereby with the established order.

The "image-mongering" reflected in the ascendent political and commercial style also reflects itself in the syntax of the sentences used. Marcuse contrasts a "classical" philosophy of grammar with prevalent tendencies of speech. In the former, a subject "is first a 'substance'" and its predication in the sentence does not change this fact. A subject remains different from its predicates

whether actively or passively related to them and, if not a proper noun, it is more than a noun: "it names the concept of a thing, a universal which the sentence defines as in a particular state or function." The "grammatical subject," then, always "carries a meaning in excess of that expressed in the sentence."[83] It is the conceptual distance between the subject and its predicates that allows them to mediate one another within the sentence.

The style of dominant usage, however, is always to couple the noun with the same adjectives, continuously repeating this formula and thereby hypnotically creating a fixed meaning in the person's mind. Words become cliches circumscribed by the publicized and standardized language. Immediately identified with its predicates:

> The noun governs the sentence in an authoritarian and totalitarian fashion, and the sentence becomes a declaration to be accepted--it repels demonstration, qualification, negation of its codified and declared meaning.[84]

In this form, prepositions become evocative and predication becomes prescription. And through repetition, a "false familiarity" develops that promotes the self-identification of individuals with their given functions. The subject as concept, thereby, gives way to the noun as object-image, where the latter is established through a closed set of dynamic-sounding, endlessly repeated predicates.

As the examples we have seen show, Marcuse describes a variety of concepts, whose closed definition short-circuits their potential for critical mediation. Behind all these examples, however, is a common theme: a functionalized language freezes concepts in the present, thereby rooting out their potential as a historical agency.

Perhaps Marcuse's central argument can be made clearer if we look a a fundamental political concept such as freedom. Early in One Dimensional Man, he concludes that the concept "freedom" has, through "mass information," been transformed through "monopolistic" repitition into a hypnotic dictation--a self-validating hypothesis. If "'free' are the institutions which operate (and are operated on) in the countries of the Free World; other transcending modes of freedom are by definition either anarchism, communism, or propaganda,"[85] then "freedom" as a concept cannot be employed to discover whether or not the Free World is, in fact, free. The problem is that we have a concept based on a previous historical situation, freedom as an aspect of the development of capitalism, ritualized through a functional redefinition,[86] claiming that today capitalist societies are the only free societies. If all important concepts have a universal as well as particular aspect, the present "official" definition of freedom

sunders the universal (to transcend domination in any historical period), in favor of the particular historical manifestaton. And, in Marcuse's view, even this particular aspect, it appears, is borrowed from the past and misapplied in the present. Thus, the partial truth of capitalism as an aspect of freedom from traditional authority becomes the total lie of a "free world." In taking this partial truth and operationalizing it (redefining it in terms of the working of capitalism as an international system), the universal aspect of freedom, its capacity to aid transcendence, appears to be an irrational desire for utopia. Freedom as transcendence becomes, in politics and even in political and philosophical inquiry, a nice though irrational ideal or a mere value judgment separate from the "real world." The "official language," therefore, becomes a mode of control--what is "given" is true and rational; what opposes the given is false or irrational.

In contrast to functionalized language, Marcuse looks to dialectical thought, for example, as embodied in The Communist Manifesto. Here we find, in contrast to "hypnotic nouns" with "frozen predicates," an open language that unfolds with each of the two key terms, the "bourgeoisie" and the "proletariat" "given contrary predicates":

> The "bourgeoisie" is the subject of technical progress, liberation, conquest of nature, crea-

> tion of social wealth, and of the perversion and destruction of these achievements. Similarly the "proletariat" carries the attribute of total oppression and of the total defeat of oppression . . . the subject [here is] an historical agent whose identity constitutes itself in and against its historical practice, in and against its social reality. The discourse develops and states the conflict between the thing and its function, and this conflict finds linguistic expression in sentences which join contradictory predicates in a logical unit--conceptual counterparts of the objective reality. In contrast to all Orwellian language, the contradiction is demonstrated, made explicit, explained and denounced.[87]

If we contrast this example with that of the functional redefinition of freedom, we find the core of Marcuse's thesis. Operational language is constituted by redefining concepts so that they become totally functional for the established society. Freedom, as defined above, is a falsification of the concept "freedom" because it sunders its universal element and thereby removes its critical dimension. For Marcuse, the redefinition is testimony to the "omnipresent power of the given facts," as formerly critical concepts become themselves "facts" of the given reality. As such, they do not search for truth but rather establish it and pass judgment in a "prejudged form." One is free, then, if one fits into the operational definition as established in harmony with the given social order. There is no judgment possible of whether the social order

is free; the only judgment possible is of ideas, opinions, or facts that contradict it. These are immediately evaluated because freedom as a concept capable of mediating the given reality, of being able to explain, describe and pass judgment on it, instead simply mirrors it.

What is lost is memory and history. Operational concepts "forget" the past, the conflicts, hopes and aspirations that led to the present because they exorcise the universal from the particular. Freedom as quest becomes freedom as daily existence. Marcuse follows Adorno in arguing that the suppression of memory is itself linked with the bourgeois principle of progress and rationality, where the present is seen as rational (and to be further rationalized) and "Memory, Time, Recollection" and tradition as "irrational leftovers"[88] of the past.

Dialectical concepts, on the other hand, are at once a way to recall what was, to see what is, and to look into what will be. In contrast to operational concepts, they are historical because they examine both dimensions of reality: the given and the actual, is and ought, appearance and essence. Both dimensions are necessary to sustain the tension needed for critical abstract thought:

> The two dimensions are antagonistic to each other; the reality partakes of both of them, and the dialectical concepts develop the real contra-

> dictions. In its own development, dialectical thought came to comprehend the historical character of the contradictions and the process of their mediation as historical process. . . . The suppression of this dimension in the societal universe of operational rationality is a suppression of history, and this is not an academic but a political affair. It is a suppression of the society's own past--and of its future, in as much as this future involves the qualitative change, the negation of the present.[89]

In Marcuse's view, concepts like "proletariat" are historical precisely because they describe and explain what is, in such a way as to also show what was and what may be. "Proletariat" as used by Marx is not a noun-image (although it is in Stalinist propaganda) that excludes critical thought through a closed definition because it reveals a subject that is always in the process of becoming. It is in this sense that dialectical subjects constitute themselves "in and against" their historical practice and social reality. The proletariat is, therefore, both a product of capitalism and the potential for socialism. It both mirrors the positive reality and portends its negation. However, "freedom," operationally defined, is not capable of accurately portraying either what is or what can be. In remaining only positive, it is partial and therefore untrue, although the apparent rationality of operationalism, and the power of political and commercial propaganda do, indeed, make falsehood appear true:

> The unified, functional language is an irreconcilably anti-critical and anti-dialectical language. In it operational and behavioral rationality absorb the transcendent, negative, oppositional elements of Reason.[90]

This is the core of Marcuse's thesis on language. Yet there is an apparent ambivalence that Marcuse exhibits, concerning to what degree this language can or does circumscribe the understanding of ordinary people of the world they live in.

Even in One Dimensional Man, Marcuse maintains that there is opposition to one-dimensional language and society:

> . . . the popular language strikes with spiteful and defiant humor at the official and semi-officical discourse. Slang and colloquial speech have rarely been so creative. It is as if the common man . . . would in his speech assert his humanity at the powers that be, as if the rejection and revolt, subdued in the political sphere, would burst out in the vocabulary that call things by their names: "headshrinker" and "egghead," "boob tube," "think tank," "beat it," and "dig it," and "gone, man, gone."[91]

And again, later in his more optimistic Essay on Liberation, he suggests that there is a "methodical reversal of meaning" of the ordinary discourse of functionalized language, "in the most militant areas of protest." Hippies, for example, take harmless words out of their context and use them for tabooed objects or acts: "trip," "grass," "pot," "acid," constitute such usages. Black militants are even more successful, creating an actual

reversal of meaning. The soul, for example, "lily-white ever since Plato," is taken over as the key phrase of Black pride. Moveover, it is now black that is beautiful.[92]

Even within the traditional confines of ordinary usage, Marcuse seems to indicate that there exists a critical dimension. In his severe and exaggerated attack on ordinary language philosophy, which I shall not pursue here, he praises Karl Krauss, who maintained that analysis of ordinary language could reveal the social and political context in which the language developed and is used. These deeper meanings which, "with various degrees of awareness and explicitness, [enter] into the individual communication," overlap with one-dimensional language, and could be surfaced, thereby penetrating the distortion of ordinary usage. Thus, in both the various examples of countercultural usage and the depth layer beneath ideological meaning, Marcuse seems to indicate that ordinary language is not completely closed to immanent critique by its users. Nevertheless, Marcuse still concludes that the consciousness of the average person remains imprisoned within the "straightjacket of common usage," and revealing the truth of such distortion "is not the job of ordinary thought in ordinary speech." It is apparently only the theorist (i.e., the critical theorist) and perhaps those

imbu ed with the "new sensibility," who have some vantage point in the critique of ideology. The average person is ultimately incapable of that.

Marcuse's Freud: one-dimensional character structure and the eclipse of subjectivity

We have seen from the above discussion how social structure, science and technology and language in Marcuse's view, circumscribe a repressive world of "one dimensionality." While one might conclude that a complete thesis could be based on these elements alone, for Marcuse the picture also includes a pessimistic psychological profile, based on his adaptation of Freud for the study of repression in technological society.

Marcuse turns to Freud, in part, to explain why revolutions have failed to occur or why they have themselves reproduced domination. He recounts the Freudian myth of the primal horde, in which repression is restored through guilt of having overthrown the father, reproduced in biography (ontogenesis) and the development of the species (phylogenesis). In his view, the Marxian concept of false consciousness must be expanded to include psychic repression of this sort. He writes in Eros and Civilization:

> . . . ever since the first, prehistoric restoration of domination following the first

> rebellion, repression from without has been supported by repression from within: the unfree individual introjects his masters and their commands into his own mental apparatus. The struggle against freedom reproduces itself in the psyche of man, as the self-repression of the repressed individual, and his self-repression in turn sustains his masters and their institutions. It is this mental dynamic which Freud uncovers as the dynamic of civilization.[93]

Marcuse turns to Freud for another reason as well, to enable him to maintain the hope that domination may yet be overcome. In much of Marcuse's writing, from Eros and Civilization (1955) to An Essay on Liberation (1969), there recurs the theme that it is Eros, the "life instinct," that could potentially guide the critique of domination. This becomes particularly important since Marcuse fears, as we have seen, that the productive forces have become a mode of domination, and the working class decidedly non-revolutionary. Eros, then, becomes a "material basis," as John Fry puts it, to ground the possibility of liberation in an otherwise reified society. It allows Marcuse to shift critical theory from now hopelessly distorted consciousness to the subterranean yearning of the life instincts.[94] Ultimately it is Eros, borrowed and adapted from Freud's later metapsychology, that saves Marcuse from complete despair, even in One Dimensional Man.

Marcuse's adaptation of Freud has two components. The first is his attempt to bring out the "historical

substance" of Freud's categories by, as he says, "unfolding their own content."[95] The second is his analysis of the contemporary "obsolescence" of Freud's concept of man, due to the advance of technological society.

For Marcuse, certain Freudian terms "do not adequately differentiate between the biological and the social-historical vicissitudes of the instincts." He, therefore, introduces two terms to augment the fundamental psychoanalytic concepts of "repression" and the "reality principle."

If basic repression is characterized by those modifications of the instincts "necessary for the perpetuation" of the human race in civilization, then we must distinguish from it "surplus repression" as that repression necessary only for social domination per se. Behind Freud's "reality principle," Marcuse claims, lies the fact of scarcity, which requires the repression of the pleasure principle in order for labor to proceed. The reality principle does not acknowledge, however, that repression may continue even after a society has the potential to overcome scarcity, due to the specific distribution arrangements and mode of work society imposes on its members. The "performance principle," Marcuse argues, is now the "prevailing historical form of the reality principle" obscuring the present capacity to overcome want. Because the struggle against

scarcity was "bound up with and shaped by the interest of domination," scarcity continues to be created, artificially under the performance principle in the interests of elite domination, requiring and sustaining repression that is now historically in excess of what is necessary:

> the specific historical institution of the reality principle and the specific interests of domination introduce additional controls over and above those indispensable for civilized human association. These additional controls arising from the specific institutions of domination are what we denote as surplus-repression.[96]

The obsolescence of Freud's "man": Marcuse's despair--and hope

One Dimensional Man may be understood as an analysis of the practical collapse of the distinction between the individual and society due to the pervasive domination of technical rationalization. This eclipse of subjectivity in the face of the "objective" onslaught of technique, renders obsolete the type of person described by Freud.

I have discussed earlier some specific ways in which the "man" described by Freud has become obsolete, according to Marcuse, particularly with the decline of the family and the father's role and the consequent shrinkage of the ego. This "regression of ego" is nothing less than the disappearance of the individual capacity to think and reason

privately and in opposition to society. The genius of advanced industrial society is its ability to "resolve" the conflict between individual and society by making society's needs the individual's own.

Marcuse, then, begins with Freud's person, in whom there exists "a constant struggle between the three basic forces of Eros, the death instinct [Thanatos], and the outside world." Three principles guide this struggle: the seeking of pleasure, the desire to return to the painless world before birth (Nirvana) and the reality principle, modifying the instincts to conform with the outside world.[97] In the struggle for life, productivity must be assured to overcome scarcity; therefore, the individual must be desexualized in order to "live in a context of unpleasurable work." Eros, then, must be transformed from polymorphous-perverse sexuality to genital sexuality, whose aim is reproduction and which forms the basis of the monogamous family. Here the father enters to repress the child's desire to return to the mother and the painless state before birth. In dominating the Oedipal conflict, the father reduces the scope of sexuality and accomplishes the introjection of morality through the creation of a superego that can tame the instinctual forces of the id.

Without the repression of the instincts, Freud

asserts, life would be impossible because the instincts are conservative in nature, seeking pleasure, calm, gratification. They are, therefore, profoundly unproductive, incapable, as Marcuse puts it, of the "alienated productivity that is the motor of cultural progress."[98] The aggression created by the suppression of the instincts becomes externally the force for alienated productivity and internally that of social morality. In the mature individual, it is the job of the ego to mediate betweem the id, superego, and the outside world. It is just this function that allows the individual that amount of "discontented" freedom possible in civilization. However, according to Marcuse, because Freud maintains that this freedom has as "its inner logic" suppression and sacrifice of happiness, he also holds out, however remotely, the possiblity of freedom in harmony with pleasure:

> Thus Freud reveals the actual negativity of freedom and in refusing to transfigure it idealistically he preserves the idea of another possible freedom in which the repression of the instincts would be abolished along with political oppression, while the <u>achievements of repression would be preserved.</u>[99]

If civilization has produced discontent in the struggle to overcome scarcity, overcoming scarcity could become the basis for transcending a civilization with discontent as its hallmark. Was not the first suppression

of the instincts, Marcuse reasons, due to "neither nature nor poverty nor weakness . . . but rather the despotism of domination" introduced by the primal father? And are not the instincts themselves, as Freud argues, fundamentally conservative, seeking balance and gratification rather than "striving for what is endlessly higher and unattained"?[100] If domination is not an instinctual necessity and if seeking gratification need not require endless productivity, then a pacified world, free of domination, in which work becomes play,[101] can be envisioned. This is the "decisive correction of Freudian theory" Marcuse introduces:

> The achievements of repressive progress herald the abolition of the repressive principle of progress itself. It becomes possible to envision a state in which there is no productivity resulting from and conditioning renunciation and no alienated labor: a state in which the growing mechanization of labor enables an even larger part of the instinctual energy that had to be withdrawn from alienated labor to return to its original form, in other words, to be changed back into energy of the life instinct . . . alienated labor time would not only be reduced to a minimum but would disappear and life would consist of free time.[102]

The very ability to understand this historic opportunity has been undercut, however, by the development of one-dimensional character structure as a product of progress as well. It is precisely the conscious ego, capable in principle of such reflection, whose capacity for mediating experience has been sharply curtailed by the

strengthening of the institutions of technical reason over the family and the father. Instead of a critical faculty, the ego has been reified, reduced to "automatic reaction"[103] to stimuli from the outside world. The instincts themselves, as we have seen, become directly linked to the one-dimensional world either as libidinal attachments to desublimated objects (e.g., the auto as an object of libidinal cathexis), or productivity as a direct outlet for aggression, or the enemy as a personified object of aggression. Consumption, productivity and the enemy, then, all become instinctual needs of the one-dimensional person. As productivity increases and, with it, the promise of freedom from alienated labor, surplus repression must intensify to guarantee future productivity, thereby intensifying aggression and the need for the enemy as an outlet. This psychological constellation, therefore, roots in the biological structure, as John Fry describes Marcuse's work, "the fundamental disposition to support the economically essential and self-beneficial arms economy." The enemy syndrome, thereby, fosters interclass harmony (and inter-imperialist harmony as well): "Both political apathy and economic prosperity are further ensured in a single stroke."[104]

Technical reason is imposed from the outside on the

immature ego as the now collectivized ego-ideal--the model for conduct. It replaces the shattered ego and the weak superego. As Schoolman concludes, in Marcuse's argument: "the essential elements of subjectivity, the psychic apparatus itself, are eroded by the technical apparatus."[105] The individual then, becomes reduced to part of a mass, in which mediation between the self and others is displaced by immediate identification. Behavior now is determined by "mimetic" adjustment, rather than introjected codes of morality, and the "multidimensional dynamic . . . has given way to a one-dimensional static identification of the individual with the others and with the administered reality principle."[106]

In the child, then, one-dimensional society creates a very weak ego with the ubiquitous ego-ideal of technological rationality, represented by its institutions and leaders. In the mature adult, it reaches down into the "biological structure" to harness both aggressive and libidinal impulses, for the sake of productivity, consumption, and consensus. The result is a society whose members are all on the road to becoming objective reflections of the needs of the technical structure. Armed with Freud's metapsychology and concept of "man," as he interprets them, Marcuse finds that "man" has been rendered obsolete in

today's world. As an "ideal," however, the concept retains critical force:

> That which is obsolete is not, by this token, false. If the advancing industrial society and its politics have invalidated the Freudian model of the individual and his relation to society, if they have undermined the power of the ego to dissociate itself from the others, to become and remain a self, then the Freudian concepts invoke not only a part left behind but also a future to be recaptured.[107]

Liberation or Apocalypse?

In Marcuse's world of one-dimensional people, three possibilities emerge. If productivity continues, society can continue going along, as described above, unless there is an atomic war, which seems quite likely. Should the productive apparatus falter, however, the severe aggression that continuously develops in advanced industrial society could break free into a modern barbarism. Finally, there is the remote hope of liberation, most remote in One Dimensional Man of 1964 but rekindled by 1969 in An Essay on Liberation.

I have suggested before that, although advanced industrial society uses the aggressive energy available in productivity, this does not satisfy aggressivity in its "primary form" and therefore creates frustration and

further aggression. As the individual produces, under a repressive instinctual structure that does not allow gratification, enjoyment, or peace with what is produced, such denial also instigates further aggression and the basis for further production. As instinctual repression increasingly becomes surplus and unnecessary repression, therefore, production becomes less able to satisfy agressive impulses, and production and rationalization must be accelerated. This "vicious circle of progress," is augmented by the fact that in a Vaterlose Gesellschaft ("society without fathers"), in which incorporation in the technological ensemble rather than conscience guides behavior, a breakdown in the productive process would unleash the terrible aggression accelerated by rationalization itself. As it is:

> . . . the activation of surplus aggressive energy releases instinctual forces which threaten to undermine the established political institutions. The sanctioning of aggressive energy demanded in the prevailing situation makes for a growth of popular extremism in the masses--a rise of irrational forces which confront the leadership with their claims for satisfaction.[108]

Marcuse states, in fact, that the "preservation of democracy, and civilization itself," increasingly depends "on the willingness and ability of the government to withstand and to curb aggressive impulses 'from below.'"[109]

In the end, we find in Marcuse the curious mix of a

world of subjectless people, completely adapted to mass society, yet fully capable of destroying it and themselves. In One Dimensional Man, however, Marcuse seems to suggest that ever-increasing productivity, technical reason as ego-ideal, cathected rewards instinctually tied to the person's identification, unfree cultural institutions and the creation of "enemies" will harness aggression successfully and allow advanced industrial society to continue indefinitely. Unless, of course, there is nuclear holocaust.

The happy consciousness of an amoral society

The people that inhabit this world, Marcuse characterizes as having a "happy consciousness." Shorn of the old-fashioned superego, granted "satisfactory liberties," they are incapable of judging misdeeds of the person or the society.[110] Their extremely weak ego may be able to help channel aggression into production and consumption, but it can only do so because it "submits quickly to required modes of thought behavior"--that is, completely identifies with technological rationality.

Their happiness is itself, therefore, marked by domination. In the earlier stages of capitalism, there was a need to repress instinctual energy through the centrali-

zation of erotic energy into genital sexuality, development of the monogamous family based on heterosexuality, and its sublimation into socially productive labor. This was an extremely repressive organization of the instincts, intensifying as it did the need for gratification and sublimating gratification, which further intensified the need.[111] There was, however, a hidden negative virtue here. The very process of sublimation preserved in fantasy, wish, imagination, and unconscious thought the potential of libidinal liberation. The creative link between instinctual frustration and cognitive comprehension of its source was suppressed but not disengaged.

The repressive desublimation of advanced industrial society qualitatively alters this circumstance. For one thing, society's technological advancement and affluence no longer require the old mode of severe instinctual repression. In fact, technological society requires a direct cathected libidinal tie between the individual and the products of society:

> We are again confronted with one of the most vexing aspects of advance industrial civilization; the rational character of its irrationality. Its productivity and efficiency, its capacity to increase and spread comforts, to turn waste into need, and destruction into construction, the extent to which this civilization transforms the object world into an extension of man's mind and body makes the very notion of alienation questionable. <u>The people recognize</u>

> themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanism which ties the individual to his society has changed and social control is anchored in the new needs which it has produced.[112]

There is, therefore, not only no need for a repressive sexual morality but a vital need for a liberalized sexuality. In the context of a free society, Marcuse would argue, such desublimation would be liberating, and, in fact, a condition for liberation. In advanced industrial society, however, desublimation ties the individual instinctually to the production apparatus. It also encourages the further decline of the ego, since gratification can now be immediately obtained without the old-fashioned search of the ego that often issued in sublimation, repression, and further search for fulfillment. The decline of the ego and of subjectivity itself is, therefore, the effect of and necessary condition for repressive desublimation. The result is, again, an eclipse of subjectivity so severe as to threaten the distinction between individual and society, and with it the need for norms to regulate conduct. The need for guilt and anxiety are, therefore, overcome.[113] Any act or deed appears permissible:

> The result is the atrophy of the mental organs for grasping the contradictions and the alternatives and, in the one remaining dimension of technological rationality, the Happy Consciousness comes to prevail.[114]

Perhaps the most provocative way to summarize Marcuse's thesis is to suggest that in one-dimensional society alienation is overcome.[115] There is no longer an ego capable of guiding the individual and no need for a superego replete with a moral code of behavior. Even sublimation, the reservoir of alienated wishes and desires has been transcended and with it the possibility that the individual might harbor needs, at some frontier of the psyche, different from those of society. The individual now is the society. And yet Marcuse concludes, of course, that the needs people have are not freely arrived at and do not suggest what is essential about people. He suggests that the fact that people are apparently no longer alienated by their existence signals "a more progressive stage of alienation." Alienation has become "entirely objective," defying ideological indictment. The "false consciousness" of technological rationality therefore has become "true consciousness." Before we question the logic and validity of this provocative hypothesis, we need ask, does Marcuse see any way out of this dilemma?

Liberation by the few?: radical intelligentsia as a subjective vanguard

If nuclear war or the descent into barbarism is

avoided, there is a glimmer of hope--but nothing more. As is characteristic of Marcuse, he offers few practical ideas toward the liberation he so desperately seeks. Sometimes he suggest that the only hope lies in disengaging the war economy. At other times, he puts forward the notion of somehow undermining the mass media, particularly television. In his essay "Repressive Tolerance," he argues that we must deny tolerance to the purveyors of one-dimensional rationality in order to puncture the ubiquitous false consciousness that has "destroyed the basis for universal tolerance."[116] Critical psychotherapy always remains useful to reclaim the private mental space now fully invaded by mass society.

Given Marcuse's analysis of one dimensionality it is less surprising that he offers few practical ideas on liberation than that he holds out any hope at all. According to his study, after all, "there is no ground on which theory and practice, thought and action meet."

Marcuse's turn to Freud is decisive here. For just as he looks to psychoanalytic metapsychology to demonstrate how deeply false consciousness is embedded, here he seems to maintain that this consciousness does not fundamentally alter basic "human nature." If the human essense was itself altered and then gratified, it would be inappropri-

ate to speak about domination of what would then become gratification of natural human needs. What happens, instead, is that a deeply felt "second nature" of needs is created, needs that are stabilizing and fundamentally conservative, "the counterrevolution anchored in the instinctual structure." People are tied "libidinally and aggressively to the commodity form," with merchandise, productivity, and the enemy all becoming biological or instinctual needs. One-dimensional society does, therefore, meet the needs of this "second nature" it creates socially in its inhabitants, and any attempt to transform it will also have to change these needs:

> To the degree to which this foundation is itself historical and the malleability of "human nature" reaches into the depth of man's instinctual structure, changes in morality may "sink down" into the "biological" dimension and modify organic behavior. Once a specific morality is firmly established as a norm of soical behavior, it is not only introjected--it also operates as a norm of "organic" behavior: the organism receives and reacts to certain stimuli and "ignores" and repels others in accord with the introjected morality, which is thus promoting or impeding the function of the organism as a living cell in the respective society. In this way, a society constantly re-creates, this side of consciousness and ideology, patterns of behavior and aspira- tions as part of the "nature" of its people, and unless the revolt reaches <u>into this "second" nature</u>, into these ingrown patterns, social change will remain "incomplete," even self-defeating.[117]

The problem for Marcuse is, then, how can a revolution

be made by a populace "biologically" wedded to its own domination? His answer in capsule form is the following. The working class remains the agency of change, but it is hopelessly programmed and virtually incapable of critical reflection. Technology and science remain the vehicles of liberation but in their present form constitute, instead, institutions of domination. Given these conditions, consciousness of repression and the development of needs qualitatively different from those now existing must precede revolution. A new subject is needed to break free of the vicious circle: a revolution is needed to create a free society, but it presupposes a need for the freedom it would create, a need now absent.

This circle seemed complete in 1964, but by 1969 Marcuse was writing An Essay on Liberation to suggest a possible way out. Here the question of "second nature" becomes decisive, because it implies a more basic nature that technological rationality obscures. Not surprisingly, the real nature of people resides for Marcuse in Eros, the struggle for gratification of the "life instinct," and what has changed by 1969 is that Marcuse finds people exhibiting this "new sensibility" of Eros.

Marcuse's turn to Freud had always been two-pronged: it enabled him to show how deeply manipulation could root

itself, as well as to believe that if one drilled deep enough, one could find hope. Eros was used by Marcuse in Eros and Civilization to explain failed revolutions and to provide a practical standard to judge progress, for a Marxism confused by a regressive technological milieu of abundance. Shorn of a real subject in One Dimensional Man, it becomes merely theoretical construct, the last strand of hope-as-an-idea, before the technical onslaught.

With An Essay on Liberation, Marcuse finds in the student rebellion of the West real live people who exhibit a political radicalism that can tap basic moral dispositions of the "human organism" and can help reveal the "biological foundation for socialism." They seem well prepared because they've experienced less repression of "authentic" instinctual needs, due to the displacement of the father, permissive child rearing, prolonged adolescence and freedom from responsibility. Their violation of taboos, therefore, is not restricted to sexuality (since they're freed from the repressive restrictions of only genital sexuality) but, in fact, "leads to refusal and rebellion." Consequently, it bypasses the absorption into the status quo of repressive desublimation:

> This radicalism activates the elementary, organic foundation of morality in the human being. Prior to all ethical behavior in accordance with specific social standards, prior to all ideological

> expression, morality is a "disposition" of the organism, perhaps rooted in the erotic drive to counter aggressiveness, to create and preserve "ever greater unities" of life. We would then have, this side of all "values," an instinctual foundation for solidarity among human beings--a solidarity which has been effectively repressed in line with the requirements of class society but which now appears as a precondition for liberation.[118]

In their style, dress, speech and acts, they exhibit what Marcuse calls the "Great Refusal" of being absorbed under a repressive reality principle that denies the life force of the id. If they engage in "uncivil disobedience" and confrontational direct action or use language that sounds obscene, they are, in fact, resisting illegitimate authority and obscene governmental and corporate acts, in ways that cannot be absorbed in the repertoire of permissible acts: their refusal refuses functionalization within the going order:

> They are not professional martyrs: they prefer not to be beaten, not to go to jail. But for them, this is not a question of choice; the protest and refusals are parts of their metabolism.[119]

Moreover, they are part of the "new working class" of technical and scientific workers and managers and may someday hold pivotal jobs in the production process. And although this "class" is otherwise "well integrated and well rewarded," it increasingly has objective revolutionary

potential because of its position and the decline of the "old working class." It could be former students, as "calculating managers" of the whole, who might use the power of society to reveal to its workers their oppression.

"The student rebellion," therefore, "hits this society at a vulnerable point; accordingly the reaction is venomous and violent."[120] The university and its defense against financial and political debasement becomes, thereby, "a vital part in the larger struggle for change," for it remains the critical institution in which to develop "true consciousness."[121]

In addition to the student rebellion, Marcuse points to "ghetto populations" and liberation struggles as significant breaks from corporate hegemony. Both share a vital, basic need to revolt. In the case of the former, there is the advantage of being somewhat uncorrupted and bulwarked in easily organized centers dispersed throughout society. There are the severe disadvantages of being racially divided from white allies, internally divided (e.g., the Black bourgeoisie), often engaging in unpolitical protest, and generally being marginal to the production process. Although Third World guerrillas can win specific revolutions, put economic pressure on imperialism and provide powerful moral examples of non-Stalinist socialism (e.g.,

Vietnam, Cuba, and China after the "cultural revolution"), their success ultimately depends upon breaking corporate capitalism at its "strongest link."[122]

It is, then, revolution in the U.S. which will be decisive, in Marcuse's view. If it does occur, it must begin with a new consciousness to counter the near total "social determination of consciousness":

> Historically, it is again the period of enlightenment prior to material change--a period of education, but education which turns into praxis: demonstration, confrontation, rebellion.[123]

The proto-new-subjects will be agents of revolution but not an agency of change. Initially they will be in opposition to the working classes, who, although diminished in power, are still necessary for revolution due to numbers and structural positioning, although their needs nevertheless remain those of a repressive society. Their task will then be "liberation [which] would mean subversion against the will and against the prevailing interests of the great majority of people."[124] Confrontation of this sort will undoubtedly increase tensions between them and their needed allies, just as surely as it is the only way to expose the system. In a period of disintegration, Marcuse nevertheless concludes, the "masses" may become (somehow) sufficiently disengaged to better judge these efforts at liberation for themselves.

Delegitimation and capitalist crisis

The development of a new consciousness, however, will be of no avail unless corporate capitalism begins to weaken. "Corporate capitalism," Marcuse now claims in An Essay on Liberation, "is not immune against economic crisis": the huge defense economy burdens the taxpayers and helps reduce profit margins, while economic conversion risks high unemployment. Foreign outlets for productivity will meet increased resistance in the Third World. Maintaining an adequate profit rate and preventing widespread unemployment will necessitate intensifying demand, "thereby stimulating the rat race of the competitive struggle for existence through the multiplication of waste, planned obsolescence, parasitic and stupid jobs and services." A high standard of living and a wasteful economy will drive wages sky high. These contradictions coming home to roost may intensify class struggle, but they will not issue in revolution, for state power will contain them within the bounds of capitalism: "the translation of the economic into the radical political struggle would be the consequence rather than the cause of change."

Change would require a period of unstructured, diffused disintegration, which could be sparked by economic crisis and "activate resistance" against political and

"mental repression." Under such circumstances, the legitimating backbone, the "moral fiber" necessary to stability, could wear thin. Prefiguring Jurgen Habermas' Legitimation Crisis, Marcuse declares in 1969:

> Now it is the strength of this moral fiber, of the operational value (quite apart from their ideational validity), which is likely to wear off under the impact of the growing contradictions within the society. The result would be a spread, not only of discontent and mental sickness, but also of inefficiency, resistance to work, refusal to perform, negligence, indifference--facts of dysfunction which would hit a highly centralized and coordinated apparatus, where breakdown at one point may easily affect large sections of the whole. To be sure, these are subjective factors, but they may assume material force in conjunction with the objective economic and political strains to which the system will be exposed on a global scale. Then, and only then, that political climate would prevail which would provide a mass basis for the new forms of organization required for directing the struggle.[125]

It is, then, only with the convergence of the weakening of "the global economy of capitalism" and "radical enlightenment" that authentic liberation might develop. As to the present, we seem to be in a "nonrevolutionary but prerevolutionary situation," marked by the "objective necessity" for revolution due to an irrational social system, yet encumbered by "the paralysis of the masses," and missing, thereby, the "objective factor" necessary for revolution.

The immediate revolutionary job is, then, one of political education. Marcuse suggests that this can take the varied forms of critical psychoanalytic therapy to help regain private mental space; critical social and political theory to expose our real condition; and action to penetrate the repressive totality of the language and deeds of the society. Such actions can be confrontations with authority or a series of reforms informed by the "radical social content of aesthetic needs," ranging from better zoning to protection from noise and dirt, closing cities to autos, restricting transistor radios, birth control, decommercializing nature or "total urban reconstruction." These programs, Marcuse insists, "would become increasingly subversive of the institutions of capitalism and their morality":

> The quantity of such reforms could turn into the quality of radical change to a degree to which they would critically weaken the economic, political, and cultural pressure and power groups which have a vested interest in preserving the environment and ecology of profitable merchandizing.[126]

In a period of growing crisis, then, such reforms could help generate the delegitimation necessary for revolutionary success. Moreover, if a revolution is successfully carried forth "by the non-repressive forces stirring in existing society," led by people who, Marcuse claims,

are "allergic to domination," with the "achievements of productivity" at their "disposal," the revolutionaries would be in a good position to avoid the imposition of "repressive controls" afterward. Such a revolution could avoid the psychic and political Thermidor, the "return of the repressed" (guilt of having overthrown "the father") that has abetted the reimposition of authority after other revolutions.

The promise of liberation

As for the present, Marcuse claims, it is a time for "utopian thinking," of developing the subjective consciousness that can understand the objective irrationality and objective possibilities. We can now imagine, he suggests, a society in which labor time can be reduced to a minimum and in which work becomes play. Productivity would cease to be an end in itself and instead exhibit the aesthetic quality of "display." It would be guided by a "technology of liberation" born of a gaya scienza "free to project and design the forms of a human universe without exploitation or toil."[127] An aesthethic environment would be created for people to spend time that would now be truly free because they would be fully able to decide how to utilize it: it would mean the "Aesthetic principle as form of the

Reality Principle."[128] The new society would be populated by "a type of man" for whom time and death would lose the now debilitating quality of anxiety and fear:

> a type of man with a different sensitivity as well as consciousness: men who would speak a different language, have different gestures, follow different impulses; men who have developed an instinctual barrier against cruelty, brutality, ugliness.[129]

For Marcuse, then, liberation is nothing short of life fully exhibiting the qualities of Eros, as a desublimated art of free existence. The mark of reason and rationality would be whether or not the gratification of the "life instincts" was being asssured, whether or not the pleasure principle was being realized. The concepts of freedom, reason and happiness would merge, as people would be, for the first time in history, free to use their reason to fulfill their human essence of living a gratifying, happy existence. The mind-body dualism would be overcome, as people would be "cured" of the effects of unnecessary repression, and this would be exhibited in gesture, physical movement and thought. Our very senses would be free to become "productive in their receptivity." In short, the liberation Marcuse envisages, suggests the end of human alienation:[130]

> Technique would then tend to become art, and art would tend to form reality: the opposition between imagination and reason, higher and lower

> faculties, poetic and scientific thought, would be invalidated. Emergence of a new Reality Principle: under which a new sensibility and desublimated scientific intelligence would combine in the creation of an aesthetic ethos.[131]

The strategy and dilemma of overcoming "repressive tolerance"

If the objective agent of revolution, the working class, has been derailed from its mission, the young intelligentsia-as-subject prefigures the sweeping liberation he suggests. It is the job of this agent of revolution to prepare the subjective groundwork for a revolution that must still await economic and social crisis. Then, perhaps, the vital need for revolution still might be developed in the vast majority of the people, who are presently in no position to judge their real interests:

> In the last analysis, the question of what are true and false needs must be answered by the individuals themselves, but only in the last analysis; that is if and when they are free to give their own answer.[132]

In the meanwhile, Marcuse suggests, "it makes sense to say that the general will is always wrong--wrong in as much as it objectively counteracts the possible transformation of society into more humane ways of life."[133] The strategic dilemma the young middle-class intelligentsia face, then, is that in their protest against authority they also

must protest against the present needs of the majority, thereby ultimately for everyone's real interests. Moreover, their protest must not be too tame, must not confine itself to present laws and institutions, or it will be absorbed by the one-dimensional political arena. Given Marcuse's analysis, the agents of revolutionary consciousness must initially confront both the objective class of revolution and the "semi-democratic" system that gives them latitude to maneuver.

In his essay "Repressive Tolerance," Marcuse confronts this dilemma by developing an argument to justify the privileged position he ascribes to the radical intelligentsia. "The problem," he argues, "is not that of an educational dictatorship, but that of breaking the tyranny of public opinions and its makers in the closed society."[134] Because the condition doesn't exist for democratic tolerance, knowledgeable people capable of deliberation and choice need a "discriminating" tolerance as part of the "struggle for a real democracy." Tolerance as now practiced really amounts to a pseudo-tolerance, masked in a spurious objectivity which hides the manipulative grasp and destructiveness of dominant interests. This "toleration" must be countered by withdrawing tolerance from ideas and actions that further regimentation and destructiveness, and favor-

ing ideas and actions, including unlawful and even some violent acts, that promote freedom and pacification. In the present stage of civilization, Marcuse argues, it is possible to identify movements, policies and opinions that would promote the use of the material potential for freedom and peace. Such constitute the base of democratic rationality and their strengthening requires "suppression of the repressive ones":

> In past and different circumstances, the speeches of the Fascist and Nazi leaders were the immediate prologue to the massacre . . . if democratic tolerance had been withdrawn when the future leaders started their campaign, mankind would have had a chance of avoiding Auschwitz and a World War.[135]

If the choice were between democracy and rule by an elite, Marcuse argues, democracy would certainly be preferable. Today, however, a destructive elite rules, one which may destroy all life on the planet. This elite is protected by the "end of ideology" as a false consciousness that "has become the general consciousness," and by programmed needs supportive of the institutions of domination. Through indoctrination and the mythology of genuine democratic tolerance, it controls the mind. Through repressive desublimation, it weakens the power of the intellect by removing the force of the id from its attempt to discern reality and seek happiness. Discussing the latter, Robert

Paul Wolff suggests:

> Tolerance, for Marcuse, is liberating when it is the established order's grudging acceptance of negative or oppositional expressions which seek to tap the unconscious as a way of attacking surplus repression. Tolerance is repressive when it is, as in our present society, an easy acceptance of the surface manifestations of the negativity in such a manner as to rob it of its transcending capability and leaves surplus repression untouched.[136]

It is, then, the job of radicals to begin to recreate the conditions for real democracy. First and foremost is the need to develop free mental space, to subvert the conditions by which the mind is made into a "subject-object" of one-dimensional politics. And this work "must begin with stopping the words and images which feed this consciousness."

In contradistinction to "repressive tolerance," Marcuse argues, we need a "liberating tolerance" of both discussion and deed, that "would mean intolerance against movements from the Right [and the establishment], and toleration of movements from the Left." "Liberating tolerance" is justified because the left is much weaker than the status quo and therefore cannot present its message effectively. Moreover, truth is not entirely relative: pacification and freedom, in Marcuse's view, are possible consequences of left thoughts and actions, but they are an impossible consequence of those from the

right. Consequently, discussion under "repressive tolerance" does not fulfill the mission of tolerance in a democracy: to allow ideas to compete in the search for truth. "Liberating tolerance" is then an attempt at achieving some balance. For if tolerance does not take sides, it protects a whole that is extremely violent and fundamentally intolerant, under the guise of tolerance protected by law seeking to prevent violence:

> Such extreme suspension of the right of free speech and free assembly is indeed, justified only if the whole of society is in extreme danger. I maintain that our society is in such an emergency situation, and that it has become the normal state of affairs.[137]

Real tolerance, truly democratic tolerance, Marcuse concludes, will never "be the gift of the powers that be." It can only be won with "the sustained effort of radical minorities," willing to break the hold of one-dimensional society, through their thought and the example of their actions and thus create the condition necessary for a real democratic majority: rational people who can think for themselves and have within them a need for freedom. Radical students are the protosubjects of the real democracy that might be established, and they have potential allies among ghetto populations here and liberation struggles abroad. Their ultimate success of creating a revolution

without a consequent Thermidor is "no more--and no less--than a hope." While the immediate situation is one of "containment," Marcuse concludes in 1969, "it is hard to see" how struggle for the "betrayed promises" of this society can be "arrested indefinitely."[138] In the present prerevolutionary situation, it falls to minorities "militantly intolerant and disobedient to the rules of behavior which tolerate destruction and suppression," to prepare the subjective groundwork: consciousness of the omnipresent grasp of one-dimensional society is the first step, the "Archimedean point," upon which future revolutionary change depends.[139]

Marcuse's Explanation of Non-Participation: A Summary of the Paradigm of Political Mortification

It should be clear by now that Marcuse does, indeed, devote much of his work to analyzing the ascendency of what Mills called "the cheerful robot." Political mortification *is* Marcuse's explanation of non-participation. Within this general framework, however, there are at least three Marcuses that bear directly on our study.

First, there is the "precise" Marcuse who postulates that technological rationality has become the legitimation

of advanced industrial society, doing for it what the fair exchange of equivalents did for capitalism. Secondly, there is the person I should like to call the "common sense" Marcuse, offering an often suggestive panoply of the causes of quiescence. These range from a psychological profile of frustration and safety-valve release to a confused and debased language; a political economy geared to no ends other than self-perpetuation and growth; a scientific and technological complex that is politically ascendent; and a manipulated mass of people unable to alter these circumstances. Integral to this Marcuse is an intense and vital moral concern. With the world on the brink of achieving the means to overcome want and misery, this potential is used, instead, to create the conditions for a new barbarism, or worse, total annihilation with nuclear weapons. Writing always with the backdrop of the Nazi extermination camps, Marcuse's sensibility is vigilant against the potential for human barbarism, and concerns itself with unearthing the structural and psychological causes of such horror.

It is this fear, I believe (and my view must remain speculation), that helps create the "one-dimensional" Marcuse, a theorist whose caricature of people is often so severe as to be contemptuous of any serious notion of human

liberation. This Marcuse does, of course, offer an ideal of liberation, which is itself so sweeping as to make one wonder whether it is not caused by profound lack of faith in what real people are capable of. It is almost as if the people Marcuse studies are so immune to moral sensibility that he must create new people to replace them.

The first two Marcuses fall, roughly, into the category I have called theorists of relative political mortification, while "one-dimensional" Marcuse puts forth a thesis of absolute political mortification. Many of Marcuse's most important propositions, in fact, straddle both camps, their residency often depending on the implication he draws, at the time, of their real meaning. The distinguishing characteristic is always this: when Marcuse argues that people can, in fact, become objects of the technical ensemble (and, again, not just treated as such), when he argues that subjectivity is, itself, being transcended, his concepts fill out a theory of absolute political mortification. For example, when he suggests that a fully functionalized language can, in fact, become the only language people speak, whether or not he believes this now to be the case, he fulfills this requirement. Fully credentialed one-dimensional people, it seems to me, would be in an complete state of absolute political

mortification.[140]

There is a further complication, in that Marcuse's work often embodies a curious mix of idealism and materialist determinism. At the extreme, consciousness seems fully determined by the requirements of the base of the technological infrastructure. At the same time, he seems to hold that there are forms of human reason and truth, centered on the rational use of human activity to pacify existence and extend libidinal gratification, that remain even while subjectivity is eclipsed. Moreover, there is the core of the human essence as Eros, which seems at once a "forgotten" (in the sense of totally repressed) ideal of human life, and a "material" substratum based in libidinal striving. The connection between libido as energy and Eros as a conceptual ideal that is repressed is not clearly spelled out, it seems to me, nor is it clear how Eros as an ideal can be maintained at any level of the human mind, if the ubiquitous onslaught of technological rationality Marcuse describes is possible.

I shall not attempt here to untangle all these elements of Marcuse's work, nor shall I explicitly try to ascertain precisely what elements fit most closely into which of the several versions of political mortification he offers. My purpose, in the forthcoming evaluation, will be

to discuss whether and in what way Marcuse's theory of apathy as a condition augments the discussion of political subordination developed by Mills and, indeed, the development of a conceptual map for explaining non-participation.

Before launching into this evaluation, let me summarize Marcuse's main points. Advanced industrial society (the American variety) is a decisive break from simple corporate capitalism, in that technological rationality is now both a central organizing principle and a legitimating force. Nevertheless, although the needs of technical development determine the policies of the society, sundering the independence of capitalists, society remains organized to maintain elite privilege.

The foremost problem presented to this repressive mode of organization is that it creates both the technical possibility of overcoming the need for alienated work <u>and</u> the need for ever-greater productivity and a repressive organization of society as a whole. It "solves" this problem by developing a social structure of containment, a one-dimensional language, a science and technology whose <u>telos</u> is, itself, domination, an ideology of technological rationality as a new legitimation and an unnecessarily represssive instinctual and character structure.

The repression developed in one-dimensional society

is, however, historically unique in that it both meets some basic needs of people and creates in people a fundamental need for the social system itself. People are satiated with privatized rewards and adapt in mimetic fashion to the needs of the technical ensemble. Their very instincts are harnessed, with aggressive energy feeding productivity and alienated labor and libidinal energy cathected onto objects of consumption. This mode of denying a primary release of instinctual energy, particularly aggression, creates an escalatory effect which further intensifies the need for productivity. Communism (and other "enemies") provides an effective and stabilizing release for this pent-up frustration and serves further to displace rivalry among capitalist powers and between the capitalist elite and the working class.

The decisive effect of one-dimensional society is to remove the present organization of science and technology as an immament critique of contemporary social relations and to fully integrate the working class, the classic Marxist agency of change, into advanced industrial society. If there is hope for transcendence, it must await the convergence of capitalist crisis and the political work of those imbued with the "new sensibility," largely the student population and the radical intelligentsia. Until such

time, the job of students and others not yet integrated, such as those populating the ghettoes, is to break thrugh the "repressive tolerance" that has choked off critical thought in American society.

Based on this summary, we can reproduce Marcuse's paradigm of apathy as a condition as follows:

> X (a mass, class or society) is in a condition of apathy with respect to Y (something enhancing human liberation) if X is no longer capable of caring about Y. A lack of ability to care involves being devoid of a language, an ideology, a character structure, or a social structure with a progressive dynamic that could provide an Archimedean point for critical reflection. At its most extreme, apathy devolves into absolute political mortification, in which human subjectivity itself is transcended. At its least extreme, it consists of apathetic individuals committed to a fundamentally apolitical ideology and psychologically manipulated into adaptation. I have called this relative political mortification.

Before moving on, let us note three divergences with Mills' paradigm of apathy as a condition. First, Marcuse's analysis really is about masses of people or whole societies and gives little consideration to particular groups and the reasons for their quiescence. Secondly, unlike the view of Mills, reform for its own sake generally plays little role in Marcuse's thinking, and there is little exhortation for elites or people in general to act responsibly. His standard of what people should care

about, therefore, seems usually to have full-scale liberation as its backdrop. Measured against such an exacting standard, one will surely find lots of apathetic people. Thirdly then, his analysis doesn't focus so much on whether people can care about something important, but rather on whether in mass society people have become incapable, perhaps permanently, of caring about liberation. This is, of course, partly why I have chosen to study his work. I now turn to evaluate his argument.

CHAPTER V

THE LIMITS OF INTEGRATION INTO "TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY"

Introduction

In this chapter, I shall crititically confront the thesis of "one dimensionality" examined in Chapter IV. The argument will be that Marcuse extends his conception of false-consciousness beyond any bounds that are reasonable and that his analysis of the eclipse of subjectivity is, itself, based on an impoverished subject. He thereby derives an overly functional view of why people acquiesce to political domination. This will be the focal point of the forthcoming critique. While there are aspects of Marcuse's analysis, which I have called relative political mortification, that will prove worthy of consideration, his stronger formulation of the one-dimensionality thesis remains unsubstantiated at best and possibly not credible in any case.

The critique of Marcuse is essential today. For in an era of mounting systems "dysfunctions," exploring the limits of the integrating capacity of technological rationality becomes increasingly important. Understanding these limits gives us, at the same time, important insights as to

how social systems may have to be legitimated in the future. Ironically, in evaluating Marcuse's "one-dimensionality" thesis, we are also asking: if society cannot be fully integrated in the way Marcuse presumes, where else is corporate capitalism likely to turn in its search for legitimation? I will turn to this question in the final chapter.

Evaluating Marcuse's Explanation of Non-Participation

With our study of Marcuse we have come, in a sense, full cycle from our opening discussion of Bernard Berelson's explanation of non-participation. The apathy that Berelson saw as the necessary condition for American democracy to continue is now viewed from a radical lens as a profound false-consciousness that stabilizes a "totalitarian" society immune to critical reflection. There is also a profound irony here, I shall argue; for Marcuse, like Berelson, errs decisively in both overstating the amount of apathy present and misconstruing the nature of what apathy does exist.

The irony is deepened when we consider that Marcuse would sharply criticize Berelson's analysis for failing to penetrate the appearance of apathy and contentment. Yet

there is a sense in which Marcuse duplicates Berelson's error, for with all the "depth" psychology employed by the critical theorist, he devotes virtually no thought to unearthing the complex of attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, fears and reasons that motivate the political behavior of real live human beings. Instead, like Berelson, he takes a snapshot of American people and develops his explanation from it. Moreover, Marcuse also exaggerates the stability of the socioeconomic system itself, although he does have a much more sophisticated understanding of the ingredients necessary to maintain that stability.

The differences between the critical theorist and the positivist are, of course, even more important. Underlying Berelson's analysis is a fairly simple concept of subjectivity, in which humans respond to their environment through a fairly straight-forward calculus of pleasure and pain. Participation in political life, then, is understandably limited in that it is not pleasurable, and this is implicitly justified because participation is not seen to have intrinsic value. Both human development through reason and activity and its obverse, false-consciousness of the real situation one is in, are ruled out at the start. Each agent, Berelson would have to argue, is fully capable of understanding the merits of participation and of the

political system. Any attempt to charge that agent with partial or false understanding would be undemocratic in politics and unscientific in inquiry.

Marcuse, of course, commits both sins and should be defended on both counts. Any social theory contains within it an idea of the parameters of human nature and how people are likely to act in specified situations. Each theory, when confronted with a dissident example, will explain the example in ways that protect the core of the theory. The explanation will often have the form of ascribing false-consciousness to the dissident. If people seek pleasure and if participation is rewarding only to the extent that it maintains a political system providing the goods to enhance contentment, how would Berelson explain a contented person who participated? If an important element of his thesis were that contentment leads to non-participation, to protect this core, he might suggest that the person isn't _really_ content, ascribing false-consciousness, or he would have to admit that sometimes contentment leads to participation (depending on other factors), weakening the thesis.

Such caveats, however, are an integral part of theorizing _per se_, and they do not by their appearance undermine a particular theory. If some motivations are not clear to an actor, if some structural arrangements are

imperfectly understood, if an actor's behavior does not correspond to his or her beliefs, if these are possibilities inherent in human action, then all theory should seek to explain human activity in terms that include but extend beyond the professed motivation of the actor. Because the connection between motivation, intention, understanding and action is complex, there is nothing improper or undemocratic about trying to discover the actual relationship that obtains. On the contrary, because democracy depends upon extending the capacity to reason, such intellectual activity is necessary for a democratic temper to exist in political theory.

It is, in fact, Marcuse's discussion of apathy as a condition, a form of false-consciousness, that contributes to our study by completing the conceptual map necessary for explaining non-participation. As I shall argue in the concluding chapter, neither the apathy related to choice of Berelson, nor the depoliticization based on rational decision described by Schattschneider, nor even the political subordination characterized by Mills, nor the combination of all these exhausts the possibilities. The question posed by Mills, "can men be made into cheerful and willing robots?" must be faced squarely, and Marcuse, to his credit, does so.

Yet, like Berelson, Marcuse's concept of subjectivity is itself flawed: this shortcoming ultimately brings down much of his theoretic enterprise in the explanation of quiescence. Berelson looks at the human subject, as it were, from the outside, finding creatures of relatively straightforward motivation who, taken together, constitute a system of individuals that appears to be defined by the sum of its parts. The combination of these individuals (who could be understood metaphorically as vectors) constitutes the social and political order. This concept of the human subject allows Berelson to understand his role as that of a scientist whose concepts and method are value neutral with respect to his object of inquiry: the unstated goal seems to be the study of the functional parts of the uncriticized whole suitable for the purpose of social control.

Marcuse is sharply critical of this type of technocratic consciousness with regard to political analysis, particularly because it severely distorts the amount of freedom now prevalent in society and grossly underestimates the capacity for liberation inherent in the human species. The subject whom Marcuse believes can exist, in fact, at times assumes mythological proportions, as Peter Cleckak points out, appearing here and there as Orpheus, Narcissus, and

even Prometheus.[1]

There is a fear, transparent in Marcuse's work, however, which I believe motivates his often vitriolic attack on positivism. For all the aesthetic sensibility Marcuse seems to believe people capable of, he is gravely concerned that technocratic consciousness can, through social manipulation, completely circumscribe human consciousness itself. Marcuse's anger at positivists is on the surface motivated by their role as ideological shills for an oppressive system, but his underlying fear is that people can become (and are rapidly becoming) identical to the objects of inquiry assumed by positivist theory. The technocratic project is most dangerous because people can conform to its requirements.[2] The eclipse of subjectivity Marcuse fears, then, occurs at precisely that moment when positivist theory becomes human practice.

The question must be asked: if the human subject, as Marcuse understands it, is capable of such sweeping liberation and rich sensibility, how is it that real live people can conform to the positivist ideal he despises? The answer, I believe, is that both Marcuse's utopia and negative utopia are burdened by a common and inadequate of subjectivity that ultimately undermines the core of the thesis of one dimensionality. There is a sadness to this

because, at the same time, Marcuse often provides rich insights as to how a society on the irrational road to holocaust can maintain the consent of what must remain its subjects.

The Impossible Thesis of Absolute Political Mortification

Marcuse's writing is often filled with what could be read critically as confusing and even contradictory assertions or sympathetically as sweeping imaginative insights. Both exist and ample literature exists detailing his virtues and flaws.[3]

I will focus here on the several types of explanations of non-participation Marcuse offers, rather than attempt to disentangle and analyze the full range of his theorizing. My departure point is his thesis of "one dimensionality" taken seriously and literally as a vision of absolute political mortification.

There is little doubt that while Marcuse hedges on his thesis, at the very least it comprises an important element in One Dimensional Man. Morton Schoolman takes this thesis so seriously that he calls his book on Marcuse The Imaginary Witness: when society becomes truly one-dimensional, who would be left to observe this fact? Human subjectivity, as

we understand it, would have been transcended. After all, Marcuse does write that alienation:

> . . . has become entirely objective; the subject which is alienated is swallowed up by its alienated existence. There is only one dimension, and it is everywhere and in all forms. The achievements of progress defy ideological indictment as well as justification; before their tribunal, the "false consciousness" of their rationality becomes the true consciousness.[4]

Taken to its extreme, for Marcuse, people can become objects in the technological ensemble. At the very best, if they retained any subjectivity, it would be so removed from their practical capability that they would be indefinitely incapable of comprehending their situation.

In either case, I believe that Marcuse's concept of subjectivity is a radical departure from that of Karl Marx and that Marx provides a vantage point from which to criticize Marcuse. For Marx, alienation is objective in that it refers to more than a state of mind, fostered as it is by an objective social structure at a particular point in history. Alienation, however, is dependent upon the active recreation of the alienated structures and roles by human subjects. Alienation is, therefore, objective and subjects become objectified, but they never, in any sense, become objects.

For Marx, the hallmark of human existence and potential is the characteristic of praxis, understood as "sen-

suous human activity." The existence of such activity is essential for Marx's concept of alienation; we see this in various places throughout his work. Early on, Marx borrows the "transformative method" from Feuerbach to criticize G. W. F. Hegel for inverting the subject-predicate relation: "It is important that Hegel always converts the Idea into the subject and the particular actual subject, such as 'political sentiment,' into the predicate." For Marx, Geist (as false-consciousness) is the product of real live subjects, predicated on their activity, and, I believe technological rationality would also remain predicated in the same way. Marx should reject Marcuse's view when it comes close to asserting that technological rationality is supplanting human consciousness itself.

Later, Marx develops a greater appreciation for the seeds of an adequate notion of praxis within Hegel's work. About Hegel's Phenomenology, Marx now asserts:

> . . . Hegel grasps the self-development of man as a process, objectification as loss of the object, as alienation and transcendence of this alienation; that he thus grasps the nature of work and comprehends objective man, authentic because actual, as the result of his own work. The actual active relation of man to himself as a species-being or the confirmation of his species-being as an actual, that is, human, being is only possible so far as he actually brings forth all his species-powers which in turn is only possible through the collective effort of mankind, only as the result of history--and treats them as objects, something which is again only possible

in the form of alienation.[5]

Species-life needs to be developed, therefore, but it is already characterized by work and exists "in the form of alienation." Alienation limits people from fulfilling their species-nature, but it is predicated on alienated people-as-praxis.

Finally, in the famous passage in Capital:

> We pre-suppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. . . . He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realises a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will.[6]

For Marx, people do this even while alienated and while misunderstanding the social relations dominating their labor and the real purposes of their actions. Nevertheless, it is fair to say, the essential characteristic of alienated labor would never be the "mimetic" adjustment to a technical process that Marcuse describes. For Marx, the basis upon which any future liberation depends is the complex of intention, action, purposes and willpower that presently exists in work, no matter how alienated, and these constitute the core of human activity as such. Work may be boring, habitual, scientifically

managed, and indeed programmed, but it always remains the activity of human subjects. From the outside, and Marcuse looks at them this way, workers may appear to be drones and may even think of themselves as such, but at the core, they bear essential resemblance to the architect and no resemblance to the bee.

In response, Marcuse might argue that the above analysis does not take into account the prevasive impact of science and technology that exists today, in contrast with the period when Marx wrote. Marcuse does, in fact, criticize Marx for "undervaluing" their effect on "man's being and consciousness," and this is embodied most decisively in Marcuse's claim that "by virtue of the way it has organized its technological base, society tends to be totalitarian."[7]

This argument fails, however, in that it avoids the essential issue raised. For Marx, ideology was always necessary to fool people, while for Marcuse (in his theory of absolute political mortification), ideology in Marx's sense is obsolete. Morton Schoolman captures this essential distinction between the two writers when he claims:

> The reciprocal relationship of base and superstructure as was conceived by Marx is altered by Marcuse decisively in favor of an all-pervasive and all-determining material basis encroaching

> upon, manipulating, and coordinating ideology until there ceases to be any difference between base and superstructure, ideology and reality, subject and object.[8]

If this assessment is true of Marcuse, his claim that Marx "undervalues" science and technology can be true and remain irrelevant to this discussion. It is not how much impact technics has that is essential but what kind of impact. The argument here is that it cannot turn people into mere objective reflections of the technical base. Nor can Marcuse sidestep this criticism by suggesting, as he does at the beginning of One Dimensional Man, that he is only elucidating tendencies. This is also beside the point because I am denying that they can even be tendencies, since the end result is not possible.

Schoolman provides an excellent illustration to support these claims against Marcuse. In reviewing the literature of industrial psychology, he finds since the mid-fifties an increasing acknowledgment that workers are more complex than allowed for in the models of Frederick Taylor and Elton Mayo. If the original techniques of industrial management were not very successful, they were now obsolete, replaced by "job rotation," "job enlargement," "participative management," "work teams," "human relations training," "sensitivity training," "job enrichment," "encounter groups" and even Eastern philosophy.

These were developed to take into account the complex rationality and emotional needs of workers, who were suffering from a variety of maladies stemming from rationalization of the workplace, ranging from frustration, meaninglessness of work, psychological failure, reduced output and errors, to putting off difficult decisions, daydreaming, impatience and aggression. White-collar workers were also suspected of suffering from similar ills. "Personality and organization" theory emphasized techniques that would enhance the "growth needs" and "self-realization" of white-collar workers throughout the organizational hierarchy.

Schoolman claims, and I think he is right, that Marcuse would explain these developments as a logical extension of the methods of Frederick Taylor and Elton Mayo, whose "substance and function has remained the same": increasing rationalization at work brings with it increasing rationalization of the human mind to conform with the work process. There is, however, a better explanation, argues Schoolman, in that the very proliferation of such techniques indicates their <u>failure</u> rather than their success. If human "irrationality" of the type suggested above results from the increasing rationalization of work, there may exist a fundamental "contradiction between human

nature and the nature of work in a technoligical society":

> What this suggests is that the increasing rationalization of production results not in more extensive domination but in increasing resistance to domination. Technological domination may therefore reach its limits long before total rationalization has been consummated, and at the highest stages of rationalization this process may be sowing the seeds for its reversal.[9]

Let me now state the case somewhat differently than Schoolman does. Viewed from Marcuse's perspective, the list of industrial psychology techniques would be seen as technical adjustments of the system toward increasing rationalization. These would be effective because they increase the worker's immediate satisfaction, thereby enhancing motivation and productivity. Ultimately the worker is so well integrated, he or she becomes indistinguishable from the apparatus itself. In these assumptions, Marcuse differs little from functionalist industrial psychologists themselves.

This line of thought, however, has no less a critic than Thomas Fitzgerald, who, as director of employee research and training at Chevrolet of General Motors, wrote an article in The Harvard Business Review (1971) to warn management against these techniques. For one thing, he argued, programs such as "job enlargement" would wear thin, requiring continuously developing new techniques. More importantly, should more meaningful reform be intitiated,

such as "worker participation," it could get out of hand and challenge the prerogatives of management:

> Once competence is shown (or believed to be shown) in, say, rearranging the work area, and after participation has become a conscious, officially sponsored activity, participators may well want to go on to topics of job assignment, the allocation of rewards, or even the selection of leadership. In other words, management's present monopoly--on initiating participation, on the nomination of conferees, and on the limitation of legitimate areas for review--can itself easily become a source of contention.

Fitzgerald, with greater awareness of the politics of the workplace than Marcuse, bluntly states: "History does not offer many examples of oligarchies that have abdicated with grace or goodwill." For his part, none of the industrial psychology "reforms" listed can replace the old-fashioned work ethic, now departed. They either will fail to adequately address the motivation problem or lead to demands for actual structural reform threatening the system itself.[10]

Reinstating subjectivity (even without full political consciousness) back into the worker, we now find that the techniques of ever-greater integration Marcuse fears may either fail to integrate the worker or themselves spark more radical demands. In the end, as Schoolman claims: "Technological rationality is frustrated by the rationality of subjectivity."[11] We must wonder, therefore, if

technological rationality cannot fully impose its will at the closest point to the "technological base," the workplace itself, how can it extend its grasp in the way Marcuse claims, out into the political culture itself?

Subjectivity and the dimensions of language

The argument presented so far is that technological rationality cannot completely circumscribe consciousness in any sphere of human interaction. I have already counterposed Marx's conception of false consciousness and *praxis* to that of Marcuse and found the latter wanting. Moreover, the examples drawn from industrial psychology seem to indicate a practical limit to the extent to which humans can be expected to adapt to a technical ensemble.

Marcuse's discussion of "one-dimensional language" is an attempt to show how technological rationality, through the medium of language, abets mimetic adjustment to advanced industrial society. If such a language does not and cannot exist as the only medium of human "discourse," however, this would also severely undermine Marcuse's thesis. Is this the case?

If we recall Marcuse's notion of liberation, we find the quest for a qualitatively new science, free of domination and the *telos* of control over nature. Such a science

would also require methods, concepts and, indeed, a language fundamentally different from that now utilized by science. The present scientific language, for Marcuse, is the form of the contemporary language of domination.

Jurgen Habermas critically confronts Marcuse's view on the relation of science and liberation. He argues that there can be no qualitatively "new" science, if newness means anything fundamentally different than the instrumental control over nature through purposive-rational action. If this is true, the search for emancipation cannot depend on a new science as the basis of human interaction. For Habermas, liberation depends, instead, on several moments in the historical dialectic: work as instrumental control over nature through purposive-rational action and technical rules; interaction dependent on conventions and norms regulating conduct; and discourse which can call into question doubtful norms or conventions, including the uses to which science is put but not the project of technical control itself as an aspect of human endeavor. Behind the idea of discourse stands the ideal of undistorted communication which reveals, for Habermas, a human "emancipatory interest" as such.

We can extend this argument to suggest that while instrumental control over nature remains a <u>partner</u> in the

quest for liberation, rationality cannot completely circumscribe human consciousness, although it can provide an ideology that distorts this reflection, even for a critical theorist:

> . . . with the institutionalization of scientific-technical progress, the potential of the productive forces has assumed a form owing to which men lose consciousness of the dualism of work and interaction. . . . The increase in adaptive behavior is, however, only the obverse of the dissolution of linguistically mediated interaction. This is paralleled subjectively by the disappearance of the difference between purposive-rational action and interaction from the consciousness not only of the sciences of man, but of men themselves. The concealment of this difference proves the ideological power of the technocratic consciousness.[12]

Habermas is extremely concerned about how far systems of purposive-rational action can go in their ability to dominate institutions and "detach" communicative action as the basis for human consciousness: "today the psychotechnic manipulation of behavior can already liquidate the old fashioned detour through norms that are internalized but capable of reflection." Tomorrow "biotechnic intervention in the endocrine regulating system," or in genetic transmission itself could potentially "completely dry up" "old regions of consciousness developed in ordinary language communication." He remains unsure but these considerations draw out, in his view, the underlying model of the ideology of technological rationality. Furthermore, they urgently

press us to recognize the distinction between the language of work and that of interaction, because it is only by penetrating the ideology of technological rationality by "removing the restrictions on comunication" in the sphere of interaction, that we can use the developing technology in the interest of emancipation--and stave off the vague possibility of total technological domination.

I should like to state the case somewhat more strongly in reference to Marcuse. Complete domination of technological rationality could not result from the type of social control he suggests, although we will here leave it as an open question as to whether the negative utopia Habermas warns of is at all possible. Further, if it would be possible to achieve total operant conditioning, I conclude, this would constitute a fundamental and decisive change in the evolution of the human species. Post-history in this sense would clearly mean that human beings, as we now understand that term, would cease to exist. Moreover, a decisive examination of this potential would not only include the question of whether it is feasible to complete such widespread conditioning, but also whether, in fact, conditioning of this sort would completely eliminate from the "mind" the potential of human interaction and discourse.

In any case, the examples of technological domination

of consciousness that Marcuse offers fall far short of even beginning to establish this possibility. The evidence Marcuse offers is paltry, to say the least, and at times smacks of the most superficial behavioralism: the behavior of the American people conforms (appears to conform) to the needs of the technological apparatus, therefore, people are presumed to be becoming one-dimensional. How does he know? To put it bluntly, Marcuse provides little evidence to support the thesis that absolute political mortification is possible. The evidence he does supply consists largely of superficial descriptions even of behavior (e.g., mimesis), virtually no analysis of the process of subjectivity that lies behind the appearance of adaptation, a highly speculative psychology, and an untenable thesis of one-dimensional language.

One-dimensional language?

Those who believe that the moral concern which prompted Marcuse's thesis of one-dimensional language is now behind us only need to listen to any press conference in which President Reagan defends what he calls the "Peacemaker." The President is, of course, referring to the MX missile and it is this type of bastardization of language that worried Marcuse so. A similar example, it will be

recalled, occured when President Nixon's press secretary Ronald Ziegler termed as "inoperative" a previous statement on Watergate by the President, a statement that was actually a lie. This use of language, however, condemnable, does not constitute the basis for one-dimensional language.

Marcuse claims that there is a tendency to define basic concepts in functional terms and then to operationalize these definitions. Taken to its logical conclusion, a completely functional language could be developed in which people would follow the rules of closed predefined concepts, immune to reflection. If this occurred, people would be following essentially technical rules of behavior; and their behavior would, indeed, become lawlike. Systems theory, it would appear, would become the theory and practice of society, although presumably there would be no subjects left to use it as a theory.

In no significant way does Marcuse establish this case. Let us recall an extreme example he gives in which ordinary language is manipulated to incorporate the equation, "preparing for war is preparing for peace." Here Marcuse is claiming both that a fundamental concept, peace (or war, for that matter), is being functionally redefined to preserve the going order, and that this radical redefinition conflates dialectically opposite terms. He is wrong

on both counts.

To the extent that people accept the locution "preparing for war is preparing for peace," they do so because they retain an implicit distinction between war and peace. Their agreement, instead, is predicated in the acceptance of a theory of how one can best deter war, in this case, by "strengthening" a nation militarily so that it will not be challenged. Munich is the contrast model here. Of course, we can object to this theory and claim, for example, that such war preparations are well beyond what is necessary for strength, or perhaps some would argue that pacifism, particularly in a nuclear age, is a more assured route to peace. But these objections would not be arguments demonstrating that the distinction has collapsed, for our claim is that we are engaging in unnecessary or extremely dangerous preparation, or in truth preparing for an imminent war. Ronald Reagan's preparation for war may appear to us to be insane, but his use of the "Peacemaker" as the name for the MX missile is not, strictly speaking, illogical. If he secretly intends to use it in a "first strike," he would be lying, it will now appear, to those whom he has manipulated into accepting his deterrence theory. If, in fact, he has lost the distinction between the concepts war and peace, he would actually be insane in

a critical respect. But those sane people who agree with his usage, whether honest or dishonest, do so based on an implicit distinction they hold between the terms war and peace in their understanding of the name "Peacemaker."

Marcuse needs to show, instead, that the term "peace" is now fully defined by the term "war," as in "war is peace." This he has not done and cannot do. For if the term "war is peace" did not remain a contradiction in our language, we would have not a one-dimensional society but an insane society. Schizophrenics, for example, at times develop insane languages on this model to cope with an unbearable reality.

Marcuse could intelligibly claim that pushing the locution "preparing for war is preparing for peace" too far is dangerous for human survival and ultimately could undermine important aspects of coherence in our language, adding to the danger. If such usage were manipulated by elites, it could sow mass confusion, allowing war preparation to continue. If the confusion spread to elites, we would have a society in complete interpretive breakdown, in an important sense the opposite of a one-dimensional society. As the breakdown of coherence progressed in an age of nuclear weapons, the survival of the society would clearly itself be threatened. People would become dangerous to themselves

and others in precisely the same way as certain mental patients are. This is the real danger posed by terms like "Peacemaker." But a mass insane asylum is not a one-dimensional society.

If opposite terms cannot be collapsed with the result Marcuse envisions, can all important terms be functionally defined and can this constellation of terms constitute the sum of rules for human behavior? Marcuse criticizes positivist social scientists for defining democracy in terms of the criteria they presume characterize the contemporary American political system. Taken together, these constitute the operational definition of the term. His deeper fear is that, first, terms like "democracy" can, in fact, be defined in this way and that, secondly, all important normative concepts can thereby be rendered functional becoming essentially technical terms. The first point could be true only if we conceived of operationalization in the highly qualified sense of stipulating a limited set of relatively self-contained defining terms, but this approach, if widely adopted, would severely undermine the importance of the concept. His second concern remains unfounded.

"Democracy" is what has been called an "essentially contested concept" in that it carries moral approbation in

general and is therefore sought as the imprimatur for a variety of social systems. Each conception of democracy, however, carries with it certain assumptions about political anthropology, socioeconomic organization, and how other important terms such as "freedom" and "justice" are to be filled out. "Democracy" is, then, a term which helps constitute a way of life that sets the context for human intention, purposes, thought and action. If "democracy" were to be "operationally" defined in the above sense, it would at once lose its ideological power: confined to a discrete set of "operations," it would no longer be an important context for human interaction, now only tangentially related to the important terms that do set the context. It would be reduced to a quasitechnical term. Marcuse, then, is right in criticizing positivists for uncritically equating democracy with certain practices in U.S. political life, but wrong in assuming that if democracy could actually be reduced to this scope, it would remain an important concept.

The real ideological power of positivist redefinitions of democracy is that they trade on our ordinary usage of the term, which carries an implicit understanding of it as crucial in constituting a desired way of organizing political life. Operationalizing the term would, therefore,

either cut it off from any significant relation to concepts like "freedom" and "justice," or similarly reduce the importance of these terms by operationalizing them as well. Moreover, the operational criteria of democracy, such as elections, would also have to be given discrete definitions. All these would have to be reduced, essentially to quasi-technical terms and, as such, they would provide little ideological purchase. On the contrary, what is pernicious about the project of positivists, then, is not that they will successfully operationalize the concept, but that they are likely to only partially re-define it, retaining much of its moral imprimatur and ideological power.

Can language consisting solely of functional technical terms be established? Let us now contrast "democracy" with a technical concept, whose operational criteria can be specified. Let us define "boiling water" as a condition that obtains when water reaches a temperature of 212° F at sea-level atmospheric pressure. We have now stipulated sufficient criteria for the definition of the concept: when water is heated to 212°F under atmospheric pressure, it boils changing from the liquid to the gas state. We notice immediately that the concept "boiling water" entails other concepts, whose definition would entail others still,

such as temperature, molecules, etc. What begins as a simple operational definition, then, soon becomes more complex. This is unimportant, however, for the point of the term "boiling water" only is to stipulate a condition that exists with a certain mixture of heat, water and atmospheric pressure. "Boiling water" differs from the term "democracy" in that there is nothing within the rules we follow to apply the concept that tells us anything about its use or why one would ever, in fact, boil water. On the other hand, democracy and the concepts it is tied to themselves entail reasons for their own application.

Let us contrast a hypothetical society in which a bubbling underground spring is viewed as a gift of the gods with our own in the age of nuclear power plants where technicians are charged with the job of boiling water with the heat of nuclear fission. In the former, water boils but "boiling water" does not exist as a technical term. To the extent that it exists at all, it is a religious concept. In the latter, technicians follow rules to control nature for an intended result, the production of electricity to light and heat homes and provide power for machinery. However, the concept and the rules to realize it only make sense in a social context that is able to apprehend the concept and its criteria and has established

the purpose in doing so. The latter appraisal is dependent upon norms of behavior and reflections on these norms as to how to live. These judgments cannot be reduced to technical rules, although technical requirements may enter into the judgment. A society may be short on energy and choose not to use nuclear power because of insoluble problems with the technology. The closer the "technical" problems come to threatening important norms or values, the stronger they become as reasons for a course of action: in this case, life itself may be threatened. However, technical rules themselves cannot establish their own ultimate value or purposes: they remain dependent upon the sphere of communicative discourse to establish the meaning of the social practices they help constitute.

Yet it is this sphere that Marcuse fears can be completely circumscribed from human consciousness. If the above argument is correct, however, this cannot be possible (short of the unlikely and perhaps impossible negative utopia Habermas describes) because technical rules by themselves do not motivate behavior. And if the technical rules derived from the law-like behavior of physical properties cannot be meaningfully detached to stand independently from communicative discourse, then we would expect the rules governing "purposive-rational" behavior in

social systems also to be incapable of such detachment.

In fact, this is the case. The "technical" rules governing the concept "pricing" in a market economy may be derived by studying the relationship between supply and demand. As long as the economy remained a free market economy, and as long as this relationship is not reflected on, or is reflected on and accepted, it would indeed help predict pricing behavior. Now suppose shortages develop in food products while there is an abundant supply of automobiles. Such a development could help call into question an important normative underpinning for market economies--the efficient use of resources to provide the greatest good for the greatest number. Government could in this case decide to subsidize the increased production of food through a tax on automobiles. In the short run, as production of food increased, its price would drop and more and more people would eat. The system would be adjusted by human intervention through government into the pricing mechanism that is partly justified by an important norm of market theory itself. Without understanding this modification and the reason for it, the new pricing systen would be unintelligible. It is decisive, however, that the alteration of the "technical" rules governing pricing can develop out of an immanent critique of the market theory of which pricing is

a conceptual component. "Technical" terms like "pricing" bear a more immediate relationship to the norms and values implicit in communication than do terms like "boiling water."

For Marcuse to fully develop the thesis of one-dimensional language, therefore, he would have to reveal a fully enclosed "systems language," in which all concepts are defined by discrete operational requirements: "subjects" would be defined by a closed set of predicates; verbs would "describe" movement not human action; with the sundering of human "purposes," the relation between "subjects" and "objects" would be altered, as the opposite terms merge. It might take the form when W (water) is subjected to X (212°) and Y (sea-level pressure) then Z (water boils). Of course, it would not be a language at all but a set of lawlike statements of precisely the same character as those that stipulate the conditions under which the concept "boiling water" is operational.

Technical language cannot exist on its own because it is dependent on the language of human interaction to discover the laws that would form the basis for its rules and on human subjects to follow those rules for some purpose, in part, removed from the rules themselves. "Subjects" following <u>only</u> technical rules would, in fact,

be objects determined by laws--a truly one-dimensional language would signal the end of the human race as we now know it.

Up till now the discussion has been a bit unkind to Marcuse because it has not acknowledged his own ambivalence about how far one-dimensional language has developed. Referring to one-dimensional language, he remarks that "people don't believe it, or don't care, and yet act accordingly." There appears to be for Marcuse a remaining critical potential to language exhibited in slang, colloquial speech and the depth layers of Karl Krauss discussed earlier in Chapter IV. Marcuse, therefore, maintains that it is possible to "make the established language itself speak what it conceals or excludes, for what is to be revealed and denounced is [still] operative within the universe of discourse and action." However, Marcuse also maintains that the universe of discourse is "closed" and that ordinary usage is stuck within the "straightjacket of common usage," which is a "totally manipulated and indoctrinate universe." Can this contradiction be resolved?

Morton Schoolman resolves it, I think correctly, in the following way. While Marcuse stresses the importance of understanding the "social context" in which ideological language develops, he "fails to push the notion of social

context to a concept of an intersubjectively constituted context of meaning":

> For Marcuse, social context appears to mean social structures or political institutions that create ideological meanings completely independent of the language and meaning constituted by the activity of the society's members. . . . It is as though the individual comes to know two entirely different languages, one constituted intersubjectively and the other structurally determined, neither of which can be understood in the least in the other's terms. Only such a structural theory of the formation of the "prevailing universe of discourse" could explain how ideological meanings are closed to critical perspectives.[13]

Therefore, if ideologically distorted ordinary language does not emanate from, and, in fact, exists independently of the depth layers of language that do develop within human practice, the individual has no critical purchase within speech to uncover the distortion. Extending Schoolman's argument, if such a separation can occur and technological rationality can independently motivate behavior, there is nothing in principle to stop the functional language of the technical base from eventually eroding that subjectivity now still revealed by language's "depth layer." As systems of purposive-rational action extended their grip on society, the need to define a way of life through norms and values would recede, and the ideology of technological rationality would completely

circumscribe "consciousness," which would by now be reduced to functional behavior. The end result would truly be "one-dimensional man." But it is precisely this idea of a one-dimensional language of technical rules removed from the intersubjectively established language of human practice that we have challenged. If this separation is not discarded, then Marcuse's thesis is implausible; if it is discarded, then his case is fraught with contradictions. In either case, the thesis of one-dimensional language as evidence for absolute political mortification is undermined.

Nor, once again, can this objection be avoided by claiming the domination of technological rationality is only a "tendency," for it is the plausibility of the end result that I am questioning. In fact, disclaimers of this kind would only heighten the suspicion that Marcuse does believe fully that "one-dimensional language" is a plausible outcome of advanced industrial society. What began, then, as an apparently unkind discussion of Marcuse's language theory is now revealed as a straightforward attempt to draw out its underlying assumptions.

Real people and false-consciousness

In his discussion of the world of ordinary language and how analytic philosophy itself becomes ideological,

Marcuse argues:

> In one way or another, all possibly meaningful predicates are prejudged. The prejudging judgment might be as broad as the English language, or the dictionary, or some other code or convention. Once accepted, it constitutes an empirical a priori which cannot be transcended.
>
> But this radical acceptance of the empirical [by ordinary language philosophers] violates the empirical, for in it speaks the mutilated, "abstract" individual who experiences (and expresses) only that which is given to him (given in a literal sense), who has only the facts and not the factors, whose behavior is one-dimensional and manipulated. By virtue of the factual repression, the experienced world is the result of a restricted experience, and the positivist cleaning of the mind brings the mind in line with the restricted experience.[14]

We must now ask, how can Marcuse conclude that the "English language" can become an "empirical a priori" that becomes a weapon for the "positivist cleaning of the mind"? Part of the answer has already been given. If language can be conceived, as Marcuse believes it can, as a one-dimensional universe of terms that mirror only the "positive" technological universe, consisting of closed "operational" definitions of what become essentially "technical" terms, of a series of terms that cannot contradict one another, then the mind must be an essentially inactive receptacle that is "given" thought from the outside.

It is apparent by now that the origin of "one-dimen-

sional" thought is, in some unspecified way, the technical base. The character of the mind and, indeed, of human subjectivity is presently determined not by its own logic, nor even by a dialectical relation between the human subject and the objectified technological universe, but by the logic of technics itself.[15] Thought processes mirror, and not just metaphorically, the needs of advanced industrial society and the "person" incorporates them as his or her own.

Now this is, of course, a negative-utopia for Marcuse--not the desired state of affairs. Yet this fact cannot save Marcuse from the argument advanced here, that his concept of mind, and of human subjectivity itself, is essentially one-dimensional. For the type of transformation that people would have to make, from two-dimensional action to one-dimensional behavior, is so radical that it would be tantamount to creating objects out of subjects. I shall soon ask, does Marcuse's view of psychology and liberation significantly mitigate the force of the questions I have raised?

First let me ask a question. Marcuse's analysis of contemporary society has been valuable for this study because it attempts to examine, in stark fashion, how people may be conditioned not to engage in political thought

and action or to engage only in uncritical political thinking and mimetic activity. We have defended him against methodological and political charges on the issue of whether false-consciousness is an illicit concept and criticized him for extending his argument well beyond any reasonable concept of false-consciousness. Is there a contrast-model that retains the importance of Marcuse's attempt to conceptualize the role of false-consciousness in the study of depoliticization, while avoiding his errors?

Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb criticize writers of both the left and right for too glibly accepting the idea that economic rewards are a sufficient motivation for the integration of workers into an industrialized society. They title their 1972 book The Hidden Injuries of Class, because in their study of the beliefs, aspirations, and motivations of workers, they find a far more complex relation between the appearance of worker integration and the reality of emotional damage in a class society. Even those workers who have made it into "middle class" American life, they argue, are far from content with their achievements.

Sennett and Cobb's work is a powerful indictment of writers such as Marcuse, who profess to analyze consciousness without seriously considering both the actual beliefs that workers hold and the active role of the workers in

helping create those beliefs. How would Marcuse, the authors might ask, explain the feelings of someone like Frank Rissarro, who has climbed the ladder from the factory into the "white-collar" world but does not feel his new work is worthwhile when compared to jobs that produce useful things? Yet he has climbed this ladder to gain respect and personal dignity. Or Frank O'Malley, who understands that success and respect require advancement over one's fellows, and that such advancement erodes fraternity, the respect of others, and ultimately self-respect. Sennett and Cobb unearth a rich complex of aspirations, attitudes and beliefs that, taken together, constitute the "internalizing of class conflict, the process by which struggle between men leads to struggle within each man."[16]

In sharp contrast with Marcuse, the authors argue that class conflict is, indeed, not dead, but that it must be studied in relation to specific aspects of ideology, cultural background, intergenerational differences, specific work and even personal circumstances. Taken together, they do find important common themes in the responses of those they interview. American workers define their self-worth in terms of ability to succeed, educational accomplishment, personal sacrifice, and freedom. Yet they are caught in

binds at every turn. They are "free" to advance, but if they do, they sacrifice fraternity and respect, and if they don't, they risk their dignity. They want their children's lot to be better than their own and they will sacrifice for this goal. But when their children become educated, workers may feel betrayed by the status distinction that has now been insinuated into their family, are ambivalent about the kind of work their children will do and are often resented by their children who never asked for the sacrifice in the first place. In order to maintain dignity and respect, they judge themselves and others, yet they don't feel qualified to judge. They feel anxious and often guilt-ridden about their lives and blame themselves for these feelings--"if only I had worked harder," "made use of that education," "sacrificed more." Whether they succeed or not, they often feel as if they have failed and <u>they blame themselves</u> for their failure.

Consider now the passivity of men such as these in this light. Rissarro has achieved much of what he considers the "good things" in life, yet after superficial declarations of satisfaction, the doubt shows. Rissarro <u>views himself</u> on the receiving end of the good things, a passive agent who is not the cause of even his own success: "I was just at the right place at the right

time." Far from being a disclaimer of modesty, what Rissarro's comment reveals is a man who feels he doesn't belong in the world he now inhabits, as an outsider intruding on the middle class, illegitimate in his new situation and undeserving of respect. He explains his achievements to himself as luck--the intervention of an outside force. To explain it as achievement would be to respect himself, but he is not confident of his dignity. Yet he wants respect and so he continues to judge himself and others in a social situation that will only reconfirm his doubt.

Rissarro's comprehension of himself as a passive agent, however, is a far cry from adaptation to a mimetic process. In fact, it is his <u>active struggle</u> for identity and respect which is crucial in turning the blame for his situation not on society or on a class structure, but <u>on himself</u>. Indeed, if he weren't such an <u>active</u>, self-blaming judge, he might be more willing to listen to theorists like Marcuse. Sennett and Cobb report:

> The examples we have so far given of assertion of individual ability in families point to three general results of such assertion: the search for respect is thwarted; the individual feels personally responsible for the failure; the whole attempt accustoms him to think that to have individual respect you must have social inequality.[17]

Sennett and Cobb capture the sociological significance of John Schaar's critique of equal opportunity as ideology. When it totally circimscribes identity development within the countours of achievement ideology, equal opportunity is hostile to equality, community and self-respect. The result is not contentment but deep personal injury, most intense for those strivers of ethnic and class backgrounds whose status is insecure in America to start with.

While the analysis of writers like Sennett and Cobb is a healthy antidote to superficial studies of consciousness, it exaggerates the sufficiency of studying the beliefs and the self-interpretation of the agent in the explanation of his or her actions. Most of us only imperfectly know why we do what we do. While the explanation of behavior surely must include the beliefs of the participants, those beliefs sometimes constitute a partial or even false understanding of the real situation the agent is in.

A fuller accounting must include both the structural constraints on action and beliefs and the unconscious and semiconscious motives of the participant. A white worker may hate Blacks and join the Ku Klux Klan because he believes Blacks to be welfare cheaters. While we can always ask, "Do you really hate Blacks for this reason?" we can

accept the self-assertion at some point and still conclude that this belief is not the real reason, while it is certainly the reason he gives. We may say that the real reason is that he is part of a racist labor market in which he sees Blacks shuttling continuously between menial jobs and state dependency for survival or that the white worker has suppressed fears about his own adequacy or discontent as a worker and projects them onto the most available target. In the investigation of human behavior, we must always ask if the beliefs of the participant accurately capture the situation he or she is in. In doing so, we distinguish between the immediate unreflective motivation for action and the underlying constraining factors.

Moreover, the self-interpretation of the agent may itself not only result from structural and psychological constraints but contribute to them. I may work in a society in which work is unsatisfying, organized instrumentally, complemented with an ideology of achievement, and preserve my self-respect by believing that I do what I do so that my children will prosper. I see young middle-class radicals criticizing the kind of work I am forced to do and rejecting the type of life I want for my children. To maintain my identity, I <u>suppress</u> my doubts about my work

and life and explain the behavior of the radicals as utopian or adolescent. I, therefore, reject a potential alliance that might help me explain the constraints on my worklife, thereby strengthening those constraints through my active recreation of the ideology of achievement into, first, the ideology of sacrifice, and secondly, my maintenance of the ideology in the face of challenge.[18] From the point of view of my position in the labor market, I adapt an important aspect of dominant ideology to my situation, reject alternatives, suppress doubts, close off new ways to understand my situation, and shore up the factors that constrain me in my position, now under radical attack. My "self-creation" can end up as self-deception and even irrationality, and the fact that I help do it can strengthen the deception.

Moreover, were I to accept the position of the radicals, I would find important institutions such as my labor union arrayed against me, constrained by a corporate economy to favor pay incentives over redefinitions of work. Should I be elected president of my union, I would find that our new program would itself be in a bind. Advancing it might incur plant closings, while retreating from it would undermine the legitimacy of the "new" institution I have helped create, and undermine worker motivation as

well. If my program became one of full worker's control over production, it would find itself in contradiction with capitalist prerogatives of control over the workplace, and perhaps be repressed. To be successful, my program would have to generate substantial refashioned institutional support to create pressures for structural change within capitalism. Perhaps my work would be successful enough to throw American capitalism into a bind; to allow it to continue would threaten investment strikes and underproduction, while to repress it would undermine worker motivation and productivity and threaten revolution.

Having successfully created institutional pressures for change, other workers like me would now have an opportunity to work under self-managed industries. Seeing that work can be more satisfying than they had imagined, the need would lessen for them to maintain the ideology of sacrifice in the face of counter-evidence as to its desirability. The bind they were formerly in between rejecting an ideology vital to their self-respect and rejecting constituencies with whom they could align would now loosen its hold. Released doubts would now lessen their anxiety and strengthen their resolve to struggle for a better life. They would believe they can change their life <u>and</u> have a structural opening for such change to be feasible.

Surely, then, Sennett and Cobb are right in suggesting that ideology is not simply imposed on workers, and Marcuse is wrong in assuming that it conditions them in the way he says. Of course, people do not simply create ideology to meet their life situation, for the ideology they commit themselves to is itself constrained by social structure and institutional arrangements, closing off other avenues for thought and action and fostering suppression of doubts. And such institutional complexes cannot be easily discarded as they provide, however unfairly or imperfectly, basic needs of food, shelter, and security for many people, as well as rooting identity and belief. It is, then, this complex of attitudes, beliefs, needs, programs for action, institutions, and social systems that, taken together, constitute a truly dialectical relationship between the active agent establishing meaning in his or her life and the social structure that both constrains and enables the agent to think and act. The struggle for self-consciousness is nothing less than the struggle to overcome the false and partial understanding about one's real situation and make this dialectic as transparent as possible. Simplistic and exaggerated theories of false-consciousness must be decisively rejected, for they undermine, at the same time, the quest for adequate explanations of action

and the quest for freedom itself.

Marcuse's Freud and subjectivity

In the above discussion, I have argued that Marcuse's account of subjectivity itself at times tends to be one-dimensional, thereby fundamentally misconstruing the nature of false-consciousness in political life. To this Marcuse might respond that while reasonable people can disagree about the degree of adaptation that has been reached or is likely to be reached, he too believes human subjectivity to be more complex than I have granted him. What I have done, he might suggest, is only describe his views on the thought and action of people's "second nature"--the depth socialization that fosters adaptation right down to the "biology" of people. Human subjectivity exists, but it is so repressed that in any description of thought or behavior, it appears completely transcended.

This rejoinder would advance Marcuse's case, but only so far. It advances it because we do see in Marcuse's psychology some residual doubt about how far socialization can go. For example, Marcuse speaks not only of mimesis but also of guilt, sublimation and introjection. The difference between these concepts is important: where mimesis implies an incredibly weak ego (or none at all)

that simply reflects the needs of society, concepts like guilt, introjection and sublimation imply both norms of conduct and identity development. Moreover, the process of introjecting morality, and the function of guilt and sublimation, betray a relation between the individual and society that cannot be harmonized in the way mimesis suggests. Guilt is necessary because all individual needs are not compatible with those of society, and sublimation is a way for the individual to gain gratification from desires that would be otherwise thwarted. Mimesis, however, implies no such conflict between individual and society.

For Marcuse, concepts like introjection and guilt are more appropriate for the era of competitive capitalism, with the decisive paternal resolution of the Oedipal conflict, while mimesis becomes increasingly appropriate during the decline of authority characteristic of advanced industrial society. Marcuse might argue that usage of both sets of terms implies a society in process of transformation. This explanation remains inadequate, however, for it still implies that mimesis could become the primary and perhaps sole mode of socialization. Yet Marcuse offers no substantial evidence for this claim, and I have offered evidence against it.

Moreover, even if we presumed with Marcuse that

beneath mimetic adjustment there resided a more primary nature, Marcuse's account of subjectivity would remain flawed. Here a contrast with Freud is helpful. For Freud, individual maturation is based on a process of development through which humans learn how to manage their needs, more or less successfully. The process is complex, involving particular developmental stages and their resolution (e.g., the Oedipal situation), at times immediate identification (e.g., the oral phase) and at others repression, guilt, introjection, sublimation, etc. Through this process, the individual develops a sense of self-identity and a sense of others, and such is a necessary basis for cognitive development as well. I become relatively free as I learn what needs I should and should not act on and why I act as I do in given situations. Against this process of development and subjectivity, however pessimistic in Freud's analysis, Marcuse offers essentially an ideal--by 1969 a "biological foundation for socialism." Having found Freud's "man" now obsolete, it is here that Marcuse locates the substratum of real human subjectivity. Subjectivity, then, becomes reduced to a hope for the future.

However, he offers us little understanding of the process by which such subjectivity would develop. There are times when Marcuse does come close to stipulating the

conditions necessary for the development of self-identity. In his essay "Repressive Tolerance" he writes:

> Frequently brushed aside is the question as to what has to be repressed before one can be a self, oneself. The individual potential is first a negative one, a portion of the potential of his society: of aggression, guilt feeling, ignorance, resentment, cruelty which vitiate his life instincts. If the identity of the self is to be more than the immediate realization of this potential (undesirable for the individual as human being) then it requires repression and sublimation, conscious transformation. This process involves at each stage (to use the ridiculed terms which here reveal their succinct concreteness) the negation of the negation, mediation of the immediate, and identity is no more and no less than this process. "Alienation" is the constant and essential element of identity, the objective side of the subject--and not, as it is made to appear today, a disease, a psychological condition. Freud well knew the difference between progressive and regressive, liberating and destructive repression.[19]

Marcuse here stresses objectification, and the necessity of some constraints for the development of the self and the development of the psyche--even in a liberated psyche of the future. More characteristically, however, Marcuse fluctuates between the despair of total alienation and the hope of total liberation.

Instead of a portrait of psychic and cognitive development, we are left with a rather mechanistic portrait of both the requirements for establishing true subjectivity and the nature of subjectivity itself. For Marcuse, the emergence of real subjectivity is predicated on overcoming

scarcity and the need for the performance principle, and thereby unnecessary repression. Unlike Freud, for Marcuse the necessity of repression is evaluated primarily by the material development of society, not by the developmental structure of the psyche in relation to the presumed needs of civilization as such.

Yet what kind of subjectivity is Marcuse offering? Certainly it is not on the model of Freud, for this is the type of person who has become obsolete with the passing of competitive capitalism. Indeed, having abandoned in practice Freud's developmental scheme and providing no replacement, Marcuse leaves us to wonder how a person would develop a concept of self and other and conceptual categories with which to interpret the world. We are left, instead, with the ideal of a "new man" who would presumably be free to use reason to gain gratification, substantially free of the need for sublimation, repression, and fantasy characteristic of earlier unliberated social systems. What remains, then, is an image of a core of true human subjectivity as Eros, that can be reached by stripping away the layers of "oppressive" mental structuring.

Morton Schoolman, for example, criticizes Marcuse for utilizing essentially an "economic" model in which instincts press for unsublimated modes of discharge. For

Marcuse, then, thought as mediation of a pleasurable experience is peripheral to the direct gratification of an impulse. Here is the basic problem. If freedom is defined largely by the pursuit of unsublimated gratification, the subject who is pursuing that "freedom," or simply following the libidinal drives for gratification, would be in no position to choose alternate paths to gratification or between different types of gratification. Indeed, he or she would be in no position to decide if present gratification would be in his or her long-term interest. The idea of choice itself seems undermined. The unfortunate collapsing of freedom, reason and happiness in Marcuse is symptomatic of the eclipse of subjectivity within his ideal of human development.

In his conception both of extreme apathy and of total freedom, therefore, Marcuse leaves us little in the way of a viable concept of subjectivity. His lack of rigor opens up his argument to internal confusion and makes interpretation of what he really intends difficult. If we look, for example, at his reason for the rise of the "new sensibility," we find it resides in the lack of severity of parental repression and freedom from responsibilities. Yet, were these not some of the same ingredients that created the post-capitalist person so ripe for manipu-

lation. And why is Marcuse so sharply critical of the "beats" in 1964 and so hopeful about "hippies" in 1969? Without greater clarity about the development of subjectivity, Marcuse falls into the trap of selectively and illicitly using similar evidence at different times to reach different conclusions. If students are reared more permissively than workers, confronting less paternal authority, by Marcuse's own account in One Dimensional Man we would expect them to be more integrated into advanced industrial society, not less so. Similarly, Marcuse needs to explain more clearly why desublimation is today so repressive, while in the hoped-for future, it would be an important basis of human liberation.

Instead, we are left with the vague idea of Eros. It is no wonder, then, that Alisdair MacIntyre concludes that Marcuse is a "pre-Marxist" thinker, while John Fry asserts that libido as a "material substratum" allows him to "have his idealist cake and eat it too," while Morton Schoolman criticizes him for behaviorism. In the end, Marcuse's adaptation of Freud does not save Marcuse from the charge that he has offered an inadequate account of human subjectivity. Neither the total alienation of one-dimensional "man" nor the "freedom" of liberated "man" contains within it a subject worthy or capable of being free.

This result is, perhaps, not as surprising as it might seem at first glance. Marcuse turns to Freud to help fill in a social psychology largely vacant in Marxist thought. Yet both the Marxist hope for a liberated future and the Marcusean fear of the contemporary reach of technological rationality present an image of the person and society standing in a far more harmonious relation than Freud ever imagined. Neither did Freud envision the communal future desired by Marcuse nor did he present a scheme of human development that would admit of the full participation and sensibility necessary for that ideal. In his attempt to explain the present and give hope to the future, therefore, Marcuse must and does discard the Freudian model of the development of human subjects. But what does he replace it with?

Morton Schoolman, focusing on Marcuse's analysis of technics, explains it this way. Marcuse's analysis of the psychological underpinning of one dimensionality is based on a "prior allegiance" to a framework that comprehends "social life exclusively in terms of the historical conditions, material factors, in the final analysis, structural elements <u>constituting</u> and <u>determining</u> the subject." Marcuse, therefore, "preinterprets" Freud's metapsychological categories in ways that render them compatible with

Marcuse's analysis of social structure. The result is that he severely downplays Freud's constitutional factors of development and the development of the ego, focusing instead on the malleability of the instincts for social control. In this way, Schoolman might have added, Marcuse can retain the liberating potential of technics through overcoming scarcity, by showing that although the need for scarcity has been largely overcome (he assumes), now direct instinctual programming channels behavior and prevents freedom. This reasoning enables Marcuse to develop his thesis of surplus repression, thereby perserving his Marxian cum Marcusean hope that advanced technology is the base upon which liberation can still be built. In the end, Schoolman may well be right when he concludes that: "Marcuse's (pre-)interpretation of Freud can produce no other effect than to erase all limits on the extent to which the individual can be socialized."[20]

Marcuse's turn to Freud, then, does not accomplish what is required of it. It neither provides a substantial depth dimension with which to root the one dimensionality thesis, nor does it preserve an ideal capable of someday being practiced. On the one hand, we have the image of persons as fully programmed objective reflections of the needs of a repressive technology, whose instincts--both for

life and death--become resources for system stability. This is "second nature." Yet it is second nature with only apparent depth--for Marcuse gives us reason to believe that it can be quickly altered in reaction to changes in the technical base of society. Completely adaptable individuals would provide little opposition, therefore, to changes in social structure of a progressive cast. This conclusion is truly ironic: Marcuse originally turns to Freud, in part, because of the presumption that a tenacious repressive psychology is itself an important impediment to successful revolution.

Below second nature we have a more primary nature that at times appears as art-as-life and at others as a living embodiment of the pleasure principle. Yet, if Schoolman is right, "second nature" is not really an analysis of the logic of human development at a particular time in history, but of technological categories imputed to the mind: in dominating second nature, technological rationality subverts Eros, the primary nature of people.

Marcuse's dilemma is this. Without Freud, he is unable to show either the subject's role in his or her own repression or the relationship between the instincts and cognitive and ego development. Without Freud, in short, he has an impoverished psychological subject. Yet with Freud,

he can't identify the individual with the society in the way he wants to in either the oppressive one-dimensional phase or in the future communitarian phase. Marcuse's adaptation of Freud is unsatisfactory, then, because in discarding Freud's pessimism, he also discards Freud's model of subject development without replacing it with one that could bring forth the basis of a reasonable notion of liberation--a complex human subject. The irony emanating from this lacuna in Marcuse's thought is that when applied to the unliberated present, Freud's model of human development appears as an exercise in optimism in comparison to Marcuse's.

Beyond liberating tolerance

Marcuse's problematic account of subjectivity also becomes the underpinning of what amounts to an ultimately quiescent political strategy. As we have seen, Marcuse is predisposed to believe that technological rationality both dominates the political system and consciousness, so that the essential conditions for democracy do not exist. His essay "Repressive Tolerance" may be understood as an attempt both to undermine the belief that democratic tolerance does exist and to stipulate how conditions may be recreated under which people could reason freely. He writes:

> . . . the alternative to the established semi-democratic process is not a dictatorship or elite, no matter how intellectual and intelligent, but the struggle for real democracy. Part of this struggle is the fight against an ideology of tolerance which, in reality, favors and fortifies the conservation of the status quo of inequality and discrimination.[21]

Given the prevailing conditions of "tyranny by the majority," however, Marcuse concludes that the tolerance necessary for a free society can only be won by the efforts of radical minorities--"militantly intolerant and disobedient to the rules of behavior which tolerate destruction and suppression." Exhibiting the "new sensibility," radical minorities are in the privileged position of being able to reason and speak the truth. Liberating tolerance is, for Marcuse, nothing less than speaking the truth and acting truthfully, while deterring others from speaking and acting falsely. For Marcuse, it will be recalled the "telos of tolerance is truth."

Marcuse is certainly correct in pointing out the selective tolerance of liberal polities. His equation of liberating tolerance with truth, of course, puts him in much more difficult water, for which he has been roundly criticized. What he should have said, perhaps, was that all polities set parameters for what they will tolerate, and that he is trying to redefine those parameters in a more reasonable way, using coercion when necessary, just as

polities themselves do. Whatever objections one might have to this reformulation, it would allow Marcuse to claim that the present system is one of pseudo-tolerance and maintain the important conceptual distance between tolerance as an important condition for the search for truth, and truth itself.

Alasdair MacIntyre sharply criticizes Marcuse for not recognizing that the "telos of tolerance is not truth but rationality." For a person to be rational, he or she must state ideas in such a way that we could know what would count as evidence against then, and they be held open to criticism and refutation. Rationality does not guarantee truth, but it is an important means to attain it. The toleration of alternate ideas is, therefore, necessary to achieve a truer understanding of our situation because it allows us to use reason more fully. Marcuse himself suggests that in the last analysis, people should decide what is in their interests--if and when they are free to choose. Yet, the closer he comes to stipulating what that choice must be, the more specious his notion of freedom becomes and the more questionable the "truths" arrived at.

Human beings at any one time only imperfectly know their situation. There always exist, theoretically, new ideas and information which could bear on their self-

understanding, and the point of view of that understanding is itself subject to change. From the point of view of justice, I may view as fair an exam I didn't study for and failed, while, from the point of view of my freedom, it restricts my ability to get a job. I may ultimately decide that I cannot be truly free unless I follow the dictates of what I perceive as just. I am in the best position to capture the truth of my situation only after reasonably exhausting the possible ideas, information, and points of view pertinent to it. Moreover, to deepen my knowledge, I would need to explore which of the conventions and constraints of my society harm my interests and inhibit my freedom and which enhance both. The ideal of equal opportunity and the need for an education for respect and a good job may have thrown me into a competitive educational rat race, while the ideal of equality and the hostility of corporate capitalism to authoritarian patriarchy may have fueled rebellion against illegitimate authority. For me to more fully understand the real role of present ideas, information, conventions and structural arrangements, I need to compare them to some alternate set. My judgment is further enhanced by opening it to discussion and criticism by others. Having done all this, I am in a better position to know how I would be freer or what is in my real inter-

est. In short, I become more fully self-conscious of the situation I am actually in, and self-consciousness requires tolerance of competing ideas within the individual and within the society. Neither the pseudotolerance of "semi-democratic" societies nor the "liberating tolerance" Marcuse prescribes enhances such self-reflection.

Marcuse would agree that in an egalitarian society of equal access to education, media and other resources, such reflection would be desirable and, in fact, part of the real democracy he would like to see. Under present circumstances, however, it is the "radical minority" that must work for the "emergence of a true and sovereign majority" in spite of the present needs of the majority. They seem to know the truth while the majority presently seems incapable of knowing it. Neither requires the type of tolerance described by MacIntyre.

The quiescence involved in this line of reasoning is manifest. First, it illicitly excludes, from the start, a strategy that includes "the majority." Grossly exaggerating the eclipse of subjectivity, Marcuse's theory of "tolerance" reinforces the constrained scope of thought and action open to the "majority" (constraints that suggested the theory to him in the first place), by denying them an alternate practice. Secondly, it encourages a lack of

reflection on the part of the "radical minority," legitimizing any insensitivity to "the majority" that might already exist, thereby unnecessarily widening the breach between them. Instead of confronting authority, "radical minorities" mistakenly might confront potential allies in "the majority," deflecting attention from deeper structural troubles, ultimately fostering misinterpretation of political reality and furthering depoliticization. For even when the target of a political action is clearly designed to be an institution of power and not "the majority," confrontational strategies remain fraught with the difficulty that important aspects of authority to be confronted may be closely identified with by "the majority." Marcuse's strategy simply magnifies this important problem.

Thirdly, it understates the intense personal reflection and political activity that often are vital to the development of radical political actors as well. During the 1960's, many young student radicals, indeed, had been raised in privileged homes with nonrepressive child rearing. Yet their ideas, rather than stemming from some vague "organic" foundation, were often extensions of those of their parents and their radicalization the result of the broken promises of liberal reform. In Young Radicals, Kenneth Kenniston reports that: "What is most impressive

is not their secret motivation to have the System fail but their naive hope that it would succeed and the extent of their depression and disillusion when their early reformist hopes were frustrated."[22] Kenniston's conclusion concerning the students who worked in the "Vietnam Summer" of 1967 is consistent with a reading of the seminal statement of the student protest of that era--the 1962 Port Huron Statement: the most striking thing about this document is that it attempts to formulate and heal the breach between American ideals and practice.

For both "radical minorities" and "the average person," I conclude, therefore, that Marcuse's ideas on "repressive tolerance" deny most people a theory that would help them practice true self-liberation. We can agree, then, with much of Marcuse's critique of the pseudotolerance of liberal societies and even the need to confront militantly its manifestation and still concur with Alasdair MacIntyre when he writes:

> The only education that liberates is self-education. To make men objects of liberation by others is to assist in making them passive instruments; it is to cast them for the role of inert matter to be molded into forms chosen by the elite. The majority of men in advanced industrial society are often confused, unhappy and conscious of their lack of power; they are often also hopeful, critical, and able to grasp immediate possibilities of happiness and freedom. Marcuse underrates most men as they are; the false contempt for the majority into

> which his theory leads him underpins policies that would in fact produce just that passivity and that irrationalism with which he charges contemporary society.[23]

Advanced industrial society or the politics of corporate capitalism?

As we have seen, the lens of technological rationality distorts Marcuse's perception of human subjectivity and underplays both the active struggle of people to understand their lives and their potential for self-liberation. It also clouds Marcuse's analysis of social structure in a way that reinforces his inadequate account of subjectivity and exaggeration of political passivity. I shall focus here on these latter points. Many of Marcuse's structural predictions, such as long-term stability and mounting affluence, domestic and international integration have been severely challenged by a decade of economic uncertainty, a stalled domestic standard of living, a domestic legitimation crisis, a state fiscal crisis, increasing world disorder and worldwide hunger. In his later writings, Marcuse discusses some of these issues and tries to incorporate them into his work.[24] The inaccuracy of his predictions is less important to the analysis here, however, than is the predisposition to gloss over the rumblings beneath the veneer of stability.

Marcuse preinterprets the relation of social structure, elites and masses in ways that privilege the claim of technological hegemony over evidence of important structural difficulties. Marcuse looks at institutions such as welfare and trade unions after they have been afforded some legitimacy within the social system and concludes that they are part of the growing administrative grasp of government within advanced industrial society. Their development, for Marcuse, is evidence of our society's ability to manage its contradictions, particularly between the potential of automation and the need for alienated labor, in ways that strengthen the whole. There is, of course, evidence that enlightened elites at times do press for governmental reforms to meet changing socioeconomic reality. Yet these reforms often have far more to do with struggle and demands from below, ranging from voting pressure to militant strikes and even rioting. Moreover, writing during the age of Reagan, it is obvious that these gains are precarious and require struggle to be maintained.

The system adjustment Marcuse claims, then, rests on the problematic assumptions of the eclipse of subjectivity and that accommodative institutions are in a simple functional relation with the system as a whole. In fact, however, the relation is complex, with the institutions

proving both functional for the society and at the same time putting new constraints and pressures on the system. These pressures are more easily accommodated at some times than others, and sometimes these institutions bump into each other. Today, corporate desire for higher profits, union demands for their share of the pie, welfare cries for simple economic justice are all competing, however unequally, for a relatively shrunken surplus. Moreover, this competition, once again out in the open, has been a feature of American life at least since the 1930's. Marcuse's fundamental error here is to assume that a complex process of demands, militant action, compromise and even, at times, betrayal and defeat, leading to the development of accommodative institutions, can be explained instead by a logic of administrative rationality. This explanation, which assumes an eclipsed subjectivity, provides an account of social structure that further and mistakenly underpins Marcuse's analysis of the eclipse of subjectivity. Together they provide the core of his over-functional view.

Moreover, Marcuse's analysis of advanced industrial society makes certain presumptions that are not warranted. For one thing, the central role he assigns productivity for its own sake clouds somewhat the role of profitability as the central system imperative. How can we explain, for

example, employer decisions to forgo productivity increases that might result from worker participation schemes or decisions to use labor-intensive technologies when labor is cheap, without immmediate reference to management decisions based on profitability? And how would he explain the decisions, for example, of U.S. auto makers until recently to continue to produce inefficient cars, even in the face of foreign competition over the last 20 years? What is technological about that rationality?

In addition, the economy is far more complex than Marcuse's notion of advanced industrial society reveals. There is, for example, a dual labor market, one consisting of higher-paying corporate jobs, often unionized, the other of lower-paying nonunionized jobs within firms that must struggle much harder to remain competitive. Further, between and within each labor market, there is segmentation by race, sex and class background. If the working class is integrated, this result probably has more to do with its inability to forge a common interest, rooted in these structural differences, than because it simply has incorporated the interest of the system as a whole. Similarly, while more and more people are becoming dependent employees whose narrow range of decision-making and power resemble each other, there remain important differences in work-life

and status. While some differences are artificially created to produce worker competitiveness and division,[25] and some are based on sectoral position in the economy, and some are based on the nature of the job itself, all have consequences for worker consciousness.

These cleavages are of prime importance in understanding how contemporary political struggles may be waged. To whom, for example, will unionized workers turn in the search for allies to help protect the gains they now see being eroded? Will nonunionized workers, particularly Blacks, Hispanics and women, be seen as potential allies or threats? Marcuse's theory of advanced industrial society does not help answer these important question. Instead, he vacillates between his pessimistic moments when he sees one large degraded working class, to more optimistic moments, for example in his 1972 Counterrevolution and Revolt, when he sees young workers now beginning to understand the nature of their degradation.

Yet this either-or dichotomy itself distorts reality. Might not young workers displace important sources of their degradation by seeing the threat to their dignity coming from below rather than above? And do they not react to it apolitically through alcoholism and drug use, quasipolitically through adsenteeism and sabotage, as well as politi-

cally through wildcat strikes and union insurgencies? Moreover, where will older workers turn? What meaning will the crisis in legitimacy have for those with a greater stake in more traditional values now on the wane?

Lacking both a concept of subjectivity that allows for political decisions and actions, that may neither be simply conditioned nor purely revolutionary, and a complex analysis of social structure, Marcuse falls prey to reductionism: either there will be a revolution, which is unlikely, or advanced industrial society will make the necessary adaptive changes to consummate its hold, or there will be a final barbarism.

Perhaps intuitively recognizing some of these difficulties, Marcuse's more recent writings seem to speak more about "monopoly capitalism" than advanced industrial society and to indicate that now managing crises is more like juggling severe problems than "absorbing alternatives" in ways that strengthen the whole.[26] However, Marcuse's commitment to the thesis of the hegemony of technological rationality cannot help but bias his analysis, not only to crude false-consciousness theory but also to glossing over the complexity of social structure as well. Yet, political strategy today depends on comprehending just that complexity. So does political explanation. Marcuse's strategic

and explanatory failures are, themselves, symptomatic of the shortcomings not only of his analysis of subjectivity but also of social structure as well.

In the end, Marcuse's prime limitation is that he attempts to develop an over-functional explanation of how modern industrial societies maintain themselves. My prime purpose in the preceding argument has been to draw out and challenge the assumptions behind that view and to argue that his extreme one-dimensionality thesis distorts our understanding of social and political reality. One underlying theme emerges. Marcuse's fear of the potential functionalization of all aspects of modern society leads him to miss the important ways in which social systems, even when hegemonic, are not purely functional systems.

As we have seen, adaptive institutions and practices can produce ambiguous results. Industrial management schemes may integrate workers, but they can also wear thin, escalating the need for new techniques. Desublimated libidinal attachments to objects can ensnare one in a consumer world, but they can prove unsatisfying, leading to a rejection of that world. Trade unions can help integrate workers into corporate capitalism while also putting new constraints on the system itself. By his own account, weak parental authority can lead to an immature ego ripe for

manipulation--or lead to the "new sensibility."

In trying to explain far too much within a pure functional theory, Marcuse can unwittingly subvert the study of depoliticization. For example, industrial management may help depoliticize the worklife of people, not by adapting them to organizational needs but by failing to convince them of the sincerity of management's goals. The result could be a wave of cynicism, drug and alcohol use, or perhaps apolitical protest that is quickly dissipated. These possible results do not follow from the original intention of management but the effect is depoliticization at work nonetheless. The unintended consequences of activity of adaptive instituitions are critical to the study both of quiescence and activism, and an over-functional view can only obscure their significance. In overlooking these, one, at the same time, will miss the complex nature of depoliticization and the possible openings for change under the surface of what appear as encompassing functional relationships.

If human subjects could become the type of subject assumed by positivist theory and feared by Marcuse, these ambiguities would not emerge. But because they cannot, analysis of the functional capacity of instituitions cannot be derived from what Mills called "grand theory"--it must

be rooted in the study of specific human practices within the context of particular institutions and the constraints of a general social structure. This study, by and large, Marcuse does not undertake. Neither society, nor institutions, nor individuals are reducible to the presumed functional requirements of a social system abstractly conceived.

The Tenuous Thesis of Relative Political Mortification

The criticisms presented here, I believe, undermine some of the central elements of One Dimensional Man. It is now appropriate to qualify the argument in the following way. Partly out of richness of thought and partly out of lack of clarity, Marcuse not only presents an untenable thesis of absolute political mortification but also a useful conceptualization of relative political mortification. In order to pursue this line of his thought, we have to hold in abeyance, for a moment, Marcuse's analysis of the erosion of subjectivity and my criticism of that view.

As we have seen, there is evidence in Marcuse's discussion of language and psychology of some ambivalence about how far the process of mimetic adjustment has gone. Moreover, when Marcuse writes concretely about the appli-

cation of techniques of social control, he tends to exaggerate less the extent of adaptation. For example, in writing about the application of personnel management technique, Marcuse argues that the operational nature of the concepts employed tends to redefine general discontents into specific personal grievances. If a worker complains that "wages are too low," this may be redefined, after scrutiny of the individual worker's situation, to mean that the worker's "present earnings, due to his wife's illness, are insufficient to meet his current obligations." In reformulating the grievance, the potential of a general critique including all wage earners is collapsed into a gripe about a particular situation:

> Once the personal discontent is isolated from the general unhappiness, once the universe of concepts which militate against functionalization are dissolved into particular referents, the case becomes a treatable and tractable incident.[27]

Operational redefinitions of this kind are ideological, in the first instance, because they make the worker's situation plausible to him or her in ways that hide the implicatin of the grievance for society as a whole. Marcuse, of course, carries this line of argument much too far, suggesting that such concepts could potentially circumscribe consciousness. But as this example shows, Marcuse does have a prior concern with ideological

distortion that is based on the need to hide political reality from subjects capable of penetrating the ideology.

In fact, if we turn from Marcuse's analysis of the "masses" to his discussion of "reason" itself and, in fact, the implied role performance of critical theorists, we find in Marcuse a richer concept of subjectivity. Marcuse argues, for example, that in classical Greek philosophy, "reason" has the ontological function of distinguishing what is true from what is false to preserve "being" from destruction. The "struggle for truth" is "the essentially human project" of people faced with an "antagonistic reality"--"a world afflicted with want and negation, constantly threatened with destruction":

> To the extent to which the experience of an antagonistic world guides the development of the philosophical categories, philosophy moves in a universe which is broken in itself (dechirement ontologique)--two-dimensional. Appearance and reality, untruth and truth (and as we shall see, unfreedom and freedom) are ontological conditions.[28]

For Marcuse, the purpose of reason is to reduce antagonisms and distortions to a minimum, but he does maintain that some repression will always be necessary for existence and that "alienation" (understood, I believe as objectification) is not eliminable. If the individual is to be more than an "immediate realization" of the negative antagonistic elements of society, identity "requires repression

and sublimation, conscious transformation." Let us recall Marcuse's claim:

> This process involves at each stage . . . the negation of the negation, mediation of the immediate, and identity is no more and no less than this process. "Alienation" is the constant and essential element of identity, the objective side of the subject. . . . Freud well knew the difference between progressive and regressive, liberating and destructive repression.[29]

In spite of these assertions about the fundamental role of reason and the ineliminable elements of identity development, as we have seen, Marcuse concludes:

> The stabilizing tendencies conflict with the subversive elements of Reason, the power of the positive with that of negative thinking, until the achievements of advanced industrial civilization lead to the triumph of one-dimensional reality over all contradiction.[30]

It seems, then, when Marcuse discusses the "average person" in "one-dimensional society," he finds near complete adaptation, and when he discusses liberated people, it will be recalled, he finds an organic or biological foundation for truth. However, when he discusses reason and identity development abstractly, he finds a more complex picture: identity is mediated and not a mere reflection of experience; the search for a reality hidden by appearances is a never-ending process in which appearances never completely subsume the essential nature of people as reasoning beings. Moreover, these interpretations are consistent with Marcuse's explicit views on the

role of art and his implicit view on the role of theorists like himself. Art surfaces repressed truths in sublimated form. Critical theorists like Marcuse and readers who can understand him, retain the ability to develop self-identities and to reason, capacities denied the rest of the population.

We can perhaps conclude from this, as Morton Schoolman argues, that Marcuse's concept of subjectivity is not so much incorrect as "underspecified," and that there are important clues in his writing on reason and on critical theory that can help us fill out a more adequate concept. If we give Marcuse the benefit of the doubt here, we can then proceed to read One Dimensional Man more sympathetically as an attempt to demonstrate, as Habermas puts it, how late capitalism can make depoliticization plausible through an ideology of technological rationality. Moreover, we can rescue Marcuse's social psychology from the superficial arena of "mimetic adjustment."[31]

Now we place ourselves in the position of putting forth what I should like to call a tenuous thesis of relative political mortification. The core of this thesis would be how technological rationality might, as I discussed in the last chapter, serve as a new ideology to legitimate state intervention into the economy to correct

dysfunctions, while preserving depoliticization. Depoliticization is made plausible to the degree that people believe that the state is carrying out only "technical" imperatives for effective system maintenance. A technocratic state able to mitigate class exploitation, along with a program of privatized rewards, a social psychology of adaptive (although not exclusively mimetic) behavior and plebiscites on alternate sets of leaders and administrative personnel substituting for the clash of politics, would together undergird this project.

If the first step toward an adequate thesis is clarifying the role of science, technology and administration as an ideology for subjects, the second is discarding Marcuse's highly speculative and unsubstantiated notions about how the basic metapsychological instincts biologically wed people to a system of domination. As we did with the questions of ideology and subjectivity, we need to read Marcuse as having a richer conception of human psychology than his more extreme formulations within One Dimensional Man allow. If, for example, we favor Marcuse's accounts emphasizing sublimation, introjection, fantasy and even guilt over his rather mechanical mimesis formulation (designed to explain the negative utopia we are tending towards), we recapture important psychological insights

within Marcuse's theory of repressive desublimation.

Robert Paul Wolff best captures these insights in his explanation of Marcuse's theory. Within all people, he recounts, there exists a "psychical pool" within the unconscious in permanent opposition to the established society. The power of negative critical thinking is partly entailed in its ability to tap these psychological resources in the effort to imagine a different society. From this vantage, the genius of repressive desublimation is that it "absorbs" the opposition into dominant class interests by refusing to clamp down on these hidden impulses. As Wolff puts it:

> Such a reaction [clamping down] only heightens the force of the repressed desires and, Antaeus-like, redoubles their energy. Rather, the appropriate move is to permit the specific, overt act, but to rob it of its unconscious significance by immediately accepting it into the repertory of permissible acts.

The act, therefore, is unable to mobilize the hidden psychic energy because it "ceases to serve as a surrogate for the entire unconscious."[32]

If we ease our interpretation of Marcuse into these directions, we find a society with the following characteristics: (1) an inherently apolitical ideology; (2) a mass psychology that defuses, in safety-valve fashion, psychological discontent; (3) "operational" concepts that tend to personalize and/or trivialize real grievances; (4)

a language and social psychology that confuses any attempt to clarify troubles or create political issues; (5) a need for an expanding supply of privatized consumer rewards; (6) an "enemy" or underclass upon which to displace pent-up grievances. Considered as a whole, such a constellation would form the basis for a concept of relative political mortification that could be a constituent part of a series of concepts that help us explain non-participation and the tenacity of depoliticization.

Even here, however, we must qualify this assertion. While such a conceptualization makes sense, it would remain, it seems to me, an unstable constellation. It requires, after all, an economy whose surplus constantly is expanding, certainly a more problematic idea today than in 1964. Moreover, there is no guarantee that the process of desublimation tied to a consumerist economy would not itself generate unrealizable demands for ever more objects for instinctual release and spark disharmony rather than increased energy for productivity. Or if the promise of consumerism, once attained, now appears less gratifying than previously imagined, additional pressures could be generated on the system.[33]

These examples simply underscore the argument made at the end of the last section: there is a healthy measure of

unpredictability to the outcomes we can expect from what are, ostensibly, adaptive practices. Finally, a focus on relative political mortification would continue to severely underrate the very significant and often transparent coercive power relation operative even during times of apparent consensus and affluence. In the 1950's, fear of losing one's job was undoubtedly as powerful a social glue as scientific management.

Any severe dysfunction in the social system, then, can upset the already precarious balance on which the technocratic project is based. If the system fails to "correct" for exploitation, the latency of class conflict may be called into question. If repression that extends beyond the underclass is utilized, it heightens the problem. Moreover, the existence of an underclass is destabilizing in itself, since its members are not fully included in the rewards mechanism, the repression that is severely applied from time to time, and the protest that it is used to suppress, threaten to raise normative questions, even if these take a reactionary form. Even sustained affluence can help surface ethical questions, as it did in the 1960's and 1970's for many students who rebelled at the prospect of the dull life of a middle-class technocrat, morally insensible to the needs of others.

There are, however, more profound reasons that such a thesis would remain tenuous. The great strength of technocratic consciousness lies in its ability to present technological rationality as a value-neutral method by which social systems can be effectively organized. That is, it does not appear to be ideology at all because it makes no explicit claims about how people should live their lives. Instead, it claims to be an efficient system for providing goods and services and proves its ability to the degree it does provide them, thereby mitigating class exploitation for some, while displacing its harshest aspects to those on the economic margin. The stability of the system, then, is based on its ability to allocate rewards, and the degree to which technocratic consciousness can suppress questions of value.

Jurgen Habermas argues that the "new ideology is distinguished from its predecessor in that it severs criteria for justifying the organization of social life from any normative regulation of interaction, thus depoliticizing them."[34] We should, instead, read this comment to mean "attempts to sever normative criteria" resulting in a suppression of ethical categories in the consideration of public policy and the proper way to organize society itself.

At the most fundamental level, technological rationality cannot eliminate the existential question of why we should do what we do, although it can help tell us how, when, and where to do it and, at times, what to do. The answer to the question "why?" can be unreflective and assumed, but it cannot be eliminated. If it is an important question, it must ultimately be based on some human interest believed to be worth pursuing. In fact, the often unstated ethical dimension of technological rationality seems grounded in utilitarian ethics, so that the productivity for its own sake Marcuse identifies is really productivity for the sake of creating the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number. In today's world, as government proves unable to successfully manage even for this narrow construal of human interest, the project of apolitical administration is called into question by this ethical ally of technological rationality. For example, one of the appeals of the Reagan candidacy in 1980 was its ability to call into question the right of government to manage social affairs, after the Carter administration seemed unable to do so effectively. As reactionary rhetoric, it harked back to older ideas of an alleged free market, questioning the value of government intervention in social and economic affairs, and thereby the legitimation

of technocratic management that Habermas and Marcuse suggest is necessary to protect capitalism from dysfunction and class conflict. Moreover, it often cast its attack in ethical terms, articulating concerns about the family, the individual and freedom. Similarly, Daniel Bell's notion of "public household" can be viewed as an attempt to reinsert an explicitly ethical dimension, however repressive in its implications, into a managed society devoid of solid purpose.[35]

These flailing attempts to seek purpose in contemporary America are indicative, I think, of two weaknesses central to technocratic rationality as ideology. First, although it can try to hide its ethical dimension, it cannot completely detach itself from one if it hopes to motivate behavior. This dimension, close to philosophical utilitarianism, can then subject technological rationality to an "internal critique" based on the narrow range of human interests it specifies. And this would remain true even if the technocratic intention is self-consciously recast negatively to now attempt to minimize dysfunction and pain in a less hopeful world.

Secondly, as Stuart Hampshire points out, the alliance of social engineering and utilitarianism offers a constricted view of human purposes: For example, not valuing

life for its own sake but for the limitation on happiness that death would cause. Hampshire writes:

> when the mere existence of an individual person by itself has no value, apart from the by-products and uses of the individual in producing and enjoying desirable states of mind, there is no theoretical barrier against social surgery of all kinds.[36]

Yet, we can find numerous examples of vigorous opposition based on perceptions of such "social surgery" from all parts of the political spectrum, on matters considered central to constituting desired ways of life, such as sexual customs, customs of war, treatment of the aged, and respect for life itself, to name a few.[37] Conservative opposition to public education on birth control, opposition by progressives to the war of attrition in Vietnam, opposition by whomever to discarding the aged simply because they appear "unproductive," and respect for life itself displayed by religious and lay opposition not only to the nuclear arms race but to the "numbers game" as a way of thinking about it: all these may be properly understood in part as protests against what people perceive as social engineering and the difficulty of technological rationality defending itself on its own terms. Indeed, even behind the "numbers game," for example, lie various theories of deterrence, each claiming superiority in the defense of life and civilization itself. Behind the body counts in

Vietnam stood the justification of the war, however misguided, as necessary to protect freedom, democracy and life. Body counts themselves could confuse discovery of the real purpose of the war and debase moral sensibility, but they provided little legitimacy for the war itself.

None of this is to argue that the moral insensibility promoted by technological rationality will not at times hold sway, helping legitimate advanced capitalism (or state socialism) in the way Habermas suggests is required of it. When it does, moral and human catastrophe can certainly result. Rather, the argument is that it is a tenuous solution to the problem of legitimation, lacking an explicit moral foundation (the strength of traditional society), and tied to an implicit ethical code which is itself limited. When questioned, technocrats will be under great pressure to retreat to more explicitly political and moral arguments which raise the questions of why we live the way we do and what are desired ways of human life. To be forced to do so, however, undermines the ability of the technological project to keep such questions suppressed and opens the door to political critique of a system ostensibly organized by the logic of technics.

In addition to the instability of the inadequate moral and political foundation of technological rationality,

there are also reasons to believe that the unavoidable situation facing a person who tries to adopt a technocratic (or bureaucratic) role could increase the instability. In a society that accepts the technocrat as its dominant role model, it would be important that the individual person not be held responsible for the virtue and the consequences of the actions he or she carries out. The responsibility of the technocrat is the proper use of bureaucratic, technical or scientific rules to achieve ends thought beneficial for the system as a whole. While at the higher level, political decisions that set the parameters for these ends are unavoidable (although they may not be reflected on as such), it is important that these not be questioned up and down the line, for doing so increases the likelihood of normative reflection on what is being attempted. The happy technocrat derives satisfaction from knowing that if the individual job is done properly, the system will run efficiently. The foundation belief is, however, that the system goals are not determined by political debate or moral argument but by the proper use of technical rules and procedures.

Yet there are pressures in the roles of technocracts that raise questions about the absence of responsibility. For the technocrat's role to be insulated from public

responsibility, members of the public would have to view themselves simply as objects to be administered. The technocrat too is asked to view his or her own contribution to work as purely objective, yet this role of detachment is likely to clash with more human aspirations for success and recognition. I may talk about my contribution of an idea for the better accomplishment of a project as "input," but I may well resent its rejection and become indignant if my "input" is rejected repeatedly. I may conclude that the system is unfair to people like me and search for those characteristics that constitute the class of "people like me." Similarly, I may fail a test and preserve my dignity by claiming that the test is unfair, undermining my belief that objective tests can be designed capable of determining who should play what functional role. Indignant at continuous failure, I may question a hierarchy that now appears to be only ostensibly organized by functional skill and question the legitimacy of the roles of those whose status is higher than mine. I may even begin to question the technocratic model itself.

Of course, interpretations in line with adequate role performance in the above situations are possible and even likely. Bureaucrats typically fall back on the posture, "I don't make the rules, I follow them," when confronted with

a hostile public, or even self-doubt. These examples do indicate, however, how basic patterns of human interaction can subject to closer scrutiny the "objective" nature of the technocrat's role and how the language of the questions raised can escalate from gripes to political criticism.

At a more fundamental level, moreover, there is an important relationship between action, responsibility, knowledge and self-consciousness[38] that suggests technocratic consciousness cannot dispense with the need for people to ground their belief in the roles they perform, with values not provided by technological rationality itself. Technocrats are asked to view their role as objective in the following sense. Their job is to correctly apply "technical" rules to achieve an intended result, amend the rules if they prove unfruitful, and correct any mistaken applications of the rules they may make. The pure technocrat is, therefore, asked to adopt a <u>pose</u> of a predicter of his or her own behavior, with the prediction circumscibed by the set of rules required for a given end.

But once a technocrat (or any person) predicts that something will happen because he or she will follow the rules necessary to make it happen and observes that prediction, a contradiction arises: because we are simultane-

ously the observer and the observed, once we predict we will do something and are conscious of our prediction, this knowledge puts our role of observer of our action in contradiction with our role of actor. Our prediction is necessary for us to know what we can achieve, but knowledge of our prediction now, instead, constitutes a decision on our part to try to do something. This dialectic of people as predicters and deciders, identified by Stuart Hampshire as a basic aspect of human action and self-consciousness,[39] can be obscured but not eliminated by technocratic roles. It is obscured because technocrats are typically asked to view themselves as not responsible for the human interests affected by the ends they produce. Moreover, although they unavoidably decide to follow each rule to bring about a result, and these rules are formally stipulated and even codified in a way rules pertaining to customs or norms normally are not, the scope of the job is often narrowly drawn, establishing distance between the rules technocrats decide to follow and the result.

Nevertheless, if I, as a social service bureaucrat, predict that I will take you off welfare because of newly lowered income eligibility requirements, I have, in fact, decided to follow the rules necessary to take you off, whether or not it appears to me in that light. If I try to

explain my decision to you as a prediction, I can only do so in an ironical sense, and my "prediction" may prove to be a quite accurate guide to my behavior precisely because it now borders on a decision. Moreover, the more I become aware of my decision, the more intentional my action becomes. If I persist in it, the more deliberate it is. The same would obtain as much for the purest technical worker as the bureaucrat. For although the "distancing" from the implications of the end result is, perhaps, more easily accomplished here, the technician decides to follow the necessary rules to bring about some result, and is, at some point, capable of grasping this fact.

Technocratic consciousness, therefore, cannot exempt the individual from the potential of formulating the question "what is it I'm really doing?" out of the purposive-rational rules he or she is expected to apply. Because the action can be reflected on as intentional and because the person could decide (theoretically) not to follow any or all of the required rules, there is always the potential need to justify the action undertaken. This is not to say, of course, that people will always reflect on whether they should follow particular rules or that there are not other reasons, such as fear of loss of a job, that will induce following them.

Instead, it is to suggest that subsystems of societies ostensibly organized only under purposive-rational rules of behavior cannot rely on people adopting only the role of predicters of their own behavior: because people unavoidably decide as well as predict, it is, in principle, always possible for people to become aware of their role of deciders as well, heightening awareness of their freedom and responsibility, and forcing into the open the need for beliefs to justify their conduct. As we have seen, such justification can weakly fall back on ideas like "following the rules helps the system run efficiently"; less weakly on ideas like "it's for the maximum pleasure for the greatest number"; or most strongly on ideas like "it is to enhance human life itself." However, each step taken is a step away from a pure technocratic model, calling into question the suppression of ethics and politics necessary for the depoliticized ideology Marcuse argues is required to legitimate advanced industrial society.

Conclusion:
Political Subordination or Political Mortification?

In this chapter, I have argued both that Marcuse fails to substantiate his case for a theory of absolute political

mortification, and that he does offer a plausible account of relative political mortification. Marcuse fails to establish the conditions for his more extreme formulation of one-dimensional society, having an inadequate understanding of ordinary language, an oversimplified analysis of social structure, at best an "underspecified" subject and a highly speculative psychology. There has been and is an ongoing attempt to functionalize language, but language cannot be reduced to technical terms, contradictions cannot be eliminated without sowing mass insanity, and operationalization may suppress, distort and trade on the ethical connotations of ordinary language, but it does not eliminate them. Social structure has certainly changed measurably in the last fifty years, yet we are far from having one commonly degraded "technical class," however narrow job definitions have become for white-collar and blue-collar workers alike. Tacking on an underclass does not fully correct this deficiency. Differences in economic positioning remain important in the explanation of political behavior, and understanding the possibility of alliances between different sectors is fundamental to the development of political strategy.

There is also little evidence to support the severity of the eclipse of subjectivity suggested by Marcuse.

This exaggerated claim rests on a quite mistaken preoccupation with "immediate identification" as a primary mode of identity development today and perhaps the only mode in the future. All of these issues point to the extremely weak base on which Marcuse rests his political strategy.

Marcuse's explanation of non-participation is marked by a preoccupation with the "one-dimensionality" thesis, blowing up out of all proportion with respect to what is the actual or potential depth and range of political apathy. He takes the end of ideology thesis as a negative utopia that is rapidly becoming reality and counters this with an impossible image of liberation. He then develops a caricatured portrait of the prototype of the new liberation and compares the "average" person unfavorably with it, insinuating into his analysis an ethnocentric and class bias and a strategy both potentially repressive and possibly self-defeating. Indeed, he even fails to capture the experience of live struggling radicals as well. "Under-rating most people as they are," Marcuse thereby under-values perhaps the most important resource for maintaining depoliticization: the active commitment of human <u>subjects</u> to the depoliticized roles they adopt.

At the same time, Marcuse does provide the core of a thesis of relative political mortification, based on tech-

nological rationality as ideology and a psychology of harmlessly released (yet potentially political) unconscious motives, and the personalization of grievances. Marcuse's own focus on how technological rationality becomes, in part, a conceptual scheme with which to (mis)uderstand the world, implies a subject whose consciousness needs to be actively controlled. Indeed, ideology would be superfluous if "subjects" were seriously expected to merely reflect the needs of the base of advanced industrial society.[40] Moreover, Marcuse's analysis of "reason" and his understanding of the role of the critical theorist underpin a richer conception of subjectivity than a strict "one-dimensionality" thesis allows. If these are taken together with his ideas on the containment of social change, the role the "enemy" plays in this process, and a modified thesis of functionalized language, we would now have both a subject capable of false-consciousness and a plausible argument about how false-consciousness is generated and maintained.

Moreover, the moral urgency with which One Dimensional Man is written and the augmented role Marcuse sees for young workers and women in Counterrevolution and Revolt (1972), indicate that he certainly does not view self-liberation as a dead issue. Marcuse's continually expanded list of potentially revolutionary agents does, however, have the

unfortunate quality at times of theory chasing reality.

However plausible the thesis of relative political mortification may be, I have argued that the social cohesion it entails is likely to be a poor substitute for authority based on norms in the stabilization of social systems. The hidden scheme of values of technological rationality remains open to question, and, once questioned, can provide only a weak defense. Moreover, it is unlikely that people can, over the long run, successfully adopt technocratic roles in the way Marcuse requires of them. Finally, as problems of social structure appear less amenable to "technical" solutions, as is the case today, purely technocratic explanations are likely to prove unacceptable.

There is, then, between apathy-related-to-free-choice and extreme apathy-as-a-condition a middle ground of explanation that is all-important in the study of depoliticization today. Technological rationality is an important legitimation, but it is not the only one, and it is under strain. People may be conditioned through an ideology and social psychology of adaptation, but they are also coerced, excluded from important decisions and lied to about the facts.[41] People may misperceive their interests, but they often do so after an active although inadequate search for

what their interest really is. Ideology and structural pressures play a part, then, in the analysis of false-consciousness, but so do the active subjects who incorporate and adapt the ideology and who, through their role performance, help constitute the social structure.

There does remain, therefore, an important political dimension within contemporary society. This dimension, understood as the struggle to find ways to best organize ourselves publicly, is often obscured both within society at large and within the person. Yet, this dimension is at odds with the needs of both corporate capitalist and state socialist societies to present themselves as necessary and even nature-like modes of social organization. Real political debate and struggle are often subordinated to state and corporate systems of administration, but they are far from eliminated. In fact, today in the United States, there is a sharp challenge by parts both of the left and the right to the legitimacy of unquestioned government management.

Both for empirical and conceptual reasons, therefore, I find Mills' explanation of political subordination outlined in Chapter III superior even to Marcuse's qualified notion of relative political mortification. While the latter concept is a reasonable one, it has somewhat limited

purchase in helping explain either how depoliticization may maintain itself today or how people might break free of its grasp.

The critique of Marcuse is, however, an invaluable guide in framing essential questions for inquiry, both concerning social science explanation and politics itself. For it demonstrates that, with the sundering of the free market, the legitimacy of corporate capitalism is unstable, given the limits of technological rationality as an effective legitimation for a managed society. Politically, it raises the momentous question of how will this "legitimation crisis" resolve itself, particularly important in an age on the nuclear brink.

In terms of social science inquiry, it raises two fundamental problems. First, how is the study of political consciousness, and especially of false or partial consciousness, to proceed once we discard the type of unsatisfying answer at times offered by Marcuse. I have indicated some preliminary directions and suggest strongly that this problem should rank among the top concerns in the study of depoliticization.

Secondly, how is mainstream social science, still committed as it is to behavioral and technocratic models of explanation, likely to explain non-participation today; or

in the future should a "consensus" reminiscent of the 1950's be re-established? And what role will it play in helping re-establish such "consensus"?

Two projections seem plausible. If apparent consensus re-emerges, we can expect explanations based on purer ideals of technocracy to gain increased adherence and Marcuse's arguments as qualified here to become increasingly important. Today we can expect explanations to become modified technocratic theories, although still explaining depoliticization largely in terms of system maintenance but incorporating a more explicit normative dimension as well.

In the concluding chapter, I will draw out the full conceptual map implicated in the explanation of non-participation and array it against the recent technocratic theory of democracy of Samuel Huntington. This will put us in a better position to understand both the extent and nature of current non-participation and the parameters within which the depoliticization of Americans is likely to remain plausible to them. Finally, I shall conclude Mills' paradigm of political subordination, once more fully articulated, can prove essential in the urgent task facing social inquiry today: to better understand the still depoliticized, yet highly unstable, political world in which we live.

CHAPTER VI

EXPLAINING NON-PARTICIPATION

Introduction

In this final chapter, we shall explore three areas in order to enhance our ability to explain non-participation in politics today and to grasp the implications of the explanations we adopt. I shall, therefore, first review the pluralist, reform and radical explanations and the image of depoliticization they project, suggesting the appropriate role of each in a comprehensive model for explaining non-participation. In this context, I shall explore the special role apathy plays and offer a modified conceptual revision in our use of this term in the explanation of non-participation.

Secondly, I will argue that Mills' incipient concept of political subordination, once fully developed, most enhances our ability to explain non-participation today. Moreover, it embraces a method of inquiry that seems well suited to grasp the complexity of both the dialectic of human thought and action, and people and social structure--a mode, in fact, that could be utilized by theorists who might sharply question the accuracy of

political subordination as an explanation of contemporary political behavior.

Finally, I will suggest that present strategies of "reindustrialization," geared to solve problems in the political economy by shifting resources from consumption and social welfare to investment and "defense," will require a successful strategy of depoliticization as well. If depoliticization continues or is advanced by strategies of reindustrialization, how will social scientists be likely to explain it? An examination of the work of Samuel Huntington will reveal some initial directions. I will conclude with some preliminary remarks on the future of depoliticization in America and what is necessary to include in a successful strategy to further widespread democratic participation.

The pluralist explanation

The heart of the pluralist analysis extracted from Bernard Berelson and Robert Dahl, it will be recalled, centered on the assumption that America is a democratic society *par excellance*. To be sure, Robert Dahl qualified this assumption somewhat. Nevertheless, pluralist analysis generally adopted the following presumptive path. Although America democracy deviates from "classical theory," first,

the high rates of non-participation are the best we can hope for in an industrialized (indeed, post-industrialized) highly complex society which covers a wide geographic area; and secondly, those who do not participate often do not have the proper personal requisites for democratic citizenship.

Moreover, participation is not stressed as a value in itself but as a means to gain economic, political, or social goals, such as legislation favoring the interest group to which one belongs. Low rates of participation are tolerated and even praised, therefore, because participation is not intrinsically rewarding, nor does it enhance citizenship potential. High rates of participation, on the other hand, are likely to bring "undesirable" citizens into the process, straining the consensus that is the necessary basis for a democratic polity to exist. Increasing divisiveness would then undermine the system's ability to manage conflict "democratically." The system would suffer overload.

Participation in politics, according to Robert Dahl, is explained as the result of a computation between the "opportunity costs" of participating and the "opportunity costs" of not participating. When the former are lower than the latter, a person, seeing an advantage in partici-

pation, will become involved. Conversely, when the balance is reversed, a person will find it in their rational self-interest to become apolitical and, perhaps, apathetic out of rational self-interest.

Robert Dahl is careful to point out that access to the political process must be equally open to all. Political inequality, for example, suffered by Blacks is an undemocratic abridgement of American citizenship. Nevertheless, generally in the pluralist account,[1] apathy, indifference and contentment remain the primary explanations of why people don't participate. I have criticized the pluralist explanation of non-participation extensively in the first chapter; I need only highlight some core issues here.

Because the pluralist account places little emphasis on the value of participation, per se, it is not surprising that it tends to measure participation through the turnout at elections. While other forms of participation are sometimes mentioned, fair elections[2] are seen as the important measure of participation and, indeed, the only form of participation that is really necessary for polity to be considered "democratic."

Given pluralist commitment to the prima facie democratic character of American political institutions, it is not surprising that they maintain a fairly strict division

of labor between political, economic, social and other forms of human activity. If political activity is that which happens in the accepted political arena, either electoral or governmental, grievances and issues at the workplace, in the home and in the community that are not translated into issues for government are likely to be missed. This likelihood increases to the degree issues remain latent or in the form of grievances or troubles. In focusing on voting, pluralists both create a minimalist standard of political participation and undervalue proto-political and explicitly political activity that occurs outside the electoral arena.

Perhaps the most striking feature of this mode of analysis is that pluralists reverse a basic presumption of most democratic theory: non-participation, previously thought a symptom of an unhealthy democratic polity, is now viewed as a sign of democratic vitality. In assuming the American polity is the best <u>possible</u> form of democracy, pluralists are led to a method that predetermines this conclusion. The method is to draw on the characteristics of the American polity as the operational criteria of modern democracy itself and then, unsurprisingly, to find that American democracy meets these requirements, in spite of the low rate of participation. In doing so, they

circumvent a basic tenet of democracy: the necessity not only of the consent but also the participation of the citizenry. And apathy, a word in our ordinary language that conveys a state of indolence for which we hold the individual responsible, is now confused with contentment with the present order. Individuals, we are told, don't participate in politics because they are apathetic; apathy is necessary to maintain the consensus upon which democracy rests.

I have raised three main points of contention with this line of reasoning. First, political involvement is itself necessary to develop the requisites of democratic citizenship, particularly the ability to accurately assess what is or is not in one's interest. I may feel content in my present situation, but this feeling itself is based on an insecure foundation to the degree I have not explored alternative possibilities. If I am unaware of alternatives that do exist which would, perhaps, increase my happiness, my contentment could be accurately described as short-sighted. Cut off from such alternatives, the judgments which, heretofore, were accurately described as grounded contentment would become stale as my contentment slips into apathy.

Secondly, the conclusion that non-participants are content or apathetic flies in the face of empirical

evidence demonstrating a close correlation between non-participation and low socio-economic status (SES) and low educational level. According to pluralist logic, our most content citizens are our most disadvantaged, certainly an odd conclusion.

Thirdly, although pluralists contend that, from a democratic point of view, apathy is no longer a blameworthy phrase, the use of apathy as a description does trade on ordinary usage in which blame is assigned to the apathetic citizens. In fact, in a society which prides itself in being democratic, citizens who have withdrawn from politics out of contentment or some other motive are likely to describe themselves (or have others describe them) as apathetic precisely for this reason. Therefore, although pluralists claim that apathy or political withdrawal based on contentment is harmonious with the democratic spirit, in fact, such individuals are likely to blame themselves and be held responsible by others for their own non-participation.

These three points combine into the following perverse constellation. Those who do not participate due to class and educational disadvantages are not only denied the leverage to make political and economic gains within the system, but they are also implicitly blamed for their own

depoliticization, deflecting criticism from the system as a whole. By suggesting to us that a high level of non-participation is something we need not worry about, pluralist theory lulls us all into apathy, closing off one important avenue through which to better comprehend our interests and enhance our freedom--political participation.

There is, however, one virtue to the pluralist discussion of apathy. In suggesting that apathetic citizens withdraw from politics out of their own "free will," pluralists maintain an important though exaggerated connection between apathy and responsibility, although they implicitly deny that there is anything wrong with being apathetic. However perverse the political consequences of the pluralists' actual use of the concept of apathy, I shall later argue that the notion of responsibility is a central ingredient in the concept of apathy--one that must be maintained in explaining non-participation.

The reform explanation

The reform explanation of non-participation is cast, in important respects, opposite in image to that of the pluralist. In 1960, E. E. Schattschneider set the stage for much of the criticism of pluralism that was to follow with the following claim: the correlation between non-

participation and low SES was evidence that non-participants were being pressured out of a political system that was simply not meeting their needs. Those alternative political issues and public policies that might be in the interests of the non-participants were being suppressed; issues that might interest the non-participants were being displaced by those easily accomodated within the narrow two-party system. The need, in his view, was to develop a political means to overcome the present "bias of the system." Instead of apathy or contentment, Schattschneider used terms like "mobilization of bias," "abstention," "suppression" and "rejection" to explain why many people didn't participate in politics.

As we have seen, the early work of Peter Bachrach follows the basic path set by Schattschneider, while extending and refining it in several important respects. First, in some of his writing,[3] Bachrach suggests that grievances may not only be excluded from the political arena but exist as latent, unformed proto-political discontent. Secondly, Bachrach extends the pluralist concern for defining the political arena as that in which "authoritative allocation of values" takes place, to non-governmental arenas that also serve this function, in particular corporations and worklife. Thirdly, partici-

pation is, for Bachrach, more than a means to have one's interests met; participation develops the individual as a person and as a citizen and is therefore basic to the human interest in freedom.

The elaborations of the reform paradigm, taken together with Schattschneider's fundamental "bias of conflict" thesis, provide the basis for the critique of pluralism we have just reviewed. In recognizing the legitimacy only of articulated preferences that have found their way into the established political arena, pluralists reward those social groups in the least need. It is these very groups which participate the least whose policy preferences are likely to be out of step with the prevailing "legitimate" political conflicts or still in formation that pluralists generally dismiss as indifferent, apathetic or content.

Although the reform explanation is an important advance over the pluralist, I have argued that it needs to be modified in several important regards. There is one issue, for example, in which the pluralist account has the better argument. While the emphasis on non-participants withdrawing from a biased political process certainly has much merit, it should be admitted that individuals can, when appropriate, be held responsible for failure to participate. To the reform "bias of conflict" thesis we

need, in the first place, suggest that apathy (understood here as related to unconstrained choices one makes) is a necessary conceptual ingredient in the explanation of non-participation.

The most substantial criticism of the reform analysis is found, however, in what I have termed the "radical" explanation. There are three central aspects of this critique.

First, it is assumed by Schattschneider and, at times, Bachrach that non-participants withdraw from politics because they rationally perceive that their needs are not being met and that withdrawal is the rational alternative. This presumes that non-participants fully comprehend what is in their real interests and develop a strategy that also serves their interests. I have argued against this, however, that it is always an open question--one not settled simply by an appeal to evidence[4]--to what degree one's understanding of one's situation is true, partial or false. The issue of false-consciousness then should not be eliminated as a terrain, however fraught with difficulty, that political analysis needs to enter.

Secondly, in some sense, this is particularly true in the explanation of non-participation. Withdrawal or exclusion from the opportunities to articulate, express and

press for one's interests can devolve into a type of apathy distinct from that described by the pluralists. When the pressures of social structure and inculcation of dominant ideologies not in the interests of non-participants serve to foster indifference or indolence with respect to the political realm, apathy here would liken itself to a condition people suffer under. Here the responsibility for non-participation should not be located with the non-participant but with the system and its dominant elites. A person suffering political apathy of this type could hardly be said to be fully conversant with his or her interests or appropriate strategies to advance them. And this would remain true even if apathy was the end result of a process which, we might well be able to mutually agree, began with withdrawal that was initially fully rational.[5]

Lastly, reform analysis does not accurately perceive the extent of the hold social structure may have over the scope of political issue formation. Bachrach is, I believe, correct in pointing to the workplace and corporation as institutions in need of politicization. In his early work, however, he does not fully consider the limits to the issues that would likely be placed on such a process by the constraints inherent in the social structure these institutions help constitute. In his later work, as we

have seen, he has crossed from the reform to the radical paradigm, explicitly addressing issues of class, consciousness, and specifically the dual nature of participatory reform in the workplace and the corporation: as a vehicle for further legitimation of private power or as one for radical democratic change. This difference is all important. Urging participation that promises power over one's life, without comprehending and preparing for the structural and political pressures against those demands that contravene the parameters of the present system, can lead to defeat, depair, and increased non-participation.

The radical explanation

At the most general level, the radical explanation of non-participation extends our analysis in two principal ways. First, it allows us to suggest that depoliticization may be a feature built into certain types of social systems, constraining the level and quality of participation we would expect to find. Secondly, the political consciousness actors bring to the understanding of the social system in which they live may, itself, be shackled to ideologies that harm their interests and provide only a partial, or even false, understanding of their real

situation. These two factors can come together, I have argued, in a type of apathy very different from that described by Berelson. When a profound apathy results from severe social constraints and not from the malfeasance or indolence of the individual, I have suggested it is better described as a condition under which people suffer.

Conceptualizing two faces of apathy, apathy related to individual responsibility and apathy as a condition, clarifies an ambiguity inherent in our usage of the term--one with important political consequences. When people subordinated in mass society become apathetic and are described incorrectly, as Berelson and Dahl describe them, as content or indifferent to politics, the result is to locate responsibility for non-participation with the individual. The radical explanation suggests that apathy also may be fostered by social structure and ideology in ways that harm the interests of the non-participants. To the degree widespread apathy as a condition exists, we may suggest that a particular social structure is inherently depoliticizing.

The work of Mills and Marcuse indicates three potential aspects of apathy as a condition. The first, in reverse order of significance, I have called absolute political mortification and have found its most complete expression in Marcuse's <u>One Dimensional Man</u>. Absolute

political mortification would exist when people have been so thoroughly manipulated and programmed that they lose the very capacity to think in ways that may be, at some point, politically relevant:[6] they lose the capacity for intentional action. I have left open the question of whether absolute political mortification is, in fact, a theoretical possibility given the potential for chemical-based human programming and other forms of operant conditioning. However, I have decisively rejected the formulation Marcuse offers, first as constituted by problematic constituent concepts (e.g., "one-dimensional" language) defended with superficial evidence and, therefore, secondly, going beyond any reasonable conception of false-consciousness.

The essential argument against Marcuse's extreme thesis is this: Marcuse illicitly assumes that technological rationality can, in fact, become human practice. I have argued, in contrast, that Marcuse's analysis is based on a limited and distorted concept of subjectivity leading to a one-dimensional characterization of the dialetic of individual and social structure.

The application of technique and means-ends rationality remains only one aspect of human practice, ultimately relying on norms and values not reducible to technical questions to justify particular applications of technique

and to motivate human action. In fact, behind any specific application of science and technology always lie standards for the organization of society that extend beyond that of science and technology. Moreover, the possibility always exists for humans to form intentions, act on them, and reflect on their actions in terms that include but are not circumscribed by technical considerations.

While basic questions of ethics and values can be suppressed in modern society, they cannot be rooted out as basic characteristics of the human experience. The positivist project is not dangerous, therefore, as Marcuse sometimes explains it, because it can turn human beings into objects. Instead, it is pernicious because it can encourage people to believe that a particular organization of technology is "nature-like" thereby suppressing the constellation of ethical considerations that stands behind that particular organization.

In contrast to Marcuse's extreme formulation, then, what we really have is people "objectifying themselves" in a technological milieu--a modern form of the alienation Marx described a century ago. People come to <u>appear</u> to themselves and others as objects needed to serve particular functions, but they do not become objects. However strong the technological base of society becomes, it does not

sever its connection with the human subjects whose rules, values, and practices help constitute both it and the social structure in general. While false-consciousness may become extensive, therefore, it can never be reduced to a mere reflection of the needs of the technical base. The relation between human subjects and the social structure their practices constitute remains dialectical, however unfree human action may in fact be.

As a corollary to the proposition that human subjectivity is more complex than Marcuse's extreme "one-dimensional" analysis allows, I have suggested that he also offers an over-functionalized view of language, psychology and social structure.[7] Human language may become debased, but it cannot be reduced only to technical terms. Human psychology may be more adaptable (or variable) than Freud allows, but there is little evidence that mimesis, as described by Marcuse, could ever become the basic process of cognitive and emotional development. Finally, like human subjectivity itself, social structure is complex; changes in social structure are not reducible to a continuous process of harmonious adjustment, creating ever greater technological hegemony.

Marcuse's extreme thesis, and the despair implicit in it, has manifest political consequences. First, it encour-

ages us to overlook the very real struggles for human self-consciousness and liberation, however inadequate, that exist in many sectors of society. Secondly, in exaggerating the degree and misunderstanding the character of political quiescence, it at once fosters a sense of hopelessness with the present situation and a search for revolutionary heroes immune to the debasing socialization of society. This can have the unfortunate consequence of widening the breach between those whose struggle for self-liberation may share more common characteristics than Marcuse's analysis allows and whose long-term interests may have more in common than either sees today. And perhaps of greater significance, Marcuse's analysis of contemporary subjectivity leaves little reason to believe that humans are capable of any substantial freedom, let alone the sweeping liberation his more optimistic moments suggest.

In presenting an analysis likely to unnecessarily divide potential allies and a concept of subjectivity that cannot sustain a serious notion a human freedom, Marcuse's stark "one-dimensional" thesis implies a quiescent political strategy. Divided from allies, student radicals will revolt, fail and despair; or, overwhelmed by the utter hopelessness of it all, without a realizable goal of freedom, radicals will withdraw into tight little theoretically

pure circles and not even try to be politically relevant. And while Marcuse's sweeping and quite impossible vision of liberation may spur action for a while, it will also lead inevitably to defeat, despair and withdrawal. The failure of Marcuse's extreme formulation of apathy as a condition to aid explanation, and his "biological foundation for socialism" to provide a vision, is truly poignant. For the values of human liberation, enlightenment and survival so dear to Marcuse, as he argues, are under severe threat today and in need of rigorous defense. Part of that defense, however, undoubtedly is a more adequate explanation of why people don't participate in politics than the extreme concept of absolute political mortification allows.

As I have suggested, Marcuse, to his credit, does offer a more tenable thesis of relative political mortification. The essential elements of his thesis are as follows: (1) a powerful apolitical ideology of technological rationality; (2) a mass psychology that defuses psychological discontent, both libidinally (repressive desublimation) and aggressively (in the "enemy"); (3) operationalized concepts that trivialize and personalize grievances; (4) a language that undercuts the potential for criticism in oppositional concepts (a modified "one-dimensional language" thesis); (5) expanding privatized

rewards; (6) pseudo-political outlets such as when elections are really only ceremonial plebiscites. Relative political mortification would not signal the end of human intentions but rather the indefinite suspension of the consciousness to form political intentions and act in their terms.

This thesis is clearly superior to his more extreme statement because it does not reduce human subjectivity to a mere reflection of the logic of technics. Instead, the claim is that technological rationality has become such a powerful ideology, abetted by other social forces, that it successfully fools people into believing they have become mere functional units in a technological ensemble. At the same time, however, I have argued that technological rationality is not likely to prove a stable legitimization because it ultimately depends on values external to its own system of rules to motivate behavior. The possibility of penetrating the ideology of technological rationality remains real, therefore, particularly if the economic mechanism falters. The ideological protection technological rationality affords the social system can easily weaken under duress, whether in capitalism or state socialism.

Finally, while the extensive apathy implied by the

concept of relative political mortification certainly has some explanatory power, contemporary withdrawal from politics does not seem to have the full-blown mark of complete false consciousness that even this modified "one-dimensional" thesis implies.

In contrast to Marcuse's thesis on "one-dimensional society," I have suggested that C. Wright Mills offers an alternative and superior analytic framework for explaining non-participation. While some of his work also shades into extreme statements about "cheerful robots" and the like,[8] the body of his writing provides the basis for what I have termed a concept of political subordination: a state of affairs that exists when the scope of the political realm is so narrowly drawn that it clearly can be said to be severely subordinated to the dominant imperatives of the economic and social system. Mills' concept of "mass society" is the paradigmatic example he offers.

For Mills, political subordination occurs when people are denied counter-ideologies, political institutions and modes of life that would help enable them to form political intentions and act in their terms. In a society in which the prevailing ideology focuses on individual merit and achievement; in which the major political parties have programs with important similarities; and in which "poli-

tics" is considered to be contained in the specialized electoral arena distinct from work, culture, leisure and family; troubles and grievances that emerge are not likely to be translated into political issues. Instead, they are allowed to remain personalized or possibly displaced onto inappropriate objects, leaving untouched the source of the malaise and deflecting the formulation of political analysis and strategy.

Moreover, having reviewed Mills' early work on language, and on social structure in The New Men of Power and White Collar, I have drawn the following conclusion: in the terms of the individual, Mills would suggest that we cannot explain why someone does not participate politically without grasping the language the actor would use to explain his or her own withdrawal from politics. In trying to comprehend why people adopt depoliticized roles, therefore, we must not only look at the role models implicit in the dominant ideologies but also the roles the actors believe themselves to be adopting and their explanations for doing so. We do this not because the reasons the actors give necessarily will be an accurate explanation of why they have withdrawn since their self-understanding, while pertinent, may well be based on quite mistaken analysis of the forces that pressured their withdrawal.[9] Indeed, they

may believe themselves to be apathetic and indolent and hold themselves responsible, where, in fact, the political arena rarely offers specific issues that speak to their grievances.

Instead, we do it to discover how the specific depoliticized roles the actors have adopted have been formed and to discover why the actors commit themselves to these. What is characteristically different about Mills' concept of political subordination[10] is that it begins to help us see the social glue vital to depoliticized roles: the active commitment of the actors to them. When we extend his analysis in the directions suggested in the work of Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, and Frank Parkin, we see both how people adapt dominant roles to meet their real life situations (varying with class, ethnic or racial background, worklife, sex, etc.) and how a constellation of such adaptations may, indeed, form a subordinate ideology.

In terms of social structure, Mills does, at times, suggest a complexity of social types and a potential for social change that is sometimes lacking in The Power Elite. In his early book The New Men of Power, he gives his richest description of depoliticization: a range of citizens from those who have quit a political arena that does not speak to their needs, to those who have been

debased into a condition of apathy. It is also here that he suggests there may exist openings within the vicissitudes of social and economic structure for a repoliticizing strategy to be implemented. In helping us to understand how to analyze both why people commit themselves to depoliticized roles, and structural openings for change, Mills provides, at once, a guide for the analysis of non-participation and for strategies on how to extend democratic participation.

Explaining Non-Participation

In this thesis, I have been arguing two related but distinct claims. The first is that there is a full range of concepts at our disposal in the explanation of non-participation. The second is that the concept of political subordination is the most fruitful for inquiry today. Let us review these in turn.

The first claim is primarily conceptual although it does imply a certain theoretical orientation to the study of politics. This orientation may be summarized as follows. Humans are complex both internally and in the relationship they have with other humans and the social structure which they, through their beliefs, actions and institutions help constitute. The very complexity of human

thought and action means that we must always be wary of allowing our theoretical framework to seduce us into the acceptance of what appears to us to be the obvious explanation of the political act.

I have criticized each of the paradigms studied for precisely this flaw. The pluralist focuses on indifference, contentment and apathy; the reformist on rational withdrawal; and the radical on apathy as a condition. The argument here is that all of these are conceptually pertinent to the explanation of non-participation. Although, as we have seen, theorists are often insensitive to this concern.

If there is a fuller range of concepts available for the explanation of non-participation than any of the theorists allow, this implies that the task of each is to demonstrate why a particular concept has been emphasized. Each does this to some degree, engaged in a particular debate at a particular point of theoretical development. So we find Schattschneider, for example, arguing that what appears to be apathy is really rational withdrawal and Marcuse that what appears to be freedom is really profound repression. Nevertheless, with the possible exception of Mills, none of the theorists articulate the complete range of concepts. And all of them, including Mills, fail to

defend the concept they choose to emphasize against this full range.

In explaining non-participation then and successfully defending our particular explanation, we should be aware of the following possibilities. A person may, indeed, be content or simply uninterested in politics and become apathetic; this may explain some aspects of non-participation. The implication here, which should be drawn out and defended, is the presumption that such people have freely chosen to withdraw and are responsible for their decision. If apathy is to be a prime explanation, we must also consider that however free the person may intially be, apathy can itself lead to future inability to know what is in one's interest, cutting one off from important avenues of political thought and action. Therefore, a theorist should be clear whether individual apathy is to serve as an explanation of non-participation with the moral approbation that implies or whether he or she intends to reverse the normal connotation of ordinary language and celebrate apathy as good for the health of a political system. In the latter case, the theorist needs to carefully explain why the connotation in our ordinary usage should be reversed.

As the reform model explains it, people may rationally withdraw from a biased political order. The implication

here that needs defense is that people have a relatively clear understanding of their political situation and that political involvement, given the constraints arrayed against them, is self-defeating and irrational. Political involvement is generally viewed as a worthwhile avenue of human action, albeit one cut off from rational pursuit. The further implication is that people are able to maintain an accurate assessment of the political order in spite of their withdrawal. It is the bias of limited avenues of political action, and the elites that maintain such constricted avenues, that are here held responsible for the non-participation that exists.

Finally, I have argued that people can devolve into a state of political subordination or mortification that leaves them with only a partial or a false understanding of the constraints under which they suffer. Here the self-awareness of the individual (or groups, classes, etc.) becomes one of the constraining factors on the freedom of the individual. Moreover, if such "false-consciousness" is seen to be widespread, social structure itself, not just the way political issues are oriented at a particular time, is likely to be seen in contradiction with political freedom. Given such structural arrangements, issues that seriously advance the interests of the non-participants are

not expected to arise; the problem is to devise a strategy to fundamentally alter these arrangements.

While I am suggesting that each of the concepts explored is pertinent to explaining non-participation, there is nothing improper about a theorist focusing on one or another of the concepts as the one he or she believes to have the most explanatory power. Instead the argument is that theorists need to entertain more self-consciousness about why a particular choice is made and the implied requirement of explaining why other choices are being passed over.

Moreover, making the choice will entail other implications. First, the choice will inform and be dependent upon the interpretation of the available evidence the scholar examines. Secondly, the precise meaning given the concept will vary within certain parameters, depending on the theoretical framework within which it is used. The most important example of this we have studied is the way pluralists "redefine" apathy to include a positive moral orientation at odds with our ordinary language.

The choice of primary conceptual orientation and the specific explanation of the concept will also be tied to the basic theoretical orientation of the student. Pluralists, for example, "redefine" apathy not because they want

to illicitly blame non-participants for their withdrawal but rather because they see limited intrinsic value in participation. Further, too much participation, in their view, will destabilize a regime they presume to be as democratic as possible.

Decisions about which explanation of non-participation to utilize and how to develop a specific explanation will have methodological and political implications when cast against today's world. In stipulating one explanation (or a particular array of them), a theorist also does the following: (1) projects a view about what, in fact, contemporary American politics looks like and whether this is a desirable state of affairs; (2) stipulates a range of what should count as "political"; (3) suggests a view of human nature, including anthropological assumptions about how much and what kind of participation is desirable for the individual and society; (4) describes and evaluates contemporary depoliticization against this image; (5) offers considerations about whether and when contemporary social structure enables or inhibits free action; (6) implies at least one contrast mode of political participation against which contemporary affairs are judged; (7) explains non-participation in such a way that has implications for describing and evaluating future repoliticization

and formulating strategies to advance or retard further participation; (8) ultimately offers an interpretation of the political world which, if it achieves serious consideration, becomes part of the political reality that is its "object" of inquiry.

That these implications should flow from any of the potential explanations of non-participation we have identified is not, of course, a defect of the chosen explanation. Rather it is an element of theorizing per se. To the degree a theorist is aware of these, he or she is in a better position to make these implications as explicit as possible and offer evidence to support them as part of the project of articulating and justifying a particular explanation. The more fully articulated and defended the assumptions undergirding an explanation, the better the explanation is likely to be.

The theoretical task I am suggesting is, of course, not an easy one. In fact, none of the theorists we have studied satisfy its requirements, and their theories suffer for it. If human behavior is complex, fully explained neither by the stated preferences nor the apparent activity of the participants, the danger remains: if we do not articulate the implicit domains entailed by a particular theory, we are more likely to succumb to the temptation of

glibly accepting as reality those appearances that fit the predilections of our own theory. The more successful we are in articulating and evaluating what is implicit in our theory, the more likely is our theory to accurately capture reality.

In suggesting that all of the concepts we have explored have some explanatory purchase in the study of non-participation, I should draw out one implication of this propostion. People today are actually capable of both freeing themselves sufficiently from social constraints to comprehend their real situation, perhaps deciding they are content or perhaps that the political order is not meeting their needs, and of being subdued under partial or false-consciousness of their lot. Against Marcuse, then, I have argued that people are today capable of more responsible action than he allows, and against Berelson and Dahl that false-consciousness must be considered as a possible entry point to the understanding of motivation and action.[11] Therefore, while my argument is in part conceptual, its usefulness remains dependent upon an analysis of present human potential within the parameters of contemporary social structure. All theorists will not agree with this analysis.

I do believe, however, that it is an argument that

warrants a high degree of general agreement, substantiated by powerful support in two related areas. For one thing, the conceptual range I am suggesting conforms to our ordinary usage of language, with which we typically try to ascertain when we (or others) are acting freely, when our actions advance or harm our interests and when we may be acting or have acted under irrational impulses or delusions. Secondly, we attempt to achieve this knowledge in order to enhance our ability to act freely and ascertain our responsibility for what we do. The desire for self-reflective action itself, particularly characteristic of today's world, implies the full conceptual range we have suggested, from free, responsible action to unfree action engendered by causes outside our awareness or control. If we desire to be more reflective, this implies there are times when the reasons for our action are not transparent to us.

In addition to having articulated a range of concepts pertinent to the explanation of non-participation, I have also suggested my choice for the one with the greatest explanatory power today. I have called this political subordination and chosen it for two distinct reasons.

In the first place, political subordination seems best able to describe and evaluate the times in which we live. This is, of course, the precise area in which political

theory becomes explicitly politically engaged. Our critique of pluralism, reforism and "one-dimensional man" constitutes support for this evaluation.

To review, there are certain relationships today which an explanation of non-participation needs to be able take into account for. Empirically, it must be able to explain why non-participation, whether measured by the simple (and very limited) test involving voting or by tests over an arry of political activities, is correlated with class and educational level.[12] It also needs to account for the following relationship between the ideology of equal opportunity, the ideology of sacrifice and contemporary social structure. Americans today occupy jobs that are marked by numerous gradations (often unnecessary from the point of view of economic efficiency) of "function" and rank,[13] within labor markets segmented by status, race and sex, within a dual economy of unionized corporate jobs and non-unionized smaller market firms. People are further divided socially be sex, race and class; the development of atomistic urban and suburban living arrangements; a culture that encourages living vicariously through the television[14] rather than in the community; and finding the good life in consumer goods. Yet, there seems to be a shared orientation to their situation which is marked by a desire to see

themselves as free and responsible agents contributing to a tendency to hold onto a dream for advancement for oneself or one's children, in spite of important economic and social constraints on their freedom. One principle constraint, I have argued, is the fragmented nature of social and economic ties, imposing severe obstacles to forming common identities and organizations that could forge a united political purpose out of vague individual discontent. Indeed, perhaps the most important orientation people have in common is that of a competitive posture with respect to others, augmenting the disunity. Nevertheless, people in post-traditional societies seem capable of a relatively high degree of self-consciousness and often attempt to become freer by trying to comprehend the reason for their actions.

Given a vacuum of the type of political organization that would help people identify grievances and articulate them as issues, the ideology of equal opportunity generates alternate sets of self-explanations of their real situation, with the ideology of sacrifice constituting a primary alternative. It is not surprising, therefore, that people often are unable to grasp the political significance of inchoate troubles. Neither should we be surprised to find them turning them into a feeling of self-blame for failure

that has structural roots, or displacing blame onto others equally troubled; or lapsing into the kind of subordinate ideology laced with cynicism that Frank Parkin describes.

It is through Mills' examination of troubles in mass society, his early focus on the vocabulary of the actors, and his analysis of the specific strata within society that we were able to begin to unearth how these characteristics bear on the explanation of non-participation. The investigation was strengthened through the work of Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, particularly their emphasis on the ideology of sacrifice and self-blame for failure and the necessity of comprehending the self-understanding of the agents under study in the development of an interpretive account of behavior. I suggested, finally, that this latter point needs to be modified to account for hidden motives, vague discontents, partial and even false self-interpretation on the part of the agents.

Political subordination, then, helps us account for two essential components of contemporary political life: first, the fact of depoliticization based on class and education; secondly, the relation between a politically fragmenting social structure that itself is depoliticizing <u>and</u> a common attempt to see oneself as a free and responsible agent in spite of important constraints on freedom. Therefore, I have concluded that, while the other explana-

tions studied remain pertinent in explaining some aspects of non-participation, political subordination warrants primary consideration.

There is a second reason I have found the explanation of political subordination extrapolated from Mills superior. This is distanced from the specific conclusion that we live in a society in which political understanding, participation and organization is unnecessarily constrained by contemporary social structure. Because beyond this conclusion this mode of exploring contemporary political relationships helps us account for the present complexity of human thought and action. It could be applied by us at other times to reach other conclusions about how severely participation is constrained, or other theorists could use it today and reach different conclusions than I have. It is, then, a starting point for inquiry at a higher level of generality than the specific conclusions reached here, although itself not free of political implications. William Connolly summarizes these when he writes:

> The interpretation offered here . . . projects a multilayered or faceted view of persons and social relations. It requires distinctions between explicit and implicit beliefs and between conscious and unconscious purposes; it affirms the possibility of deception, distortion, ambivalence, and projection in relations with others and oneself; it insists that some degree of self-consciousness, autonomous action and moral integrity are possible human achievements; it recognizes an attenuated, historicized conception of

> natural human ends whereby some institutionalized ends [might not be able to] . . . sustain the allegiance of a populace unless they are mystified or specified in futuristic terms.[15]

As a general rule for social inquiry, then, I am suggesting that investigation should not remain at the level of what, at first glance, neatly conforms to the predilection of a particular theory. To overcome this tendency, I have previously argued that a theorist needs to consider a series of implications that flow from a particular explanation.[16] Now the argument is that the complexity of human behavior necessitates that we incorporate awareness of this complexity in our mode of inquiry. This will also help guard against prejudicial and superficial explanations, ranging from the "contentment" of Berelson to the "one-dimensional man" of Marcuse. Interpretation, then, needs to press beyond the presumptions of the theorist to consider the actual self-interpretation of the agents studied. It should, however, push beyond this level as well to discover what stands behind the account given by the agents and what in that account may be misleading or untrue. There are, of course, problems here as well. Connolly concludes:

> An interpretation wishing to both respect appearances and to reveal what they conceal can be disciplined, but it should not pretend to be politically neutral . . . to clarify then [what is implicit or repressed] is to give them a distinct shape and accent previously absent; to convince those to whom they are attributed to accept the new formulations is partly to draw out

> what was there already and partly to change it and its role in their lives. In the sphere of political reflection, discovery and creation are not neatly separable. And since ideas, beliefs, and aspirations enter into political relations, that means that political reflection, once it is heard and heeded, or heard and repudiated, never leaves things as they were.[17]

Nevertheless, these problems exist as part of a mode of study best able to capture the human complexity that shapes our thought and action. Theorists that avoid the type of inquiry I am arguing for because they fear it leads to biased analysis do so at great risk to their own work. For they, at once, are likely to miss evidence that, once considered, will render their theory more profound, while at the same time slip into an account prone to glibly accepting what appears to be the obvious explanation of behavior as reality. For the sake of artificial neutrality, they will avoid articulating how their particular work is politically engaged and wind up with what we may truly call a biased account.

Explaining non-participation and the two faces of apathy

There are, as we have seen, many concepts pertinent to the explanation of non-participation. These include contentment, cynicism, indifference, indolence, rational withdrawal, despair, confusion, political subordination and political mortification. Apathy, however, has played a

central role along a range of theories, and as we shall see, it retains an important place in explaining non-participation, still viewed by some contemporary theorists, for example, as desirable for a healthy democratic system. Should more stable and apparently "consensual" times reappear, it would not be surprising to see apathy resurrected as a dominant explanation in political science literature. Finally, apathy continues to be an important, and perhaps the dominant, popular and journalistic explanation of non-participation, and it is a predominant self-explanation of non-participants. For this reason, I will try to clarify some issues involved in the use of this term.

My departure point is the ambiguity inherent in our ordinary usage of the term, which I have discussed in the chapters on Berelson, Dahl and Mills. Generally speaking, when we say someone is apathetic, we imply the agent has some level of responsibility, although the language is open enough to allow us to address the situation in which people find themselves. So when we say, "John is apathetic about nuclear war," we are at the same time holding John responsible for being indifferent to something he should care about. When we say, "The masses are apathetic about nuclear war," an acknowledgement exists that there may be something about being in a "mass" that renders someone indolent. When Mills, for example, talks about apathy, he

is suggesting that mass society creates apathy in people who, under more appropriate circumstances, would freely participate. Whereas when Berelson uses it, he suggests that the individual's apathy is related to an unconstrained choice not to participate. These distinctions are all important both in explaining why someone does not participate and in assigning responsibility for the non-participation.

Moreover, because we view participation as itself a "good," enhancing in particular a person's ability to know his or her and the public's interest, I have rejected Berelson's attempt to alter the normative import of the term apathy. If apathy is seen, as it is in our ordinary usage, as a term of approbation, it becomes all important where one is locating the responsibility for the apathy.

Ludwig Wittgenstein has suggested that there are times when we might need to revise concepts to improve our ability to use language clearly. He writes, ". . . a reform of ordinary language for particular purposes, an improvement in our terminology designed to prevent misunderstanding in practice, is perfectly possible."[18]

We should, I believe, apply this to apathy in the following way. First, when we speak of apathy based in the relatively free choice an individual makes, we may use the

term while being clear in our explanation why we have arrived at this conclusion. Secondly, when using the term to locate responsibility outside the subject, we especially need to be clear what we consider to be the source of apathy, because such is not the primary use of apathy in ordinary language. One way to do this is to use other terms that more fully capture what we mean. Political subordination and political mortification are two possible substitutes I have suggested. Each expression captures different senses of political apathy as a condition fostered by a repressive social structure.

There are several other considerations worth noting. First, apathy is a concept that suggests motivation and describes quality of behavior.[19] Saying that someone is apathetic, however, suggests nothing about whether a certain range of acts are performed. Although unusual, there is nothing illogical about a person being politically apathetic and engaging in numerous political acts. The person may not care about politics but be politically active anyway. Berelson and Dahl commit the error of confusing the language of motivation with that of action whenever they describe all non-participants as apathetic. Conversely, they err in not seeing, as Schattschneider suggests, that people may withdraw from politics precisely

because they care greatly about the constitution of the present political order.

Secondly, while individuals may, if appropriate, be held responsible for their apathy, they do not simply choose to be apathetic. Apathy relates to a constellation of personal choices and concerns. For instance, I may choose to focus my attention on my salvation in the hereafter, becoming apathetic about destruction of the environment. To the extent my choices are meaningfully said to be free, I can be held responsible. But, even when apathy is my responsibility, it is more like a frame of mind or a state I have put myself in than a choice. And when the choices leading to apathy are constrained, apathy is akin to a condition foisted upon me.

Finally, although I have suggested that a high level of participation is desirable, some political apathy is necessary. I cannot, at the same time, care about everything that is politically relevant. To care and work on certain issues is to hold others in abeyance and, perhaps, become apathetic with respect to them. In fact, trying to care about everything I consider to be important in some sense could lead to a personal collapse and total apathy. Even as I suggest that participation is very desirable therefore, I must acknowledge a distinction between neces-

sary and unnecessary apathy.

Apathy, a central concept in the explanation of political behavior, nevertheless is fraught with certain ambiguities and prone to occasional misuse in theory. I have drawn these distinctions not to suggest what role apathy should play in any particular explanation. Instead I am arguing that, however it is used, the term should clearly specify the author's intention because of the inherent implication for assigning responsibility for non-participation.

Explaining Non-Participation in the Future

There is a central problem for political inquiry today, prompted by the convergence of several "mini-crises" facing the United States. First government at all levels is facing, as James O'Connor puts it, a "fiscal crisis." Today capitalism seems unable to generate both high levels of private appropriation and sufficient tax dividends to provide services necessary for social harmony and necessities that benefit private capital but which it is unwilling to bear the cost of (such as education, roads, etc.). A contradiction therefore begins to emerge between expanding the socialization of the costs of production and the pri-

vate appropriation of profit. Secondly, the economic growth that characterized the American economy after World War II has slackened, leading to deep recession and severe unemployment. Even if a "recovery" occurs, it is an open question how the rate of unemployment will respond. Thirdly, as Jurgen Habermas suggests, the intervention of the state to correct systems dysfunctions removes the "nature-like" character of market relationships, politicizing and posing a threat to the legitimacy of the system. The question then emerges, how does advanced capitalism raise the allocation granted private capital accumulation to generate growth, maintain the tax base the state is dependent on, and maintain the social harmony necessary for the austerity this change will entail? To do so, it must defuse the repoliticizing tendency inherent in state intervention in the economy by making continued depoliticization plausible to the citizenry. As we shall see, certain explanations of non-participation can contribute to this unstated system need.

The present code word for the above economic project is "reindustrialization." In general, reindustrialization implies a shift of resources toward private investment, growth and state "defense" spending, and away from social spending. In its more modest version, it is a retreat from

the institution of social programs, such as those that characterized the "New Deal" and the "Great Society." At its most extreme, it is a call for dismantling many of the welfare state institutions and business regulations that exist in this country, along with an effort to rekindle the entrepreneurial spirit of risk taking and the work ethic, by greatly rewarding those able to succeed in the competitive scramble. Allowing those who are able to accumulate wealth, it is claimed, may even solve the problem of poverty.

George Gilder, an extreme exponent of this position, writes in his recent Wealth and Poverty:

> Our central problem arises from a deep conflict between the processes of material progress and the ideals of "progressive" government and culture. Equality, bureaucratic rationality, predictibility, sexual liberation, political "populism," and the pursuit of pleasure--all the values of advanced culture--are quite simply inconsistent with the disciplines and investments of economic and technical advance. The result is that all modern governments pretend to promote economic growth but in practice doggedly obstruct it.[20]

The heart of this version of the reindustrialization solution is to reward initiative and productivity among those positioned to generate economic growth within corporate capitalism. Reducing taxes on capital and savings, increasing military production, dismantling business regulations and even offering subsidies to promising enter-

prises are part of this project.

On the other side, however, a set of disciplines must be imposed on those unable to contribute to the reindustrialist growth plan. For the notion of growth in consumption as the economy expands now gives way to a channeling of resources from consumption into investment. Welfare recipients must receive lower levels of support; quality of life issues ranging from environmental concerns to health and safety on the job are played down; worker "productivity" in government and business is increased; and wage levels are kept down. All those not able to resist--that is those in low growth industries or areas of the country, the unemployed, disadvantaged, and disabled--will suffer even more than they presently do.

For those who refuse, greater discipline may be necessary. Social Services can be cut further, inflation used against those unable to increase their wages or benefits, and social service agencies utilized to keep track of a politically troublesome underclass. And if these fail and protests mount, more direct legal and political repression is available, particularly if the reindustrialization plan encounters no opposition other than that of the now feeble welfare state liberals.[21] As William Connolly argues, reindustrialization necessitates

depoliticization:

> If the program for the reindustrialization of America were converted into practice, it would mean the de-democratization of America. For it would place the most crucial economic decisions beyond the reach of public accountability and would shunt constituencies and public needs that do not fit into the reindustrialization syndrome toward the margin of economic life and social legitimacy. . . . [And] a number of cautious journalists and social scientists, predictably, will ignore the gap between the production of social evils and the generation of legitimate issues. They will continue to cultivate a studied innocence about the historical course we are on by equating democratic politics with electoral competition.[22]

Gilder's extreme version of reindustrialization does not now have the necessary political support to become ascendant, however, if the Reagan administration's somewhat weaker plan should succeed, this circumstance could change. Perhaps more likely, a moderate scheme will gain ascendancy, obtaining support from political forces in the center, including segments of the Democratic Party.

This strategy would agree on the need for government austerity, recognizing that, for reindustrialization to proceed especially in a low growth economy, the new capital for investment would not be coming from the investors. "Defense" spending, while lower than set by President Reagan, would continue to increase, while social programs might increase somewhat from his austere cuts. Although there will be acknowledgement of the inefficiency of some

past government programs, there also will be some insistence on a larger role for government in partnership with business to help "manage" the economy than Gilder would like. Effective management of limited revenues will be stressed, while overtly maintaining some measure of social compassion, although, in practice, the latter will be modified by the need to accumulate capital in private hands. While the emphasis will be more on equitable sharing of the burdens, the burdens will remain unfairly shared. A high degree of depoliticization will remain essential to this task. How will it be explained?

Both the extreme and moderate reindustrialization plans depend, in part, on a technocratic rationale to legitimize themselves. Both will need to extend beyond it as well for good reason. As I suggested in the critique of Marcuse, technocratic legitimations are poor substitutes for explicit norms and values. On their own, they are incapable of helping us understand why we attempt a task, although they can help tell us how to do it and who would do it well. For Gilder, expertise is augmented by initiative, the work ethic, and ultimately growth to provide the greatest good for those who produce. His desire is to help us break out of "hedonism" and think again in terms of a bright economic future. The moderate plan will also try to

answer the question put by Lester Thurow: how does a state in a zero growth economy decide the best way to allocate its limited resources? Effective management and planning will be seen here as instrumental to the goal of "fairly" distributing the burdens until economic growth takes off once again. Where followers of Gilder will accuse opponents of being hedonistic, "adolescent nay-sayers," "commie dupes," or "washed up welfare state liberals," the moderates will accuse them of being "unrealistic," unwilling to cope with the tough choices necessary in a "modern complex world" and temporarily limited economy.

If in both cases the depoliticized system will incorporate a modified technocratic rationale, how are social scientists likely to explain the non-participation that will be further entrenched should this project be successful? Samuel Huntington gave a preliminary answer in a 1975 report he helped prepare for the "Trilateral Commission," one member of which was Jimmy Carter, later to be our technocratic president (and failed moderate proto-reindustrialist) par excellance.

The problem today, Huntington argued, is that our political system has become "overloaded" principally by enlarging the role of the "welfare state" beyond what it can reasonably be expected to accomplish. By overextending

certain functions of government, we weaken its authority, disabling it from being able to do what is really necessary. The recent democratic surge of the 1960's and 1970's is partly responsible for the present crisis, dramatically increasing what was expected of government. Today he argues, formerly marginal groups now occupy their rightful place in the system, and the system no longer requires excessive participation from a democratic point of view and can't afford it economically and politically. If participation slackens, as Huntington thinks it will and should, what will replace the call for the extension of democracy in the legitimation of the system? Arguing that we err decisively in exaggerating the degree to which authority for our political system should issue from democratic participation, Huntington suggests new sources of legitimacy, in particular expertise, seniority, experience, and special talents. Substituting expertise for participation, we lessen system demands, increase efficiency, allow the system to function under less duress, and thereby restore authority to a system now more effective, legitimated with a technocratic rationale:

> Predictively, the implication of this analysis is that in due course the democratic surge and its resulting dual distemper in government will moderate. Prescriptively the implication is that those developments ought to take place in order

> to avoid the deleterious consequences of the surge and to restore balance between vitality and governablility in the democratic system.[23]

Restoring the balance is essential, Huntington argues, because in the United States the ideals of democracy pose a threat to democratic government. Lacking traditional and aristocratic ideals, commitment to the ideals of democracy and equality in periods of "creedal passion" delegitimize existing institutions by undermining their ability to function effectively. Thus the strength of a vital, participatory society is also a weakness for governing effectively and ultimately "democratically." The threat, then, is neither primarily external nor from internal subversion but from the very ideals of democracy.

Although he doesn't express it this way, Huntington suggests a revision of our ideas about democracy. It bears more than apparent similarity to Berelson, although written twenty years later.

> . . . the effective operation of a democratic political system usually requires some measure of apathy and non-involvement on the part of some individuals and groups. . . . In itself, this marginality is inherently undemocratic, but it has also been one of the factors which has enabled democracy to function effectively.[24]

Today, Huntington reports rather casually, marginal groups are now "becoming full participants in the political system." There is then, the justification from a

democratic point of view, to cease overloading the political system with "demands that extend its functions and undermine its authority." "Less marginality on the part of some groups then needs to be replaced by more self-restraint on the part of all groups."

For Huntington, while democracy is undoubtedly a worthwhile value, it is "not necessarily optimized when it is maximized." Just as there are desirable limits to economic growth, "there are also potentially desirable limits to the indefinite extension of political democracy." "Democracy," he concludes, "will have a longer life if it has a more balanced existence." And as "creedal passion" turns to "creedal passivity," Huntington is likely to explain the non-participation of those shuttled to the side of the social and political order as apathy, deflecting attention from political constraints, in the examination of non-participation. If internalized by non-participants, a vague self-blame will haunt them, further supporting the technocrat's need to be left alone to manage the society. And both elites and marginals will accept their roles as good for a society better run by elites capable of understanding and managing it in all of its "complexity." This is the delicate "balance" Huntington hopes to fashion.

In his more recent American Politics--The Promise of

Disharmony (1981), Huntington puts the above perspective in the context of an analysis of cycles of American political involvement, based on the disjuncture he suggests exists between American ideas and institutions. He begins by criticizing consensus, pluralist and class-conflict theorists for overemphasizing the role of material factors on political history and understating the power of values and moral passions.

In America, there is a basic consensus on values that is intrinsic to national identity. This "American creed," consisting of "liberty, equality, individualism, democracy, and the rule of law under a constitution," has remained remarkably stable over time and is likely to continue into the near future. Yet, there exists a gap between American ideals and American institutions, particularly the ideal of equality in an inegalitarian society that creates a basic dynamic necessary to understand American political history.

The cleavage between idea and fact creates an "American form of cognitive dissonance" and a peculiarly "American dilemma." In order to be themselves, Americans must believe in the creed, but the more they believe in the creed, the more "against themselves" they are because they become hostile to their institutions due to the contest of Ideal vs. Institution (IvI): "the legitimacy of American

government varies inversely with belief in American political ideals."[25]

The gap between ideal and political reality stands behind the four cycles he identifies. Moralistic reform is the attempt to eliminate the gap, an attempt which cannot completely succeed. Such periods of "creedal passion" are followed by cynical times during which, incapable of indefinite moral indignation and having attempted reform, people surrender to the feeling the gap can't be eliminated. Yet, cynicism requires an indefinite ability to cope with the cognitive dissonance caused by the gap, with no prospect of doing anything about it. The resolution is found in complacent periods during which the gap is ignored, involving "a dulling of perceptual clarity." People may know the gap exists, but they interest themselves in other matters. During these periods of "creedal passivity": "cognitive dissonance lurks uneasily beneath the surface of conscience but is not sufficiently commanding to trouble people seriously."[26] Americans, however, cannot remain complacent about values for long since they are such a basic part of their identity. If still reluctant to admit to the existence of the IvI gap, they may affirm falsely that American values are fully practiced and lapse into hypocrisy, paving the way for exposure by their

own American ideals ushering in the next "creedal passion" period. Intense moral indignation will follow.[27]

Four periods of "creedal passion" have occurred in American history, during which Americans have tried to return to "first principles." The American Revolution, the Jacksonian period, the Progressive era, and the 1960's and 1970's were all characterized by distinctive political cleavage, major reform efforts, political and social realignment and intense involvement. Occurring roughly every 60 years, the next period, Huntington expects, will be the period from the 2010's-2020's.

During these periods, the disharmony characteristic of American ideals vs. practice explodes in a "moral intensity" without which the system "could not change and hence avoid stagnation and decay." Long-term system stability, therefore, depends on these periods of adjustment. However, the institutions whose power, Huntington argues, is necessary for the continuation of the society and its ideals, come under assault. Due to its dual nature, Huntington concludes, a "creedal passion period is American politics' finest--and most dangerous--hour."[28]

To this point, Huntington's argument seems to be an interesting descriptive analysis of American political history, committed to the ideals <u>and</u> institutions of Ameri-

can politics. It also appears to be a step away from his call for "apathy" for the Trilateral Commission, now apparently describing the complacency only as one stage in a broader historical dialectic that needs to continue into the future.[29]

Yet there is a parallel argument at work as well. The needs of "economic development" and the need for protection from "external threats" render American ideals, if not obsolete, in need of serious revision. Once this argument is unearthed, we are taken immediately back to his report to the "Trilateral Commission," although in a more sophisticated and elusive version. Yet, the implication to be drawn is the same: corporate capitalism is in serious tension with democratic aspirations--it is the latter that should be tempered.

Huntington's argument is as follows. The character of reform in the twentieth century is different, in critical respects, from earlier periods. In the nineteenth century, American ideals were directed at the breakdown of traditional economic and political institutions and did so successfully. The historical development of new political and economic institutions went together with progress in realizing American ideals. However, in this century, reform has been relatively less successful, perhaps most

successful in the case of Blacks. The reason he gives is that reform in the recent past "was directed at the elimination or modification of modern political and economic institutions that had emerged in the course of historical development."

Reform in the 20th century, therefore, involved more "a restoration of the past" than the realization of the future, and progress (ideals) and history (development) work increasingly at cross purposes:[30]

> . . . an increasingly sophisticated economy and active involvement in world affairs seem likely to create stronger needs for hierarchy, bureaucracy, centralization of power, expertise, big government specifically, big organizations generally. In some way or another, society will respond to these needs, while still attempting to realize the values of the American Creed to which they are so contradictory. If history is against progress [ideals], for how long will progress resist history?[31]

Huntington believes that the American Creed is likely to remain intact, with the periodicity of the past prevailing in the future. He fears that the system might get stuck in the oscillation between cynicism and moralism, further depleting the authority weakened by the 1960's and 1970's. Weakened authority could generate demands for authoritarian structures more capable of providing functional needs than are present structures. His hope, however, is that:

> . . . the cycle of response could stabilize to a greater degree than it has in the past. Americans could acquire a greater understanding of their case of cognitive dissonance and through this understanding come to live with their dilemma on somewhat easier terms than they have in the past, in due course evolving a more complex but also more coherent and constant response to this problem.[32]

Huntington's argument is now clear. In order for American institutions to function effectively, achieving post industrial economic and political development while protecting us from foreign enemies and allowing us to act forcefully in the international arena, they must regain lost authority. This requires a swing from moralism and cynicism. But to what? The first temptation is to suggest his argument is a veiled call for a return to complaceny. He writes, after all, "American political institutions are more open, liberal and democratic than those of any other major society, now or in the past."

But there is a deeper message. We are just coming off a round of democratic surge. While American ideals succeeded in advancing civil rights, in other areas they were in conflict with the imperatives of modern economic and political development. The legacy is to weaken the authority of our institutions while being unable to change their undemocratic, massive, hierarchical, and bureaucratic character. Economic concentration will not be mitigated by the

moral fervor inherent in the cognative dissonance of the IvI gap, for to change significantly our major institutions has no less than "history" against it. We can only weaken their authority through unrealistic activism, ultimately threatening our survival as a modern democratic polity.

If the institutions will not change without disasterous results, then our orientation to our ideals must. More subtle now than in 1975, Huntington implicitly is calling for a "realistic" attitude toward those ideals. His analysis at once predicts the cyclical continuation of the IvI gap and pleas for a more "complex" attitude toward the American dilemma that would tacitly change the nature of the gap. Behind this duality is the transparent fear that we will get caught in an oscillation between moralism and cynicism, thereby undermining dominant American interests.

Huntington's acknowledged solution is to call for resisting extremes "in any of these responses" to the IvI gap:

> The greatest danger to the IvI gap would come when any substantial portion of the American population carried to an extreme <u>any one of these responses</u>. . . . To maintain their ideals and institutions, Americans have no recourse but to temper and balance their response to the IvI gap.[33]

But is it really extremes in all the responses--

moralism, cynicism, complacency, hypocrisy--that he's equally worried about? In apparent contradiction, earlier in his work, he writes:

> The responses of cynicism, complacency, and hypocrisy to natural problems of cognitive dissonance do not have major direct consequences for the stability and continuity of the political system. . . . None of these responses challenge the continuing existence of the IvI gap.[34]

It is moralism, the cycle of reform and participation, that threatens the gap by trying to bring reality into accord with principles. Huntington, I believe, most fears excess here.[35]

How can such excess be mitigated? Following is Huntington's unacknowledged solution. His whole work is a treatise on the superiority of American democracy to democracy elsewhere and the limits we must observe in further attempting to democratize it in today's complex world. By calling for a more complex attitude toward the existence of the gap, Huntington tacitly suggests an acceptance of the discontinuity in ways that undermine the "creedal passion" phase and justify the "creedal passivity" phase. If internalized, this attitude would render complacency not just a cycle in America history but a characteristic of our attitude toward the ideals themselves. Thus, while he upholds American ideals, he also insinuates into

them elements which reflexively would reconstitute and narrow the IvI gap. Underneath the call for a balanced response to the existence of the gap, then, is an attempt to bring ideals into closer harmony with the realities of international power.[36] Impatient with prolonged moralism and cynicism, Huntington nudges us to the next stage of the cycle, attempting as well to make the attitudes characteristic of that stage a more permanent feature of American ideology and consciousness. The overt call is for a healthy and permanent dose of moderation. The tacit call is for more apathy.

Huntington's argument is interesting from one other point of view pertinent to our study, for while he appears to be a technocratic theorist, there is a difference.[37] I have argued earlier that technocratic roles in themselves will prove a weak legitimation for depoliticizing strategies. But notice what Huntington offers--a style of technocratic theory in which people can also feel as though they believe in the old American Creed.

In practice, people are asked to follow the dictates of modern economic and political development. In theory, they are asked to hold onto their beliefs as the creative motor of social change but to moderate their attitude to the disharmony between ideal and institution. What is the

basis of this attitude? We are asked to maturely recognize that present institutions are "modern," and thereby in their necessary form. It is the ideals about which we must become realistic. But to temper the ideals, increasing complacency, is to legitimize those institutions that would manage our affairs most successfully if we would oblige by adopting technocratic roles. To the extent we accept his argument, Huntington succeeds in injecting into anemic technocratic roles a healthy dose of abstract belief in--and complacency toward the practice of--democratic values. Democracy is used to legitimize future depoliticization.[38]

Samuel Huntington, then, presents a sophisticated argument to make a simple point--one made by Berelson twenty years ago. When decoded, it is that American capitalism requires a healthy dose of non-participation to prevent democratic ideals from getting out of hand. Declaring the basic problems of justice solved, Huntington does not adequately answer the questions posed differently by Dahl, Schattschneider, Bachrach, Mills and Marcuse: are there significant numbers of Americans illicitly shuttled to the side of the political arena, either withdrawn from or subordinated to a system that does not respond to their need? Is politics itself, unnecessarily subordinated to

other imperatives, such as capitalist development, limiting its scope and creating a need for depoliticization?

In the end, Huntington brings into the 1980's the type of analysis offered by Berelson. For the institutions of modern society to follow their natural course of development, they must be free from a future explosion between nineteenth century ideals and twenty-first century economic and political power. Because these economic and political institutions also provide the basis for "democracy" to be able to provide functional needs and "defense," they need to be protected from the "excesses" of democracy. Huntington contributes to this cause by trying to make depoliticized technocratic roles seem attractive to us by allowing us to believe that by adopting them we <u>also</u> become realistic democrats. In doing so, he provides an incipient explanation of non-participation particularly suitable for the austerity of modern reindustrialization: moderation in participation is now seen as a sign of a mature democratic polity. Cast in these terms, it helps justify and, if internalized, helps foster the depoliticization necessary for the reindustrialist's project. The "promise of disharmony" dissolves into the wish for apathy.

The Future of Depoliticization

There is reason to believe that Samuel Huntington's fear for the future authority of American political institutions is well founded. In 1981, the Reagan administration was able to enact profound policy changes, only fifteen years after liberals had unleashed their "Great Society." According to Walter Dean Burnham, such policy shifts are almost always "crucial symptoms of critical realignments" of the major political forces housed in each of the dominant parties. However, over the last twenty years, something different seems to be at work, for no "critical realignments of a classic type" seem to have taken place: Reagan's victory, for example, was unaccompanied by an ideological shift to the right.

Instead, Burnham argues, we seem to be experiencing "further stages in a general crisis of the regime as a whole, and hence of the socioeconomic system which undergirds it."[39] The crisis is profound, including in its domain severe problems in the domestic economy, in the corporate "empire," and at home in the cultural system and the state. The fiscal and legitimation crises we have reviewed seem unresponsive to any "quick fixes," raising profound questions about the immediate political future.

As we have seen, reindustrialization strategies address this crisis by shifting governmental priorities from promoting consumption to accumulation, attempting to revitalize the capitalist mode of production. Such strategies have advantages, shifting the terms of present political debate away from discredited liberal welfare state programs and thereby avoiding the resentment of those whose daily reality is shaped by the ideology of sacrifice. Nevertheless, the Reagan economic program has produced issues that undermine its authority, particularly on unemployment and nuclear weapons, and its credibility is weakened when it insists on self-reliance <u>and</u> makes it impossible for many workers and members of the underclass to work for a living.

Burnham concludes:

> If the accumulation strategies of the far right also fail--a prospect which looks increasingly likely--then what else is left? Very probably, one of two things: a first rate political breakdown and regime crisis possibly requiring some form of dictatorship to cope with the debacle, or the rise of a socialist political movement on the ruins of--and extending far beyond--the Democratic party.[40]

These problems are further accentuated because each of the two major political parties faces severe tests in being able to hold together coalitions necessary to push through future programs. While more cohesive, even the Republican

Party under Ronald Reagan is showing signs of strain. The liberal Republicans have always been uncomfortable with him. If his program falters, they will have opportunity to maneuver. Richard Vigeurie's new populist rhetoric indicates increasing disaffection on the free-marketeer right, opposing putting all the Republican eggs in the corporate basket.

The Democratic Party will face even more profound problems, trying to coalesce some corporate sectors, workers, women, Blacks and Hispanics, the "Freeze movement" and the underclass. It is caught in two related binds. If it is to hold together as a coalition, the program it advances to reassert economic growth will have to aid capital accumulation, keep unemployment at "reasonable" levels and appear to protect the disadvantaged. Specifically, the policies it has supported in defense of the underclass are not only under increasing economic constraints, given the imperative of accumulation, but also pose a threat to the identity of workers. If workers explain their self-sacrifice in terms of their identity as free and responsible persons, what appears to them as "giveaways" may have the appearance of demeaning their sacrifice and, thereby, lessening their sense of freedom. Another New Deal coalition will be no easy task.

The state, itself, will find its options limited, regardless of which party prevails. On the one hand, it is expected to be responsive to citizens through elections; on the other, under present arrangements, it must continue to support private accumulation. It can appear to do both only if it succeeds in maintaining a depoliticized public. Yet, Huntington notwithstanding, this may prove a more difficult task than is generally assumed. For one thing, certain legitimations have worn thin, particularly the belief that we will all soon be getting a bigger share of a constantly expanding pie. For another, either strategy for reindustrialization will accentuate class and sectoral cleavages with, at a minimum, opposition from both the free marketeer right, and the left and the underclass. Here the critical question will remain whether the discontent these cleavages represent will be able to be translated into effective political action.

The dilemma of the Democratic Party and the underclass provide a good example of this problem. The present Democratic agenda is likely to be unable to incorporate a serious program to speak to the needs of the underclass, although it will certainly attempt to do so symbolically. Without such a program, the "party of non-voters"[41] could increase--disaffection that overwhelmingly hurts the Demo-

cratic Party more than the Republican Party. Yet, what will happen with this disaffection? Will it translate into effective depoliticization, allowing accumulation strategies to proceed, while hurting Democratic electoral aspirations? Will left dissidents within the party be able to fashion a program to mobilize the disaffected as a serious faction? Or will the disaffected be organized in extra-party political institutions?; or will they simply engage in proto-political or apolitical activity? This is the particular dilemma of the Democrats and, in important respects, American democracy in general.

If one agrees with the basic presumption of this thesis, that from a democratic point of view there is no alternative today to increased participation, then several problems arise. These are pertinent whether one believes the most effective strategy lies within or outside the Democratic Party.

First, the strategy must demonstrate a reasonable chance of success, which is to say, it must be one based on serious coalition-building. If strictly moral exhortations to participation ever had any power in American society, they certainly will not hold sway today.

Secondly, for the strategy to be realistic, it cannot simply fly in the face of the system imperatives we have

identified--it must devise a program that can win short term gains while altering the imperatives themselves. Pure liberal welfare state policies will prove untenable if given another try, unable to sustain growth or real justice or to move us away from the dilemma the private accumulation imperative--with its present need for increased depoliticization--puts democrats in.[42]

Finally, for the strategy to be economically realistic and politically accessible to a wide enough constituency to make it credible, it must devise a program that both speaks to present needs and overcomes those needs and beliefs that presently divide its constituency or that disfavor programs necessary to attack the constraints we suffer. This is a complex problem; I can only offer a preliminary direction.

There are presently deep fears about nuclear war and unemployment. These can be combined into an effective program and coalition for jobs and peace. Although the fear of nuclear war is sometimes part of a more general fear of war, the connection between the two must be made more explicit to develop political support for cuts in the overall military budget.[43] How will nuclear war begin, for example, if not in the bowels of a shooting war that gets out of hand in unpredictable ways? Further, if we can demonstrate that foreign intervention and aid to right wing

regimes is used, at times, to repress workers abroad and thereby depress wage demands that compete with American workers, we can help heal a breach between radical democrats and workers.

There are also sound economic reasons to cut the military budget. Military spending is inflationary, producing items we cannot use in our daily life but that we expend resources on. It also creates unemployment. For every one billion dollars put into the military economy instead of the consumer economy, 10,000 jobs disappear.[44] Partly due to its capital intensive nature, military spending, in fact, produces fewer jobs than virtually any other sector of the economy. If one can successfully make the argument that true national security depends on a healthy economy and that America has more than sufficient military capability, a broad coalition for jobs and peace might prove feasible.

Other advantages emerge, as well. Funds would become available to create productive jobs in industry and technology and to help restore the infrastructure. We could create jobs by creatively restoring social services for those in need, thereby aiding in both respects women, Blacks and Hispanics and the underclass. Moreover, there is evidence that the above general strategy has appeal.

"Jobs with Peace" referenda have passed in over eighty cities and towns in this country over the last several years. If successful, such a coalition could be used to create the political space for an even more difficult task.

The gap Huntington describes between ideals and institutions underplays a disharmony inherent within American ideals themselves[45] that is insinuated into the roles Americans adopt. There is a tension today between the idea of democracy and that of equal opportunity to succeed in the competitive race for advancement. For it is the latter dream that helps legitimize both our attitude toward growth based on private accumulation and the ideology of sacrifice that helps divide workers from the underclass. Both contribute to the pressure for reindustrialization and depoliticization, undermining democratic aspirations.

The problem we face here is twofold. The political subordination of the American public involves both a constricted definition of politics and attitudes committing people to roles that undermine the coalition program a democratic thrust would require. Overcoming subordination in the longer run involves overcoming both elements.

First, we need to speak to workers' democratic aspirations. One way to do this, as Peter Bachrach argues, is to

incorporate workplace democracy into our program.[46] To the degree experienced, education in self-rule can further generate demands for increased responsibility and power, helping dissolve our present commitment to roles that reinforce depoliticization. For example, consumption for its own sake might then appear less important. Or workers might become disaffected with the imperative for private accumulation itself, seeing how it fosters dependence on large, impersonal organization and irrational product and service designs, while undermining the self-reliance that is also a vital element in their beliefs as Americans.[47] A program incorporating worker's participation or control and true self-reliance would, of course, at a minimum, raise the issue of the corporation as an explicitly political insti- tution, making vital decisions which we should have a democratic right to participate in.

The second issue is even more difficult. For here we are involved in fostering the development of roles that are, in some important respects, different from the roles people are now committed to. Creating a program with a chance for success is the first step, especially if it unites constituencies whose self-identities differ significantly. The next is that, with a relevant program, participation and struggle, in fact, can help people redefine

for themselves and with their new allies, the roles they now may desire to become committed to. Competition, individualism, the ideology of sacrifice, increasing consumption as a need, could give way to self-reliance with cooperation, worker responsibility for production and the idea of genuine participatory democracy.

As Bachrach points out and Huntington is well aware, an important source of the subversive potential in democracy is the inability of America to fulfill the democratic promise. In the past, American capitalism has, at times, benefitted from the unfulfilled promise by creating reforms that served to further legitimate the system, while deflecting attention from deeper structural concerns.[48]

However, this course may prove more difficult in the future, given the deepening legitimation problems and structural constraints American capitalism now faces. Reindustrialization strategies increase these tensions and ultimately depend on fostering even greater depoliticization than we witness today.

To promote the kind of counter-strategy for radical democratic participation I have suggested, is to promote a kind of class struggle[49]--one that certainly entails risks. Worker-corporate confrontation poses a threat to the present "pseudodemocratic system," chancing repression

and/or cynicism and further withdrawal if this strategy falters. Yet, as Bachrach asks, "Given the magnitude of the democratic crisis, which we now face, does any alternative exist?" He answers:

> . . . Tocqueville was probably right when he said that the "great advantage" of America lays in the fact that it did not have to "endure a democratic revolution." Over a hundred and fifty years later it is doubtful whether the nation can now afford not to endure a democratic revolution.[50]

Whatever one's opinion on these issues, they are part of a general problematic that will face American citizens over the coming era, ranking second in importance only to the threat of nuclear war. Political theorists cannot exempt themselves from these concerns, try as some may. As we have seen:

> Class struggle is seldom regarded by mainstream social scientists as a vital ingredient to the health of a democratic polity. On the contrary, it is usually perceived as a threat to the stability, if not the survival of democracy.[51]

Yet, if some of the crisis tendencies we have discussed are real, the middle ground inhabited by liberal theorists between stark strategies of depoliticization and radical democracy may be eroding. If analysis has implications for political action, theorists of democracy will be under greater pressure than before to line up, explicitly or tacitly, with free-marketeers, corporatists, or radical

democrats. Whether they do so forthrightly will depend on their degree of self-consciousness as theorists.

The analysis of non-participation, in turn, will specifically have implications--not only for our evaluation of the present character of democracy--but for our study of, and the development of strategies to advance or retard, further democratic participation, as well. If there is, indeed, a crisis brewing for American democracy, these explanations may prove significant for immediate political practice, as well as longer term political theory.

N O T E S

INTRODUCTION

1. See Walter Dean Burnham, "The Eclipse of the Democratic Party," in Democracy (July, 1982), pp. 7-17.

2. See Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1970), passim.

3. Steven Lukes, Power: A Radical Analysis (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1974), passim.

4. Ibid., p.15.

5. Ibid., p. 20.

6. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

7. William E. Connolly, "Conceptual Revision and Political Reform," in The Terms of Political Discourse (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath & Co., 1974), p. 200.

CHAPTER I

1. Carole Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 7.

2. Bernard Berelson, Paul Lazarsfeld, and William McPhee, Voting (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 312.

3. Ibid., p. 314.

4. See Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) for a discussion of this position.

5. Berelson, Voting, p. 314.

6. Ibid., p. 320.

7. Ibid., p. 321.

8. Ibid., p. 323.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 320. Milbrath gives a more explicit statement of this position: "Politics and government are a peripheral rather than a central concern in the lives of most citizens in modern Western societies. As long as public officials perform their tasks well, most citizens seem content not to become involved in politics." See Political Participation (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 143. Heinz Eualau is even more extreme when he claims that apathy results from "The Politics of Happiness" (Antioch Review [Summer, 1956], p. 260).

11. Otherwise we may presume some type of constraint is in operation.

12. Pateman, p. 7. My emphasis.

13. Berelson, Voting, p. 316. My emphasis.

14. Graeme Duncan and Steven Lukes, "The New Democracy," Political Studies, XI (June, 1963), 156-177.

15. Although Berelson's data correlated voting preference with socio-economic characteristics, he never systematically considered either groups, race or class in the range of X, nor issues in the range of Y in explaining non-participation.

16. For example, even when Seymour Martin Lipset or Robert Dahl suggest that because low SES people tend to be authoritarian as well as apathetic their non-participation may be functional for democracy, their view at least raises the possibility that life conditions of such groups in some way influences their "apathy." See Robert Dahl, Preface to Democratic Theory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 89; see also Seymour Martin Lispset, Political Man, pp. 32, 110-111, 216-219.

17. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard R. Berelson, Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1944).

18. Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-on Kim, Participation and Political Equality (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 307.

The authors generalize these findings in the present work by studying India, Japan, Nigeria, the United States, Austria, Yugoslavia, and the Netherlands. The findings were first established in reference to the U.S. in Verba and Nie (Participation in America--Social Equality and Political Democracy [New York: Harper & Row, 1972]).

19. Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of Democracy (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1970), p. 187.

20. To the extent apathy reflects choices made, it is more akin to a relationship of influence than of power. See William E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath & Co., 1974), pp. 85-137. Berelson also does not adequately discuss the most flagrant uses of power to prevent participation, reflecting insufficient depth even within the liberal view of power. See pp. 6-8 of this manuscript for Lukes' three paradigms of power.

21. Robert Dahl, Preface to Democratic Theory (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1956), p. 123.

22. Ibid., p. 89, and "Reflections on the Critique of the Ruling Elite Model," p. 103.

23. Ibid., pp. 31, 133-134.

24. Ibid., p. 132.

25. Ibid.

26. Robert Dahl, After the Revolution? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 105-106; Democracy in the United States, 4th ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), pp. 406-417, 424-426, 428-429; Preface to Democratic Theory, p. 137.

27. Dahl, After the Revolution?, pp. 140-141.

28. Dahl, Democracy in the United States, pp. 409-410. See also Preface to Democratic Theory, p. 76.: because of the importance of consensus, we should seek better proof of its existence.

29. George Von Der Muhll, "Robert Dahl and the Study of Contemporary Democracy: A Review Essay," American Political Science Review, LXXI (1977), 1095.

30. Dahl, Democracy in the United States, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Rand McNally Publishing Co., 1976) pp. 21-23.

31. Robert A. Dahl, "On Removing Certain Impediments to Democracy in the United States," Dissent (Summer, 1978), pp. 318-319.

32. See Robert Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 318.

33. Robert Dahl, Modern Political Analysis, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1970), p. 80. My emphasis.

34. See note 60 below and p. 61 in this manuscript.

35. Notice that as his work proceeds, his appreciation of constraints of social structure deepens.

36. It also appears that the breach between Dahl's pluralist ideal and the reality of an imperfect polyarchy grows as his work progresses. See p. 56 of this manuscript.

37. Originally entitled Pluralist Democracy in the United States: Promise and Performance (1967).

Race has usually played a significant role in Dahl's examination of American politics.

38. Dahl, "On Removing Some Impediments," p. 313.

39. Ibid., pp. 315-316.

40. Dahl argues, "Taking all these problems into account, political scientists need to begin a serious and systematic reexamination of the constitutional system much beyond anything done up to now. They need to give serious and systematic attention to possibilities that may initially seem unrealistic, such as abolishing the presidential veto; creating a collegial chief executive; institutionalizing adversary processes in policy decisions; establishing an office of advocacy to represent interests not otherwise adequately represented in or before Congress and the administrative agencies, including future generations; creating randomly selected citizen assemblies parallel with the major standing committees of the Congress to analyze policy and make recommendations; creating a unicameral Congress; inaugurating proportional representation and a multiparty system in congressional elections; and many other possibilities" ("On Removing Some Impediments," pp. 322-323).

41. In Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy, (New Haven: Yale University, 1982) he argues, however, that: "In a private-enterprise, market-oriented economy, the proper distribution of income is not primarily a technical question but a political and moral question" (p. 135).

Presumably the issue of control has more technical considerations than how that control is to manifest itself, in this case, in incomes policy.

42. Ibid., p. 166.

43. Ibid., p. 188

44. Ibid., p. 203.

45. Ibid., p. 198.

46. Ibid., pp. 185-186.

47. Ibid., p. 205.

48. Dahl, After the Revolution?, p. 103.

49. Ibid., p. 110.

50. Dahl, Democracy in the United States, p. 104. See also Chapter 5.

51. Dahl, After the Revolution?, p. 117.

52. Ibid., p. 110.

53. Recall the conflicting statements on democratization in After the Revolution?--the text in which political inequality is put squarely on his theoretical agenda.

54. Dahl, Modern Political Analysis, pp. 80-84.

55. Dahl, After the Revolution?, p. 143 and passim.

56. Ibid., passim, for the instrumental nature of the three criteria of authority defined and how the "principle of affected interests," relates to political participation. See also pp. 47-48 of this manuscript.

57. See Dahl, Preface to Democratic Theory.

58. See Dahl, Modern Political Analysis, p. 78.

59. Ibid., p. 82.

60. See Nelson Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 117.

61. Dahl, After the Revolution?, p. 143. Emphasis added.

62. See note 35 above.

63. Dahl seems to tacitly acknowledge this when he calls for serious consideration of worker's participation and control in Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy. See pp. 204-205.

64. Dahl, Who Governs?, p. 276.

65. In Who Governs?, Dahl writes: "In a political

system where nearly every adult may vote but where knowledge, wealth, social position, access to officials, and other resources are unequally distributed, who actually governs?" (p. 1). While acknowledging the existence of inequality here, it is in his later works that it becomes a central theme in which he questions not only who governs in New Haven, but who governs the central political institution of the large corporation.

66. Ibid., p. 279.
See John Buell's doctoral thesis (Amherst: University of Massachussetts, 1974), p. 30, on this theme and on the "moral stance" of Robert Dahl.

67. Peter Bachrach, "Interests, Participation, and Democratic Theory," manuscript prepared for delivery before the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy, December 29, 1971, New York, New York, p. 16.

68. Ibid., p. 10.

69. Ibid., p. 17.

70. Von Der Muhll, p. 1093.

71. Dahl, Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy, pp. 186-189.

72. Bachrach, "Interests," p. 15.

73. Robert Dahl, "The Concept of Power," Behavioral Science, II (1957), 201-205.

74. Nelson W. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory, p. 113.

75. Philip Green and Robert Dahl, "What Is Political Equality?," Dissent, XXVI (Summer, 1979), 352.

76. Ibid., p. 356.

77. Dahl, Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy, p. 186.

78. See Bruno Bettelheim, The Informed Heart.

79. Including class or race in the range of X can also have elitist, racist, or simply conservative implications--particularly if the range of Y is restricted to politics generally.

80. Bachrach, p. 10.

81. See Dahl, "On Removing Some Impediments," p. 315 on hierarchy in work. Nevertheless, his sanctioning of high levels of non-participation still has this effect.

82. Bachrach, p. 20.

CHAPTER II

1. E. E. Schattschneider, The Semi-Sovereign People, (New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston, 1960), p. 68.

2. Ibid., p. 71.

3. Ibid., p. 39.

4. Ibid., p. 105.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., pp. 105-107.

7. Ibid., p. 110-111.

8. Ibid., p. 35.

9. At one point, he does talk about the present political system being "very near to something like the limit of tolerance of passive abstention" (ibid., p. 109).

10. Schattschneider may not intend to restrict issues in this way. He does claim that the separation of the political and economic systems is, perhaps the greatest achievement of American democracy and that the American people are "willing to try to get along with the capitalist system provided that it can maintain alongside of it a democratic political system powerful enough to police it" (p. 123). Here he implies a fait accompli. But later he notes, "We need not be dismayed to find that business is powerful. Power is inherent in the modern business organization. The object of the game is not to destroy business power but to match it with governmental power" (ibid., p. 127).

11. Lewis Lipsitz, "On Political Belief: The Grievances of the Poor," in Power and Community, ed. by Phillip Green and Sanford Levinson (New York: Pantheon, 1969). p. 188.

12. As we shall see in Chapter III, C. W. Mills' discussion of troubles in mass society is to the point here.

13. We shall fully explore this theme in Chapters III-V.

14. See also note 9 above.

15. Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "The Two Faces of Power," American Political Science Review, LVI (December 1962), passim.

16. Ibid.
Earlier the authors ask: ". . . can a sound concept of power be predicated on the assumption that power is totally embodied and fully reflected in 'concrete decisions' or in activity bearing directly upon their making?" The answer: "We think not. Of course power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B. But power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. To the extent that A succeeds in doing this, B is prevented for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A's set of preferences."

17. See Bachrach and Baratz, "Two Faces," and Bachrach, "Interests, Participation, and Democratic Theory."

18. Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, Power and Poverty, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 49.

19. Ibid. My emphasis.

20. Ibid., p. 53. My emphasis.

21. See Isaac Balbus, "The Concept of Interests in Pluralist and Marxian Analysis," Politics and Society, I (February, 1971) for a provocative study of the concept "interest."

22. For an early view on ideology see Bachrach and Baratz, Power and Poverty, pp. 92-94, 55-57.

23. Ibid., p. 36.

24. Ibid., p. 49. My emphasis.
It is hard to know how to interpret no "potential demands for change," except as an absence of grievances. If no grievances exist, any further speculation that

consensus does not exist presumably becomes philosophical.

25. See Power and Poverty, where the authors discuss the relation of power and authority, pp. 32-36.

26. This interest is present but not central in other of his works. See, for example, The Theory of Democratic Elitism (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967).

27. Bachrach, "Interest," p. 2.

28. Ibid., p. 5. My emphasis.

29. Ibid., p. 6.

30. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

31. Ibid., pp. 12-15.

32. See Peter Bachrach's essay, "Corporate Authority," p. 267.

33. See Bachrach, Democratic Elitism, p. 95-98 for the difference between the pluralist "functional orientation to power" and its practical application in research.
See also "Interests" and "Corporate Authority," passim.

34. Bachrach, however, sometimes misses similarities between some socialist thought and his own. For while he calls for equality of political power and experiments with nationalization, he also claims that argument along socialist lines ". . . would border on the irrelevant. For the fundamental issue no longer relates to the problem of production or distribution but to the problem of power" (Democratic Elitism, p. 105). Is he implying here that all socialists are only concerned with the rationality of distribution and production and not with how power impacts on problems of democratic control, knowing one's interest and mass indifference?

35. Ibid., p. 92.

36. Bachrach, Power and Poverty, p. 46.

37. Bachrach and Baratz, "Two Faces of Power."

38. Bachrach, "Interests," p. 5.

39. For example, he accepts that Robert Lane's conclusions in "The Fear of Equality" (American Political Science Review, LIII [1959], 35-81) might possibly be correct: the rational self-interest of workers may be in accord with the status quo; "the worker . . . is reasonably content with the system." He continues, however: "Nonetheless on strictly political grounds I contend there is a prima facie justification in doubting whether workers' articulated preferences reflect their real interests." (See Bachrach, "Interests," p. 12-13.)

40. Lukes, "Power," p. 16.
This is the paper on which his book Power is based. His statement in the manuscript is phrased directly to the point and I wish to make. (See Power, pp. 23-24.)

41. Again, Bachrach's analysis is often richer than his definitions. He sees, for example that an important reason to increase participation is to undermine "authority." But his concession to Merelman on "anticipated response" pushes him to stress the "observability" of the nondecision in the first place. Thus, his article "Two Faces of Power" retains the subtlety of Schattschneider, and his later discussions of participation also push him in this direction. But his concern for "rigor" presses him, as Lukes points out, to try to incorporate too much in the paradigm of nondecision-making. See especially, Power and Poverty, p. 46.

42. The implication is that if people were free, they would pursue their real interests. If they are unable to do so, there must exist constraints on their freedom. If these constraints emanate from structural sources rather than personal ones, we may say, what appeared to be a relation of authority, between individual and society, is really a relation of power.

43. In some respects, Bachrach's view of interests has some of the problems of "need" theorists, generally. See William E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse, 45-83.

44. Bachrach, "Interests," p. 2. My emphasis.

45. Ibid., p. 7.

46. Ibid., p. 6. My emphasis.

47. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

48. Bachrach writes: "A particularly potent form of cooptation is 'participatory democracy';: in Philip Selznick's words, it gives 'the oppositon the illusion of a voice without the voice itself, and so stifles opposition without having to alter policy in the least'" (Power and Poverty, pp. 44-45). See also pp. 129-130 this manuscript.

49. In his recent article "Class Struggle and Democracy," Democracy (Fall, 1982), pp. 29-42, Bachrach attempts to put forth a strategy for reform, including what would be involved in actually attempting to achieve worker participation.

50. In this dissertation, see pp. 105-106 for Bachrach on this issue and my comments on pp. 110-111.

51. There are three general points worth noting as an aside to the conclusion: First, Bachrach concedes that workers are uninterested in national politics arguing that they are more likely to be interested in work-life issues. The result may be to mispercieve the present interests of workers, forgetting a main point in both his and Schattschneider's analysis: people may reject politics because the issues don't meet their present concerns. Both everyday issues and national issues may become organized into politics if they speak to people's interests.

Secondly, while Bachrach understands that elites can unconsciously work in their own interests, he underplays the extent to which non-elites can unconsciously work against their own. In studying a "power struggle," for example, he argues that the necessary and sufficient condition for its existence is if non-elites are aware of a conflict: "For purposes of analysis, a power struggle exists, overtly or covertly, either when both sets of contestants are aware of its existence or when only the less powerful party is aware of it" (Power and Poverty, p. 50). Are we to infer that if only elites are aware of a power contest, using their awareness to manipulate acquiescence and unconscious mass support, that a "power struggle" has not taken place?

Thirdly, Bachrach argues that modern workers undoubtedly suffer alienation and that there is "no basis to presume that alienation significantly impairs their ability to make rational political choices." Yet, these

choices are of dubious rationality to the degree they do not reflect the worker's real interests. Bachrach, himself, argues that, "It is doubtful . . . that in those political exercises in which they do participate that their articulated preferences actually reflect their more deep-seated concerns." It is hard to see how the worker can be making rational political choices when his or her articulated preferences do not reflect what really should be important to him or her. This reflects the deeper tension in Bachrach between his acknowledgment that many (including, at least, workers and the underclass) are not fully conversant with their interests, and his desire to avoid elitism. At this stage of his work he fails, therefore, to directly incorporate a conception of false-consciousness into his analysis. (See "Interests," pp. 12-15.)

52. Peter Bachrach, "Class Struggle and Democracy," p. 32. My emphasis.

53. See p. 121 in this dissertation and especially note 48 above.

54. Bachrach, "Class Struggle," p. 32. My emphasis.

CHAPTER III

1. C. Wright Mills, The Causes of World War III (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1958), p. 21.

2. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

3. Ibid., pp. 22-23.

4. C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 304.

5. Ibid., p. 311.

6. Ibid., pp. 314-315.

7. Ibid., p. 315.

8. Ibid., pp. 319.

9. Ibid., p. 307.

10. Ibid., pp. 308-309.

11. Ibid., pp. 311-312.

12. Ibid., p. 312. My emphasis except "experience."

13. C. Wright Mills, The New Men of Power (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1948), p. 236.

14. Ibid., p. 235.

15. Ibid., p. 260.

16. Ibid., p. 291.

17. Ibid., pp. 267-268. My emphasis.

18. Ibid., p. 268. My emphasis.

19. Ibid., p. 279.

20. Ibid., p. 271.

21. Ibid., p. 270.

22. Ibid. My emphasis.

23. Ibid., pp. 269-270.

24. Ibid., p. 270.

25. Ibid., pp. 273-274.

26. Peter Clecak, Radical Paradoxes (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 36-37.

27. C. Wright Mills, White Collar (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. xvi.

28. Ibid., p. 14.

29. Ibid., p. 59.

The shift in ownership, Mills argued, and exaggerations of the degree of competition among businessmen before the height of business concentration, continued to be obscured by the rhetoric of competition still pervading American ideology. For big business "competition" provided an ideological cover, behind which they could legitimize "rationalization" of the market. For small business, it became the rally-cry behind which their political leaders could mobilize and exploit anxieties. For both, the "rhetoric of competition" retained a political function for business competition with the electorate and especially with the unions: it justified the economic position of the business world in terms of merit.

Yet, as a public belief this "rhetoric of competition" obscured the role of political bargaining and struggle and emphasized instead the largely defunct "free market," in determining economic advantage. As a private dream, it blurred the difference between democratic and class property.

30. Ibid., p. 66.

See chart below:

THE MIDDLE CLASSES

	1870	1940
Old Middle Class	85%	44%
Farmers	62%	23%
Businessmen	21%	19%
Free Professionals	2%	2%
New Middle Class	15%	56%
Managers	2%	6%
Salaried Professionals	4%	14%
Salespeople	7%	14%
Office Workers	2%	22%
TOTAL MIDDLE CLASSES	100%	100%

Based on Mills, White Collar, p. 65.

31. Ibid., p. 65.

32. Ibid., p. 66-67.

33. Ibid., p. 161.

34. The personality market is dependent, according to Mills, on three requirements. First, there is the necessity of a bureaucratic enterprise under whose higher authority the employee is "selected, trained and supervised." Second, the employee's job is to represent the firm's good name to the public. Third, the public must largely be "anonymous, a mass of urban strangers."

35. Tact, for example, becomes a "series of little lies about one's feelings until one is emptied of such feelings." Fraternity, courtesy and altruism become "impersonal cermonials" "having little to do psychologically with old-fashioned 'feeling for another'"; directness, deference, deliberateness or frankness also become a choice of tack.

How should the salesperson maintain him or herself? Quoting an anonymous source from the 1920's, Mills

recounts: "Fritz Kreisler practices six hours each day to maintain his technique upon the violin. Is it not worth while for the salesman to practice every day upon that most marvelous instrument, the mind, in order that he may achieve success?"

What is the practice necessary?: the practice of "positive thinking"! The work to be done is to manipulate the "healthy" ideas into the mind. A suggested technique Mills recounts: ". . . when one is alone amid quiet and restful surroundings. . . preferably just before going to sleep. . . the doorway . . . into the subconscious seems to be more nearly ajar than at any other time. If at that time, one will repeat over and over again an affirmation of health, vigor, vital energy, and success, the idea will eventually obtain lodgement in the subconscious mind" (White Collar, pp. 85-86).

36. Ibid., p. 184.

37. Ibid., p. 182.

38. Ibid., pp. 187-188. My emphasis.

39. Spurred by the increasing concentration of business and finance, office expansion accelerated during the beginning of this century. The centralization of the office was further fostered by the need to cut costs during depressions and the increased volume of office work created during war. And where before World War II there was serious talk of decentralizing offices, the development of appropriate machine technology, such as electronic calculators, sophisticated typewriters, mechanical collators, that required central control, facilitated the cost-effectiveness of centralization and helped "make bigness workable."

However, it had not yet, he reports, reached the level in industry, especially in regard to capital investment, although it was clearly the wave of the future.

40. Ibid., p. 209.

The old bookkeeper became no match for the high school "girl" with three or four months machine training: "It is like a pick and shovel against a power scoop. As a result, the older bookkeepers are reduced to the level of the clerical mass." Yet, even the new machine operative is not safe: just as the machine operating high school "girl" replaces the bookkeepers, "so the big new machines promise,

in due course, to displace the high school girl" (White Collar, p. 206).

41. Ibid.

Yet, the office for Mills did not yet resemble a pure bureaucracy, with soley economic and technical criteria of rationalization, because hierarchy according to status still plays a role. Such hierarchy is facilitated by the needs of individuals to carve out personal domains and attempts by employers to disrupt worker solidarity. In the whole, however, Mills argues that gradation according to status or prestige will give way to the confluence of: employer attempts to lower costs and pay through the breakdown of complex jobs into simpler ones; technical needs for strict bureaucratic gradation prompted by the type of machinery employed; and union attempts to base income gradations on technical job classification.

42. Ibid., p. 71.

43. Ibid., p. 75.

44. Ibid., p. 109.

45. Ibid., p 78.

46. Ibid., p. 101.

47. Ibid., p. 77. My emphasis.

48. Ibid., pp. 111.

49. Ibid., p. 106.

50. Bureaucracy, for Mills, is however not simply a source of manipulation; it can be a source of authority as well. Primarily, an institution may have stated purposes whose belief is shared by its employees and customers. Certainly, this is true of the commitment to private property shared by bureaucratic organizations and many Americans. In addition, in Mills own view, truly rational bureaucracy could be "the most efficient type of social organization yet devised." Similarly, in The Causes of World War III, one of the six conditions of democracy Mills thought necessary in the struggle for peace was a neutral civil service. Nevertheless, Mills seems to have felt there was a potential for manipulation inherent in bureaucratic organization, that was presently actualized in

the "organized irresponsibility" of "modern industrial societies everywhere."

51. Ibid., p. 235.

52. Ibid., p. 234.

53. Ibid., p. 235.

54. I believe, in Mills' view, as leisure becomes "unserious freedom" in the face of the "serious authoritarianism" of work, we tend to, paradoxically, become unserious about those things we would find most intrinsically rewarding.

55. Ibid., p. 230.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., p. 266.

58. Ibid., p. 274.

59. Ibid., p. 240.

60. Ibid., p. 254.

61. Ibid., p. 252.

62. Ibid., p. 255.

63. Ibid., p. 253.

64. Ibid., p. 284.

65. Ibid., p. 283.

66. This is, perhaps, most true for white collar workers since they are less likely than wage workers to limit their ambition. Prestige is more crucial to the white collar workers' position in the social structure and to their self-image; yet it remains ambiguous.

67. Ibid., p. 284.

68. Ibid., p. 285.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid., p. 299.

71. As to the difference between wage workers and lower white collar workers, he expects the formation of a "social class" between them based on a "typical job mobility between the two."

72. Ibid., p. 309.

73. Ibid., p. 318.

74. Ibid., p. 300.

75. Ibid., p. 354.

76. C. Wright Mills, "The New Left," in Politics, Power and People, edited by Irving Louis Horowitz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 257-259.

77. C. Wright Mills, "The Decline of the Left," in Politics, Power and People, pp. 234-235.

78. C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959). p. 194.

79. Clecak, p. 54.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid., pp. 68-69.

82. Mills, The Power Elite, p. 323. My emphasis.

83. Ibid., pp. 318-319.

84. Ibid., p. 323.

85. Ibid., pp. 320-324.

86. Mills, The Sociological Imagination, pp. 172-173. My emphasis.

87. Ibid., p. 171.

88. C. Wright Mills, "Language, Logic and Culture," in Power, Politics and People, p. 433.

89. Ibid., pp. 426-427.

90. C. Wright Mills, "Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive," in Power, Politics and People, pp. 439-445.

91. Ibid., 440-441.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid., p. 447.

94. Ibid., p. 442.

95. Ibid., p. 447.

96. Ibid., p. 439-440.

97. Ibid., p. 439.

98. Ibid. See footnote 3 on p. 440.

99. Ibid., pp. 450-451.

100. Ibid., p. 448.

101. Ibid., p. 449.

102. Ibid., 452.

103. "Language, Logic and Culture," p. 430.

104. C. Wright Mills, "The Conservative Mood," in Power, Politics and People, p. 220.

105. C. Wright Mills, "Culture and Politics," in Power, Politics and People, p. 245.

106. Ibid., p. 241.

107. Ibid., p. 237-238.

108. Ibid., pp. 245-246.

109. Mills, "The Conservative Mood," p. 208. My emphasis.

110. Mills, "Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive," pp. 440-441.

111. Ibid., pp. 447-448.

112. Lukes, pp. 24-25.

113. A notion of objective class (or here, mass) is necessary in order to see that apathy as a condition may be a form of social control. If one makes this charge, it is presumed there is a latent conflict that can, at some point, become actual.

114. Mills, Sociological Imagination, pp. 172-173.

115. See C. Wright Mills, "Women: The Darling Little Slaves," in Power, Politics and People, p. 339-346.

116. C. Wright Mills, "The Unity of Work and Leisure," in Power, Politics and People, p. 347-352.

117. Erving Goffman, Asylums (New York: Anchor Books, 1961), pp. 3-49.
I use "mortification" here primarily in the sense of to deaden or destroy the strength or vigor of, particularly by limiting autonomy. Goffman uses it more in the sense of abasement, humiliation, or profanation of the self. In both our uses, systematic application is presumed. See Goffman, p. 14.

118. Mills, The Sociological Imagination, p. 171.

119. I use "absolute" here in the sense of free from limit or restriction.

120. C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, pp. 165-176; and The Power Elite, pp. 298-324.

121. See especially Jurgen Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, translated by Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973); and James O'Connor, The Fiscal Crisis of the State (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973).

122. Paul M. Sweezy, "Power Elite or Ruling Class?" in C. Wright Mills and the Power Elite, edited by G. William Domhoff and Hoyt B. Ballard (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

123. Mills, The Power Elite, pp. 24-25.

124. Mills, The Causes of World War III, p. 84.

125. Mills, of course, was aware of this, but it can get lost when he focuses on the "big decisions."

126. Mills, "The New Left," in Power, Politics and People, p. 257

127. Ibid., p. 259.

128. This, of course, would be an unintended consequence of his work.

129. This tension results, in some degree, from Mills' overemphasis of the independence of elites.

130. Clecak, p. 64.

131. Robert Bohlke and Kenneth Winetrout, Bureaucrats and Intellectuals (Amherst: University of Massachusetts), p. 6.

132. Mills has written however: "Political indifference does not necessarily involve a collapse of political expectation; it is not necessarily the end of a scale: hopeful, resigned, despairing, apathetic; that is only one route to it, and one of its meanings. Nor is political indifference necessarily irrational; in fact it may be a reasoned cynicism, which distrusts and debunks all available political loyalties and hopes as lack of sophistication."

133. William E. Connolly, Appearances and Reality in Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 67-68.

134. Anonymous source.

135. Frank Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), p. 88.

136. Ibid., p. 92.

137. Connolly, Appearance and Reality, p. 68.

138. Ibid., pp. 67-69.

139. This fear has a parallel as we shall see next in Herbert Marcuse's fear of "one-dimensional man."

Chapter IV

1. Herbert Marcuse, Soviet Marxism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), passim.

2. See also Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 39-48.

3. This lack of clarity is, in part, responsible for the development of the "three Marcuses" I shall discuss on pp. 354-361.

4. See Trent Schroyer, The Critique of Domination (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 206.

5. See especially Herbert Marcuse, "Industrialism and Capitalism in the Work of Max Weber," Negations: Essays in Critical Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

6. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 11. Emphasis added (except for "means").

7. Ibid., p. 12.

8. See this chapter, pp. 336-349.
Ironically, Marcuse's vision of liberation often exaggerates human "potential" as well.

9. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 17.

10. Ibid., p. 14. Emphasis added.

11. Ibid., p. 169.

12. Ibid., p. 144. Emphasis added.

13. Ibid., p. 18.

14. Karl Marx, Capital, Vol. I, edited by Frederick Engels (New York: International Publishers), p. 72.

15. Also for Marx, as the "organic composition" of capital increases, the rate of profit falls, creating economic crisis.

16. Karl Marx, Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Oekonomie (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), p. 592f, quoted in Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, pp. 36.

17. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, pp. 22-23.

18. Ibid., p. 17.

19. Ibid., p. 23.

20. Ibid., pp. 23-24.

21. Schroyer, p. 210.

22. Morton Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness (New York: The Free Press, 1980), pp. 148-149.

23. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 49.

24. Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), p. 32.

25. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 38.

26. Ibid., p. 48.

27. Ibid., pp. 84-104.

28. See Marcuse, Eros and Civilization.

29. See Herbert Marcuse, "The Obsolescence of the Freudian Concept of Man," Five Lectures (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970).

30. See notes 28 and 29 above.
Marcuse's work focuses heavily on his interpretation of Freud's later metapsychology.

31. See "Progress and Freud's Theory of Instincts," in Five Lectures, p. 36; Herbert Marcuse, "Agressiveness in Advanced Industrial Society," in Negations, p. 264; and Schoolman, pp. 243-244.

32. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 72.

33. Ibid., p. 65.

34. Ibid., p. 51.

35. Ibid., p. 29.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p. 53.

38. Schoolman, p. 144.

39. Jurgen Habermas, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology'" in Toward a Rational Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 96.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid., p. 97.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Marx, Capital, p. 80.

45. Marx, quoted in Habermas, "Technology and Science," pp. 115-116.

46. Ibid., p. 101.

47. Ibid., p. 105.

48. Ibid., p. 84.

49. Ibid., p. 113.

50. As we shall see in the next chapter, Marcuse carries the idea of "systems adjustments" too far, including virtually all systems changes as functional adjustments that strengthen the whole.

51. Habermas, "Technology and Science," p. 117.

52. Schoolman, p. 148.

53. Habermas, "Technology and Science," p. 111.

54. Schoolman, pp. 134-139.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid. See also Habermas, "Technology and Science," pp. 81-84.

57. Marcuse, "Industrialism," pp. 223-224.

58. Schroyer, pp. 203-207.

59. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 156.

60. M. Horkeimer and T. W. Adorno, Dialktik der Aufklarung, quoted in Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 157.

61. Ibid., p. 158, 166.

62. Ibid., pp. 237-238.

63. Ibid., pp. 166-167.

64. Habermas, p. 86.

65. Habermas notes that Marcuse has failed to stipulate the conditions either for a new science or a new technology. He adds that Marcuse would fail if he tried because such is not possible.

66. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, pp. 157-158.

67. Ibid., p. 169.

68. See Habermas.

69. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 48.

70. Ibid., p. 49.
In Marcuse's view, the very need for rationalization itself produces a higher standard of living as an "unavoidable by-product of the politically manipulated industrial society."

71. Ibid., Chapter 4.

72. Ibid., Chapter 6.

73. Ibid., p. 49.

74. Ibid., p. 85.

75. Ibid., p. 13.

76. Ibid., p. 87.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid., p. 89.

79. Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in A Critique of Pure Tolerance, by Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, Jr., Herbert Marcuse (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 96.

80. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, pp. 92-93.
Some of these examples are the type Marcuse would use today, taking them from popular magazines, such as Time, e.g., "Begin's Israel."

81. Ibid., pp. 93-94.
Abbreviations also serve to repress questions. For example, in speaking of East Germany as the D.D.R., we ignore the word "democratic." Similarly AFL-CIO "entombs the radical political differences which once separated the two organizations."

82. Ibid., p. 94.

83. Ibid., p. 95.

84. Ibid., p. 87.

85. Ibid., p. 14.

86. Although he doesn't make this argument explicitly with respect to "freedom," see his argument with respect to "communist" countries on p. 192.

87. Ibid., p. 100.
Marcuse suggests that "open" language also characterizes great liberal thinkers such as J.S. Mill and classical conservatives such as Burke and de Toqueville.

88. Ibid., note p. 99.

89. For Marcuse, dialectics as a basis for understanding history seems to derive from the contradictions inherent in human history itself. Because Marcuse

seems to hope for the millenium, where much necessity is overcome, science becomes like art, and work becomes play, it is not clear what this would mean for a dialectical comprehension of history once freedom became dominant. Is this also "post-history"?

90. Ibid., p. 97.

91. Ibid., p. 86.

92. Herbert Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), pp. 35-36.

93. Marcuse, Eros and Civilization, pp. 15-16.

94. John Fry, Marcuse, Dilemma and Liberation (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International), pp. 32-36.
Fry writes, Freudian later metapsychology and instinct theory provided Marcuse the "material basis under the material basis." It gave him hope, a vantage point to criticize positivists and "afforded Marcuse the way to have his idealist cake and eat it too."

95. Marcuse's interpretation of Freud is characterized by a need to draw out his historical implications and an insistence that Freud, in spite of the conservative thrust, never becomes an apologist for domination. For Freud, repression may be necessary for civilization, but the human cost is staggering: "Freud considers the primordial struggle for existence as eternal and therefore believes that the pleasure principle and the reality principle are eternally antagonistic. The notion that a non-repressive civilization is impossible is a cornerstone for Freudian theory. However, his theory contains elements that break through this rationalization; they shatter the predominant tradition of Western thought and even suggest its reversal. His work is characterized by an uncompromising insistence on showing up the repressive content of the highest values and achivements of culture. In so far as he does this, he denies the equation of reason with repression on which the ideology of culture is built. Freud's metapsychology is an ever-renewed attempt to uncover, and to question, the terrible necessity of the inner connection between civilization and barbarism, progress and suffering, freedom and unhappiness--a connection which reveals itself ultimately as that between Eros and Thanatos" (Marcuse, Eros and Civilization, pp. 16-17).

Marcuse's critique of neo-Freudian psychology, based on these assertions, is that it replaces the central role of repression in Freud, with an ego capable of healthy adjustment in contemporary society. See Eros and Civilization, pp. 34-35; "Epilogue: Critique of Neo-Freudian Revisionism," pp. 217-252; and Russel Jacoby's Social Amnesia (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975).

96. Marcuse, Eros and Civilization , p. 34.
Marcuse gives "the perpetuation of the monogamic-patriarchical family," a "hierarchical division of labor" and "public control over the individual's private existence" as "instances of surplus repression pertaining to the institutions of a particular reality principle." His point is to separate these from basic phylogenetic repression that is necessary to achieve the development of homo sapiens from the "human animal." The ability to mediate nature by restraining and guiding the instincts, developing needs and desires from biological necessities, ultimately increases gratification: it "is the human form of the pleasure principle" (Eros and Civilization, pp. 34-35). But note my critique of Marcuse on this point in Chapter V, particularly in reference to Morton Schoolman's arguments.

97. Marcuse, "Freedom and Freud's Theory of Instincts," Five Lectures, p. 7.
In An Essay on Liberation, Marcuse writes, "I use the terms 'biological' and 'biology' . . . to designate the process and the dimension in which inclinations, behavior patterns, and aspirations become vital needs which, if not satisfied, would cause dysfunction in the organism. Conversely, socially induced needs and aspirations may result in a more pleasurable organic behavior" (p. 10).

98. Ibid., p. 11.

99. Ibid., p. 24. My emphasis.

100. Marcuse, "Progress and Freud's Theory of Instincts," Five Lectures, pp. 37-41.

101. See Morton Schoolman, "Further Reflections on Work, Alienation and Freedom in Marcuse and Marx," passim.

102. Marcuse, "Progress," p. 39.

103. "This reduction of the relatively autonomous ego is empirically observable in people's frozen gestures, and in the growing passivity of leisure time activities, which become more and more inescapably deprivatized, centralized, universalized in the bad sense, and as such controlled" (Marcuse, "Freedom," p. 14).

104. Fry, Marcuse, p. 45.

105. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, pp. 231-232.
See Schoolman's discussion of "The Psychological Underpinning of One-Dimensionality." on pp. 231-247 of his book.

106. Marcuse, "Obsolescence," p. 47.

107. Ibid., pp. 60-61.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid., p. 59.

110. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 76.

111. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, p. 245.

112. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 9. My emphasis.
But see p. 73 on the limited scope of sublimation.

113. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, p. 246.

114. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 79.

115. Although Marcuse often talks as if alienation is completely overcome, he also writes of alienation as the objective side of the subject, as we shall see in Chapter V.

116. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," p.110-111.

117. Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, pp. 10-11. My emphasis.
Also see note 97 above.

118. Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, pp. 9-10.

119. Ibid., p. 63.

120. Ibid., p. 59.

121. Ibid., p. 61.

122. Ibid.
See Chapter 3: "Subverting Forces--in Transition."

123. Ibid., p. 53.

124. Ibid., p. 17.

125. Ibid., pp. 83-84.

126. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

127. Ibid., p. 19.

128. Ibid., p. 90.

129. Ibid., p. 21.

130. Ibid.
See, however, note 115 above.

131. Ibid., p. 24.

132. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 6.

133. Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, p. 65.

134. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," p. 106.

135. Ibid., p. 109.

136. Robert Paul Wolff, "Marcuse's Theory of Toleration," Polity, VI:4 (Summer 1974), 476.

137. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," pp. 109-110.

138. Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation, pp. 71, 78.

139. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," p. 123; see also p. 111.

140. Indeed, it would be difficult to see why this state should not be viewed as irreversible.

Chapter V

1. Peter Clecak, "Herbert Marcuse," in Radical Paradoxes (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), pp. 175-229.

2. There is also, of course, a sharp divergence between Marcuse and positivists on many issues. Politically, Marcuse stresses the role of socialization of consciousness, particularly against one's interests, where in much behavioral analysis there is an emphasis on individual motivation.

3. See Trent Schroyer, The Critique of Domination, p. 206.

4. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 11. My emphasis.

5. "in the form of alienation," my emphasis.

6. This section is indebted to Richard Bernstein's Praxis and Action, and Marx's quotations are from that text (pp. 38-43). My emphasis in the quote from Capital. See Capital, I, 178.

7. This section is indebted to the work of Morton Schoolman.

8. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, p. 187.

9. Ibid., p. 210.
See also Stanley Aronowitz, False Promises (New York: McGraw Hill, 1973).

10. William E. Connolly and Michael H. Best, The Politicized Economy (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath & Co, 1976), pp. 152-153. My emphasis.

11. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, p. 211.

12. Habermas, "Technology and Science," pp. 105-107.

13. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, pp. 200-201.

14. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 182. My emphasis except "given" and "a priori."

15. This is a fundamental criticism Schoolman levels at Marcuse.

16. Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, The Hidden Injuries of Class (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 98.

17. Ibid., p. 75.

18. William E. Connolly, Appearance and Reality in Politics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 68.

19. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," p. 114.

20. Schoolman, The Imaginary Witness, p. 258.

21. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," pp. 122-123.

22. Kenneth Kenniston, Young Radicals (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968), p. 127.

23. Alasdair MacIntyre, Herbert Marcuse: An Exposition and a Polemic (New York: Viking Press, 1970), pp. 105-106.

24. See Marcuse's Counterrevolution and Revolt (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972) and An Essay on Liberation.

25. To pursue this theme, see Michael Best and William E. Connolly, The Politicized Economy, pp. 90-95.

26. See Marcuse's Counterrevolution and Revolt.

27. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 111.

28. Ibid., p. 125.

29. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," p. 114.

30. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, p. 124.

31. This discussion is indebted to Morton Schoolman for locating the potential of a more adequate subject in Marcuse's concept of "reason" and critical theory.

32. Wolff, "Marcuse's Theory of Toleration," p. 476.

33. Schoolman argues that mediated, sublimated pleasure, for example "ideas," can be more pleasurable than

simple desublimated release. See The Imaginary Witness, pp. 102-108.

34. Habermas, "Technology and Science," p. 112.

35. Daniel Bell, The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism (New York: Basic Books, 1976), pp. 220-282.

36. Stuart Hampshire, Morality and Pessimism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 31.

37. Ibid., p. 12.

38. Stuart Hampshire, Thought and Action (New York: Viking Press, 1959), Chapter 3: "Action and Self-Consciousness." pp. 169-222.

39. The "dialectic" described is Hampshire's, while the application here is my sole responsibility.

40. See Connolly, Appearance and Reality in Politics, pp. 48-58.

41. Marcuse is, of course, aware of these concerns, but they remain at odds with his "one-dimensional thesis," particularly in its extreme form.

CHAPTER VI

1. See Chapter I. Cynicism is a term likely to be used today. See the discussion of Samuel Huntington, p. 512.

2. For a discussion of a fuller range of participatory acts and who is likely to perform them see Verba and Nie, Participation in America.

3. See Chapter II, p. 102.

4. See Chapter V, p. 364-366 and pp. 401-407. See also William E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse, pp. 45-83.
There is an essential contestability to what may be considered in a person's interest, in which the opinion of the person is important but not conclusive evidence.

5. See Chapter II, p. 101-102.

6. See Chapter V, pp. 370-373, and Chapter IV, pp. 354-358.

7. See Chapter V for a full discussion of these themes.

8. For my criticism of this view, see Chapter III, pp. 227-252.

9. See Chapter V, pp. 363-366.

10. See Chapter III, pp. 210-213.

11. See Chapter V, pp. 363-366.

12. Verba and Nie, Chapter 15.

13. See Michael Best and William E. Connolly, The Politicized Economy, pp. 90-95.

14. In some sense, the role of modern communication, expecially television is two-fold. It both fragments us, as part of a mode of life that discourages the development of community relationships, and also makes available a common, if often distorted, view of reality.

15. William E. Connolly, Appearance and Reality in Politics, pp. 84-85.

I am applying this here as a general rule pertinent to social inquiry. Thus, I include the words, "might not be able to." The answer to the question of how allegience is developed is part of what an inquiry would attempt to discover.

16. See pp. 486-488, this chapter.

17. For a suggestion of some appropriate "test" levels to help guard against illicitly accepting the appearance presumed in theory as reality, see William E. Connolly, Appearance and Reality in Politics, p. 84.

18. Quoted in MacIntyre, Herbert Marcuse, p. 92.

19. Similarly, one could vote and be in a state of political subordination or mortification. There are two points here, one of which is controversial. If I'm subordinated to a repressive system, I may not engage in acts, that from a certain point of view, are the most important "political" acts. Voting might be considered unimportant in terms of what is really politically important. The non-controversial claim is that terms like apathy, subordination, mortification, etc., help express the character of an action (or non-action), not whether a specific act was performed. Someone who performs what all might agree is a "political act" might still be politically apathetic.

20. George Gilder, Wealth and Poverty (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 259.

21. See William E. Connolly, "The Politics of Reindustrialization," Democracy (July, 1981), pp. 15-16, for a discussion of creative disciplinary control. See also pp. 17-18.

22. Ibid., p. 17.

23. Samuel P. Huntington, "The United States," in The Crisis of Democracy by Michael J. Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, Joji Watanuke (New York: New York University Press, 1975), p. 113.

24. Ibid., p. 114.

25. Samuel Huntington, American Politics--The Promise of Disharmony (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1981), p. 41.

26. Ibid., p. 69.

27. Huntington does discuss different propensities between strata. Although most American support the "Creed," the better educated, those of higher socioeconomic status, or those in political or social leadership, are more likely to give stronger support. He also suggests, "higher status people are more likely to be hypocritical or complacent, lower-status people to be cynical or moralistic," because of differing perceptions on how wide the Institution vs. Ideals gap is (ibid., pp. 71-72).

28. Ibid., p. 129.

29. He does discuss a cyclical tendency in the earlier work. It is in American Politics that he gives it the more systematic treatment.

30. Ibid., p. 222.

31. Ibid., pp. 228-229.

32. Ibid., pp. 231-232.

33. Ibid., p. 261. My emphasis.

34. Ibid., p. 85.

35. This statement is consistent with his straightforward statement on "apathy" for the Trilateral Commission.

36. Huntington seems most concerned with our relations with Europe and Japan: "The impact that the state of liberty in other states has on liberty in the United States depends upon the power of those other societies and their ability to exercise that power with respect to the United States" (ibid., p. 257).

37. The depoliticizing strategy Huntington's work implies, often in the guise of expertise, makes him subject to the following charge: "The technocratic theorist might argue that state officials, trying to manage a complex economy, should be released from the obligation to legitimize their policies to a wider populace or, more directly, that the conception of role-bearers appropriate to scientific explanation and social control is incompatible with the self-conception of the role-bearers them-

selves. Such an account, once its import is elaborated, must appear to us today to be quite implausible and to be thoroughly contemptuous of those whose conduct is to be explained. For the theorist, in constructing and defending the explanation, must claim to exercise the very capacities he strips from the human objects of inquiry. The self-identity of the one is affirmed while that of the other is repudiated; and no ground is provided for differentiating the one from the other" (William E. Connolly, Appearance and Reality in Politics, pp. 88-89).

38. Huntington argues that, in contrast to "end of ideology" theories, he believes ideology--the consensus in the American Creed--is basic to understanding American political behavior. Yet, to the degree the general argument of his book is accepted, the effect is to mitigate the power of the ideas and bring them into conformity with the institutions the end of ideology ideologists claim are part of the normal course of political and economic development and beyond ideological contestation.

39. Burnham, "The Eclipse of the Democratic Party," p. 7.

40. Ibid., p. 17.

41. Ibid.

42. For example, the economy of growth leads to ever increasing strains on capital and natural resources, while fostering a mode of living that continuously turns former luxuries into necessities (e.g., the auto in suburban and rural areas). This fosters the system's need for further growth and, by putting continual pressure on the family budget, develops political support for growth.

Yet this is precisely the dynamic that has provided the groundwork for reindustrialization strategies based on augmenting private accumulation.

See William E. Connolly, "The Politics of Reindustrialization," for a discussion of the relation between economic growth, reindustrialization, and the discrediting of the liberal welfare state political agenda.

43. Cuts beyond nuclear weapons are necessary, in part, because nuclear weapons account for only twenty percent of the "defense" budget.

44. See Marion Anderson, The Empty Pork Barrel (Lansing, MI: Employment Research Associates, 1982).

45. Huntington does discuss the tension between equality and "liberty of achievement," concluding they are able to coexist in the United States, unlike in Europe (American Politics--The Promise of Disharmony, p. 17).

46. See Bachrach, "Class Struggle and Democracy," pp. 30-33 and passim.

47. William Connolly, "Civic-Disaffection and the Democratic Party," Democracy, July 1982, pp. 26-27.

48. See also Bachrach, "Class Struggle and Democracy," p. 34.

49. Bachrach discusses a related concept of class struggle that seems pertinent to immediate political practice in the United States. See his article above.

50. Ibid., p. 42.

51. Ibid., p. 33.

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