

Chapter 1

Introduction

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Definitions of work, workers, work roles, and workplaces are contested frequently in the U.S., as elsewhere. In our efforts to describe the experiences, identities, and ideologies of workers, researchers of labor and power in the U.S. sometimes confront the limits of class analysis. Centralized and decentralized technologies, the changing organization of production and consumption, the competing loci of control over worksites (as, for example, at the intersections of multinational corporate ownership and local management), and workplaces that in no way resemble shop floors all contribute to the need for forms of analysis that take into account complex power relations and the confusing hat-swapping between labor and management invoked by “shared” management models. In these times of blurred boundaries, in which livelihoods are not always housed within the walls of a single, traditional workplace and opportunities for labor organization are decreasing, we need to look for the complex ways in which workers defy anonymity and actively define work and work relations. Approaches for studying the changing texture of power and work in the U.S. are the focal concern of the authors in this volume.

All of the authors collected here have been trained in political economic approaches, and remain friendly to class analysis as a powerful tool for engaging inequalities at the core of U.S. social and economic organization. The authors see class-related inequalities manifested in a variety of worksites—with permutations in other forms of unequal access to resources by gender; “racial,” ethnic or national identity; and age. However useful we may find dichotomous models (e.g., the owners of the means of production and the laborers, or the dominant and subordinate) for actively organizing for social change, we find that recent theories in which power is seen as multidimen-

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sional can be used to enhance class analysis in ways allowing us to see more subtle forms of workplace discrimination. Drawing on the work of Foucault and others who have focused on the workings of institutional power relations, while still attending to Marx, the authors have studied power in a range of U.S. work settings. While the work sites (given the machinations of capital these days) could also be defined as transnational in many cases, we focus specifically on a variety of workplaces in the U.S., for those interested in studying the production and reproduction of inequalities in “home” sites of U.S. capital.

Anthropologists and sociologists of work, along with scholars in other disciplines and also outside the academy, have used many approaches to studying power in workplaces—ranging from an emphasis on identity and experiences of workers to an emphasis on the restructuring of global capital.

RELATED STUDIES OF WORK AND POWER

Labor and Identity

The powerful valorization of identities through work, and manipulation of service tendencies or class allegiance, has been one area of study. Beynon and Blackburn (1972), for example, studied perceptions of work and the importance of employment for self-worth in industrial societies. Sacks (1979) provides a historical overview of the valorization of men’s work over women’s work through the lens of social Darwinism in those societies with dominant European ideologies. She demonstrates just how culturally bound that system of valorization is. The authors collected in Wallman (1979) offer insights on the culturally based valorization and definitions of work in a number of settings. Ronco and Peattie (1988) discuss the importance of the *meaning* of work in the U.S. in the 1980s. They observed people drawing significant boundaries between work and nonwork (“making work,” if necessary) as part of the construction of self-respect.

Close to home, for those of us whose workplaces are academic, those writing in Sharff and Saunders (1994) detail the interactional effects between notions of professional identity and increasing segmentation of the academic workforce into low-paying, low-security, low-status jobs and fewer higher-paying, secure, higher-status jobs. Rueschemeyer’s (1986) discussion of power and the division of labor would indicate that the power constellation secure in the latter will be likely to push for the replication of such segmentation.

Historical materialist and interpretive approaches have converged in approaches focusing on labor and identity. Willis (1977), and Foley (1990) in his duplication of Willis’s study in a U.S. site, for example, focus on school-

based training to see how class (and, in Foley's case, ethnic and gender) identity is learned, valorized, and reproduced by young people in institutional (quasi-industrial) settings. Kondo (1990), using a Foucauldian analysis of power as reproduced through direct social interaction, studied the powerful formation of social identity through workplace relations in Japan. Like these researchers, the authors in this volume are interested in the intersections of workplace identity and the reproduction of power relations in other areas of social life.

Rethinking Class and Capital

Innovative approaches to studying class itself, in the U.S. and elsewhere, have also been articulated across the social sciences in the late twentieth century. Building on the work begun by sociologist C. Wright Mills (1956) on the power elite, anthropologists in the 1960s (e.g., many of those writing in Hymes 1969) pivoted the dialectic used to study colonizers and the colonized to also study workers—in all their diversity—and those holding structural power in the U.S. Subjugation not only through the division of labor, but also through colonial and postcolonial regimes of power (often defined in terms of race or ethnicity), has produced in the U.S. what Gilbert and Kahl (1982) see as a range of economic and social class positions with differential access to resources and sites of power. Further, in the U.S., class must be considered in the social matrix of “age, race, sex, and class” (Lorde 1988). This realization should shape discussions of the future of ethnic and class relations in U.S. policy (Franklin 1988). Omi and Winant (1994) document usefully the history of *racial formation* in the U.S.—the process through which inequalities in the distribution of power and resources have been linked with changing “racial” definitions of bodies through time. Sacks (1996) argues that race, class, and gender-based systems of subordination are mutually defined and exploited by employers in capitalist relations of power.

This point is particularly salient in the mid-1990s as Affirmative Action legislation is being dismantled in such actions as California's passage of Proposition 209 in the 1996 elections (with governors and legislators in other states looking to that proposition as a model). As Colson (1977:382) states, “control over resources is evidence of power rather than the source of power.” Thus, any consideration of the power mobilized through control of the means of production and distribution, in a Marxist analysis, needs to also consider the other social means through which that power is legitimized. The intersections of gender inequality, racialized models of power distribution, and class inequities are examined excellently, for example, by Zavella (1991). Earlier, these intersections were also examined, along with contemporary iterations of theories of class and class formation, by those collected in Giddens and Held (1982).

There continues to be a lively debate about what constitutes class and class formation among Marxist scholars, ranging from a classical reading of Marx as viewing the ruling and subordinate classes as being pitted in a dualistic struggle against each other (Giddens and Held 1982:4), to Giddens's revised version of class "structuration," in which he takes into account the other social factors—for example, education (as others mentioned above have documented)—that limit class mobility and access to power through space and time (see Giddens 1979).

Of course, there is always the possibility, put so well by the authors in Williams and Chrisman (1994), that any theorization of class-based and other inequalities coming from Euro-centered cultural contexts overlooks alternative conceptualizations of power that could critically contribute to addressing inequalities anywhere. Bearing in mind the interconnectedness of forms of oppression, the authors in this volume, interested in methods to be used in U.S. worksites, find that the dialectical traditions of class analysis remain powerful tools.

As Varenne (1986:8) has noted, there are marked ideological themes in U.S. culture—"individualism, choice, progress through machines, the state and the corporation"—that often contradict one another. It is through examining the contradictions between the logic of capitalism and other logics of valorization (e.g., of particular identities) that students of work and power in the U.S. can better understand the perpetuation, and points for possible redress, of inequalities in the workplace. However, workers and workplaces in the U.S. need to be considered in a global context, especially as transnational production, distribution, and consumption soar, and the power of capital often outweighs political power.

Influenced by Marxian models of the development and organization of international capitalism (e.g., Gunder Frank 1969, on dependency theory; Wallerstein 1979, on world systems theory; and Mandel 1978, on late capitalism), as well as by Gramsci's articulation of state hegemony (Hoare and Smith 1971), anthropologists and sociologists have been studying the relationship between workplaces in many localities, state regulation (or nonregulation), and changing control of global production, consumption, and distribution patterns. Ong (1987), for example, describes the potential for cultural miscommunication between labor and management in transnational industry as resistance, in her study of spirit possession of Malaysian microelectronics workers on shop floors controlled by U.S. managers.

Nash (1989) did an ethnography of corporate irresponsibility to community in documenting the restructuring of the General Electric plant in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and the very powerful local effects that deindustrialization (as a global capitalist policy) had in the community of workers who were devastated by job losses. Ward's (1990) edited volume focuses on women as

workers on the global assembly line (whether a formal or a metaphorical one). She argues that it was the exploitation of women's labor that fueled the boom in global restructuring, especially in the electronics, pharmaceutical, service, and garment industries (Ward 1990:1–2), and the case studies demonstrate the centrality of women's labor—mostly unacknowledged and unfairly compensated—in those transnationally owned industries, often encouraged in their exploitation of women's labor by national governments. Rothstein and Blim's (1992) collection advocates the use of anthropological approaches to study the global factory:

An anthropology focusing on the global factory can investigate the ways in which local peoples mobilize culturally distinctive capacities to shape their unfolding economic destinies as well as documenting their struggles to resist the world capitalist logic in whole or in part. (Blim 1992:26)

The authors collected in Rothstein and Blim (1992) work to link their studies of specific workplaces, and the communities in which they are situated, with working models of the global factory. As Rothstein (1992:240) points out, an ethnographic approach to studying the global factory complicates the picture of producers and consumers through illustrating that “we are women or men, young or old, and we are also family members and members of racial-ethnic groups, with religious, regional, and national identities.” By combining an analysis of the changing structure of global capitalism with ethnographic approaches, the authors in this collection hope also to be able to describe the subtle (and not so subtle) ways in which inequalities are played out in and around the workplace (viewed here as a nexus between local social relations and global capital relations).

Recent Studies of Power and U.S. Worksites

In 1990, when three of us with chapters in this volume and several others presented our work in the session “It Takes More than Class: Approaches to the Study of Power in U.S. Workplaces” at the American Anthropological Association meetings in New Orleans, we were influenced by the work already being done by anthropologists of the global factory. In our work, we were exploring the possibilities of late-twentieth-century understandings of power (whether asserted on the basis of gender, ethnicity, age, regional identity, or ownership of capital) for articulating the very specific ways in which power is claimed and contested in U.S. work settings. Before I move on to discuss the various theories and ethnographies of power that have informed, and can inform, the study of work, I want to mention research which has been

done in the intervening six years that also draws together class analysis and other theoretical frameworks for understanding workplace inequalities.

Grint (1991:145) notes that corporations provide a particularly effective medium for comparing modernist and postmodern theories. Viewed by modernists, according to Grint, organizations are stable, rational, and perpetuate themselves through computer-aided decision-making. But through the lens of postmodern theories, Grint describes organizations as unstable, often without a unified intent, and as definitely out of "control"—yet not without the power to discipline individuals. That control is communicated and experienced through language, according to postmodernists. This counters the modernist view of language as "the neutral carrier of information—a transparent mechanism for carrying the meaning of an organization" (Grint 1991:146).

One theorist who has paid particular attention to the powerful implications of language for studying class is Bourdieu. He points out that while members of the same social and economic classes "on paper" are not actually and completely in contact as a group of people, mobilized for struggle, they occupy a similar space of relations, motivating them to respond to situations similarly, and their alliance is provoked perceptually as well as materially (Bourdieu 1991:231–33)—and it is that categorical construction of class, through the use of language, on which he focuses. In the 1990s, whether or not there can be a chronological charting of a "postmodern era," there has been much attention to communicative interactions in U.S. workplaces. The authors in this volume join that intellectual project, drawing on the possibilities of linguistic analysis (and other means of studying the subtle workings of power) with activist aims.

There are three recent edited volumes, in particular, that are closely related to the project in this book. McNall, Levine, and Fantasia's 1991 collection, *Bringing Class Back In: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives*, is the first. The editors contrast Weberian perspectives on class, which they characterize as the multidimensional "summation or some weighted combination of a variety of position effects, e.g., property, income, occupation, authority, education, or prestige" (McNall, Levine, and Fantasia 1991:2) with Marxist class analyses, which they characterize as always focusing on dualistic class struggle over exploitation of the working class's labor. Current theories of power are not so much the focus of their collection as are theories of class structure.

It is useful for those of us engaged in the project of studying power in U.S. workplaces, however, to be reminded by McNall, Levine, and Fantasia that multidimensional theorization of class is largely derived from the work of Weber and that there are historical examples to examine in the U.S. They note, for instance, that industrialization and segmented, migrant labor forces, along with transclass parties and organizations (blurring class boundaries and poten-

tial conflict) have shaped U.S. class relations for the nation's entire history, unlike many other contexts in which class inequalities have been studied (McNall, Levine, and Fantasia 1991:5). In this volume, then, we see the U.S., with its ingrained workplace inequalities and cultural ambivalence toward, or obfuscation of, inequality as all the more appropriate a setting for applying subtle analyses of power in combination with class approaches.

Three articles from *Bringing Class Back In* are directly relevant to the project of this collection. Jerry Lembcke, in his chapter "Class Analysis and Studies of the U.S. Working Class: Theoretical, Conceptual, and Methodological Issues" (1991), argues for attending to the lately ignored question of whether the working class can be an agent for the transformation of capitalist exploitation in the U.S. To that end, he suggests focusing on the potential for collective agency among workers—in other words, a working class—rather than on the individual worker as the unit of analysis. By focusing in this volume on different webs of power through which workers redefine their work and workplaces, we can contribute to just such a research project. I would argue that Foucauldian theories of power, which focus on the subjugation of the individual through institutions, do not prevent—but instead facilitate—our seeing the potential for collective agency (perhaps, in fact, allowing us to see an even broader field of options than some other approaches).

Further, Lembcke raises interesting methodological questions about how researchers can "see" collectivities as more than aggregate individuals, and argues for cultural analysis over, say, survey methods alone. He believes that a comparison between geographically distinct social sites, rather than participant observation in only one site, would lead to a better understanding of collective working-class agency and the potential for agency. Multilocal ethnography is in fact a growing area in social science methods, particularly for studying transnational capitalism, and in the future perhaps there will not be drawn such a strong dichotomy between ethnographic research as illustrative of the "local" and statistical research as affording global comparison in studies of class.

An example of the kind of linguistic organizational analysis advocated by Bourdieu is found in Orr and McNall's (1991) chapter in *Bringing Class Back In*. They studied historical fraternal orders in Kansas, and argue that "the pledge of brotherhood mute[d] class conflict and limit[ed] the workers' ability to articulate their grievances and form autonomous organizations" (Orr and McNall 1991:102). As Anglin does in this volume, they studied the overlap of discursive domains in shaping workers' empowerment or disempowerment. Orr and McNall use discursive analysis to better understand class relations in a historical context (where participant observation is impossible, of course, and reading the spaces between the written lines is what is left for the researcher to do):

It is through discourse, then, that humans become conscious subjects before they become class subjects; different discourse streams flow together to produce subjects and classes. As we will see, the nineteenth-century U.S. worker stood at the confluence of streams of religious rhetoric, republican ideology, German socialist ideology, and social Darwinism, to name but a few. These different streams produced, in varying locales and moments, different subjects. (Orr and McNall 1991:104)

Such an analysis can be done not only historically but through participant observation, as several of the authors contributing to this volume demonstrate.

Steinberg, also writing in McNall, Levine, and Fantasia (1991), would counter my easy elision between that volume and this one, perhaps, by saying that poststructuralist theory and methods and structuralist ones ought not to be joined in any analysis. Steinberg charges that “for the poststructuralists, discourse is the only avenue for social change” (1991:263). And he argues:

The paramount problem in poststructuralist accounts is that discourse acts upon people, rather than people acting through discourse. By subsuming the social within the discursive, these theories cast into serious doubt people’s agency and autonomy for collective action. (Steinberg 1991:264)

The poststructuralists seem to be straw theorists for Steinberg, and his reminder that “people actuate meaning—not the other way around” (1991:277) is perhaps redundant for some ethnographers who draw on poststructuralist methods while remaining dedicated to very structuralist (e.g., Marxist) analyses. The feasibility of drawing from both poststructuralist and structuralist theories in studies of work and power is a productive area of current debate.

Nash (1992) articulates the reluctance that many Marxists may feel in using discourse analysis in her article about a political conflict in Bolivia. Yet she demonstrates how helpful interpretive methods could be in understanding the role of symbolic power in a face-off between activists and soldiers at a moment when the activists laid down a national flag to block the military’s way. The soldiers were caught between their ideological relatedness to the women as citizens and their trained alienation from the women as members of the political opposition (Nash 1992).

A better understanding of such ambiguities of power and relatedness can be helpful in finding avenues for change. To those who would argue that one must take a position as either a poststructuralist theorist of power or a Marxist theorist of class struggle, I would argue along with Isaac (1987) that

the two bodies of theory illuminate one another's limits. It is not impossible to have elements of both approaches in one's toolbox.

A recent collection that demonstrates this point well is Calagione, Francis, and Nugent's (1992) *Workers' Expressions: Beyond Accommodation and Resistance*. The articles in that book expand the analytic workplace to include cultural processes, without shifting the focus from labor processes. In their introduction, Calagione and Nugent argue:

Intersections of work and everyday life are not simply confined to the rankings of occupations or careers in society. Understanding the meanings of work entails the position that it is at all points creative and—not merely productive—human activity. (Calagione and Nugent 1992:7)

By looking at the multiplicity of ways in which workers, as creative cultural agents rather than simply objects of class relations, create cultural understandings of work and power, the authors in Calagione, Francis, and Nugent's collection follow through on their promise to extend the anthropology of work beyond the dualistic framing of shop floor time and leisure time, or of accommodation and resistance.

A third contemporary volume relevant to the shared project of the authors in this book, especially as it also concerns changing worksites in the U.S., is Lamphere, Stepick, and Grenier's (1994) *Newcomers in the Workplace: Immigrants and the Restructuring of the U.S. Economy*. Focusing on sites in Kansas, Florida, and Pennsylvania, the authors document the kinds of work available—in work sectors that are being rapidly restructured—to recent immigrants to the U.S., and how those workers are involved in reshaping workplace and community relationships. In addition to immigration issues (relevant to Ibarra and Cogan's chapters in this volume), Lamphere, Stepick, and Grenier attend to gender and ethnicity as dimensions of workers' experience in and out of the workplace. Their collection demonstrates the importance of challenging oversimplifying narratives about labor and power relations, since the authors heard varied interpretations of the way new immigrant workers structured, and were structured by, their U.S. workplaces and communities.

WHY STUDY POWER?

Power is not, for the authors in this book, an end for study in itself. As a concept, it is meaningful to us only in the context of relationships that define workers as "different" from one another. Furthermore, we are interested in the ways in which the power of difference—either by job title (and resulting class

compensation, monetary or not) or by some other aspect of identity—is invoked to legitimize inequality in the workplace and in relationships beyond the workplace. Stamm and Ryff (1984:3) view power usefully as:

An element of *all* social relationships and activities. As such, it can be defined as the ability of an individual to influence or exert control over resources, actions, or social relationships which are valued by the community or group in which she/he participates.

They see people as having either “positional power,” formally assigned and ideologically sanctioned (e.g., Mills’s “power elite,” supported institutionally in ways that range from tax codes to dress codes), or “personal power,” which is exerted informally through an individual’s acknowledged ability to make decisions (Stamm and Ryff 1984:3).

Sacks (1988:79–80) argues (related to Stamm and Ryff’s view of “personal power”) that “centerpeople” have significant roles in influencing decision-making within various networks, even though (and perhaps, at times, because) they do not hold officially “legitimate” authority. One can look at a worker in terms of identity and discourses of authority, or one can invoke the worker’s “power over” or “power to” (Pred 1981) or another of many models of collective agency. But whether one focuses on the individual or the group, power is expressed relationally.

Foucault’s approach to studying power, by situating individuals within institutional contexts, is effective for making sense of everyday experiences (as well as historical patterns) of inequality in that the student of power need not choose between the individual and the collective as an exclusive unit of analysis. Foucault sees power as being produced and reproduced through constant social interaction, from many different directions.

While not entirely sidestepping dynamic conflict theory himself, Foucault counters arguments that power is embodied in constitutive dualisms (such as between management and labor) with questions about what propels those dualisms in social life. In particular, he sees acts of resistance in shifting venues so that the same individuals might not always be in the same roles in a web of power. He describes power as being problematic, contested, and requiring constant, disciplined persuasion to convince those construed as powerless of their powerlessness and those construed as powerful of their powerfulness.

My interpretation of Foucault’s writing is, perhaps, more hopefully Marxist than his own; in Foucault’s own words, power is at least:

Not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society. (Foucault 1990:93)

Similarly, Kondo (1990:307) views power as “creative, coercive, and coextensive with meaning.” Through attention to the language used in constituting as well as contesting power relations, ethnographers of work and of other domains of social life have been able to understand more specifically how inequalities are both individually experienced and socially enforced. Admittedly, Foucauldian methods for studying power are not universally appropriate, since he wrote about disciplinary power in institutions historically and culturally situated in European (and related U.S.) industrial settings. But since that is precisely the milieu with which we are concerned in this volume, they are useful.

Our aim in studying power, drawing on many approaches to do so, is to work on challenging those inequalities that are (thoughtfully or not) produced and reproduced in work settings. This book’s title is “more than class” because, while we believe that inequalities framed by capitalist logic are central in the U.S., class labels do not always fully describe the dynamics of unequal access to resources—whether those resources are economic or social (e.g., a sense of worth). What follows is an example of the need for approaches other than class analysis for studying power.

An Example of Class Complications

How can we study relationships of inequality when workers cannot be labeled as the exploited class and the exploiting class, but instead shift between those roles? Beyond explaining the relationship between conflicting class positions, how can we understand the meaning those positions have for those endlessly creating them? Are people as unaware of inequalities and their role in producing them as some iterations of “false consciousness” would represent them to be? I argue that new approaches to studying work and power can help us make sense of situations like the following one, which I documented in the late 1980s in east central Kentucky.

Imagine a place where livelihoods, family networks, and industries (agriculture and textiles, for example) overlap. There is a more complicated tale to tell, of course, but many workers in what I will call “Cedar,” Kentucky—in a county with small, hilly farms and seven thousand residents—work in both textiles and tobacco. In the (now) multinationally owned textile plant, men make and dye cloth, and women sew it into garments, in adjacent buildings. The burley tobacco is produced in allotments attached to property deeds through the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933, in a labor-intensive cycle that I would also call part of a multinational industry, since each cigarette is a product of labor in several countries—each labor force contributing a variety of tobacco with a different quality necessary for that one cigarette. (Burley tobacco is responsible for holding artificial flavorings.) Despite the

1997 acknowledgment of responsibility for health problems by some multinational tobacco companies, international product promotion and Kentucky tobacco production continue.

Until the late 1980s, the textile plant was still locally owned and under strong patron management (the white patron drawing labor into the plant through his own tobacco production networks), and work in tobacco was mostly done as exchange (noncash) labor through extended kin and fictive kin networks. Especially intensive points in the burley tobacco production cycle are "setting," when the plants are hand-set out in the field from beds where they are grown from seed; "cutting," when the mature plants are chopped off by hand with a tobacco knife and run through with a stake; "hanging," when those stakes are hung up on tiers in a ventilated barn; and "stripping," when the dried leaves are stripped off the plant stalks and prepared for sale in a regional warehouse. Labor parties for those seasonal, heavy jobs in tobacco have traditionally been assembled (with male workers, mostly) after hours from factory jobs. But the global capitalist regime of requiring flexible overtime (with resulting uncertainty about the end of any workday) took its toll in Cedar's textile plant and other plants in the region (e.g., the new Toyota assembly plant) in the late 1980s. The factory-working farmers, no longer able to predictably organize their own after-hours labor, began to employ Mexican migrant workers through the regional tobacco warehouses.

Here is, then, a low-wage employment scenario for Cedar residents and migrant workers. Those women and men from the area who *are* employed often work in more than one industry. Workers in the agricultural industry, including the recent migrant workforce, are not unionized either because (1) as farm owners, they define themselves as independent producers (albeit for the multinational tobacco industry) or because (2) their isolation and the conditions of their migration into an area and a type of work not traditionally organized through migrant labor networks discourage unionization. Workers in the textile industry, on the other hand, are not unionized because (1) they were often recruited originally, by the patron manager, through tobacco labor networks and tended to see themselves (through the ideology of agrarian independence) as independent farmers (whether men or, increasingly, women) who happened also to work in a factory; and (2) there have been, both under patron and multinational management, intense preventive measures taken against labor organizing at the plant—including a symbolic funeral for the idea of a union (in which workers were forced to bury a coffin in the front yard of the plant) and threats to move the plant to Jamaica.

Under patron management, textile plant labor relations were glossed as familial, and as such, often outside the regulatory framework of U.S. labor law. Even though the new multinational managers of the textile plant displaced their legal responsibility for the labor force by rerouting hiring through

a regional employment agency (after losing a hiring discrimination suit brought by an African-American woman), there remains a blurring of boundaries between management and labor (and ensuing "class allegiance") among Cedar workers, since some managers in the multinationally-owned factory are also workers in other community members' tobacco fields, when they are off shift.

How do workers in one exploited labor force justify exploiting new sources of *lower-wage* labor? How do various markers of identity affect those rationalizations of inequality? I argue that notions of equality have been used to explain labor practices in each setting. Instead of labeling this "false consciousness"—in which the workers would not recognize exploitive conditions—we need methods for understanding the specific ways in which explanations are employed by individuals who are momentarily situated as worker or as manager to promote, resist, or obscure labor relations.

The first use of the term "false consciousness" was by Lukàcs (1967:50), when he referred to the double bind of not an individual but a class in being unable to both subjectively and objectively assess its aims in relation to the society as a whole. While Lembcke (1991) has worked seriously on the problem of analyzing the experiences of an entire social class, in many studies of work there is a slippage between the individual and the class that leaves one grasping for methods. This is where I think it is useful to frame questions about power in terms of class relations, yet to use methods that allow us to understand workers as agents of explanation situated in various social sites.

When I wanted to try to understand the shifting power relations in different Cedar work settings, I found class analysis to be limited in that workers were simultaneously in contradictory positions *vis-à-vis* the production and reproduction of inequality. Methods of discursive analysis were useful to me in sorting out the kinds of explanation of inequality (or equality) that were voiced by workers who were related to one another in complicated ways (Kingsolver 1991).

As Wolff and Resnick (1987:218) suggest in their class process approach, individual workers can be seen as participating in numerous *sites* of social processes. Labor relations are produced and reproduced—and explained—in households, other workplaces, and state venues, for example. Interpretive methods of analysis can be employed to understand, rather than to avoid or silence in analyses of work, the various voices that create labor relations at any moment, whether in a barn, on a shop floor, or in an academic workplace. Nash (1992) and Hossfeld (1990) have demonstrated well ways in which ideologies can be manipulated as a form of resistance.

I have suggested (Kingsolver 1992) that in Cedar, workers in textiles and tobacco understand their constraints quite clearly, and they manipulate workplace "equality" explanations in a number of ways that cannot be classified

generically as in their best interests—or not—as a class, but which allow them to resist being exploited by a single industry. Yet our analyses of exploitation do not always translate into action in addressing workplace inequalities. Attention to fields of power in addition to class exploitation can help us understand the practices of inequality that indeed perpetuate those very divisions.

Without losing sight of class exploitation, I argue, then, that it is useful to focus on the active, ongoing, decentralized process of interwoven explanations of power and work that go beyond dualistic, binding analytical claims on power by the “active” over the “resistant.” The authors in this volume use a variety of methods in studying power to show (in Foucauldian terms) the capillarylike ways in which power is created through ongoing relationships.

PROJECTS IN THIS COLLECTION

By paying very close attention to the language, technologies, and processes of interaction between individuals at work, the authors in this collection demonstrate methods for watching *power* at work, and for understanding its social implications. We hope these approaches will be useful to readers working to challenge inequalities in many other venues as well.

Monica Schoch-Spana uses a Foucauldian approach to power most directly in her study of the disciplining of worker, work, and workplace boundaries in a nuclear plant that is in transition to nonactivity (in many senses).

Worker discourses (spoken, unspoken, and acted) reproduce relations of social inequality in different ways. In analyzing discourses of which the workers are very much aware—and which they manipulate—Mary Anglin uses the blurring of boundaries between worksites and religious sites (and talk) to explore how power in the workplace can be shaped by religious discourse, and vice versa.

Tressa Berman, in her analysis of Native American women’s artistic labor, crosses traditional boundaries in studies of work. She focuses on the community as worksite to challenge binary constructions of public/private, wage/nonwage, and kin/nonkin labor. Her method for studying power in that context is to reconceptualize very usefully the valorization of “ceremonial relations of production.”

Anita Puckett’s close attention to the words used by those training others in specific work tasks shows how power is communicated and reproduced. Her study is related to Willis’s (1977) and Foley’s (1990) analyses of how class is learned, but provides new insight into the uses of linguistic techniques in investigating power.

Taking gender into account in work relations, Suzanne Tallichet dis-

cusses nonparticipant observation as a method for understanding—through women's tales from the mines—the ways in which sexual harassment has been used to isolate workers and prevent their active organization or promotion. Her analysis demonstrates the continuing usefulness of dualistic categories for differential power (e.g., male and female) in analyses of work.

María de la Luz Ibarra makes the important point that domestic labor in the U.S. has been naturalized as a single work category, without adequate attention to the diversity of work experiences and life experiences in that labor sector. She combines life history with other interview approaches to provide a more textured understanding of what tasks are glossed as domestic labor, and of the multiple lenses through which work identities and life experiences of domestic workers can be discussed, including transnational migration.

Daniel Cogan also discusses immigration and workplace isolation, using videography methods to show the spatial aspects of labor force segregation in a college cafeteria. Visual approaches to studying power enable one to study the nonverbal forms power takes in workplaces.

Mary Hoyer contributes a community activist's perspective to this volume, discussing current inequalities in work opportunities in the U.S.—drawing on the city of Hartford, Connecticut, as an example. She explains the differences between numerous strategies for popular analyses of power and working conditions. She also discusses methods for, and case examples of, participatory economic reorganization. I see this chapter as a fitting conclusion to our discussion in this volume, since it provides the transition from analysis to action.

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