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Conformity, Attitude Toward Authority, and Social Class

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This study examined the relationship between attitudes toward authority, identification with authority and conformity in relation to authority in American undergraduate college students. The study consisted of two parts. The first part examined correlates of attitudes toward authority according to social class. Undergraduate college students attending Portland State University comprised the samples in which two groups, a middle-class group and a working-class group of equal sizes (n=63), were formed. A relatively new, standardized

measure of attitudes toward institutional authority, the GAIAS (Rigby, 1982), was used to measure orientation toward authority by social class. No significant differences in attitudes toward authority emerged for the two social class groups. A significant preference was shown by middle-class students for self-employment over an organizational setting, while working-class students showed a preference for employment within an organizational setting.

The second part of the study used a single subject sample (n=100), and compared responses of American college students on the GAIAS with those of English and Australian college students in the Rigby (1984) study. American college students were more pro-authority than Australian college students but not more pro-authority than English college students. In terms of political party affiliation and attitudes toward authority, American college student Democrats were more pro-authority than either the Australian or English Labour Party supporters. There were no significant differences between the U.S., Australian and English samples in attitudes toward authority for conservative political party supporters.

Additional significant findings in terms of orientation toward authority and endorsement of "Things Wanted in a Job" supported the major argument of this study, that conformity to external authority through identification is likely to characterize authority relations for U.S. undergraduate college students with middle-class career aspirations. These students are likely to be high authority identifiers who value conformity in relation to career advancement over opportunities for self-directedness and initiative on the job, and

who are more likely to aspire to higher-level (i.e., management), occupational positions.

CONFORMITY, ATTITUDE TOWARD AUTHORITY, AND SOCIAL CLASS

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

Conceptualization of the relationship between social class and occupational circumstance, where middle-class individuals come to value self-direction while working-class individuals value conformity in relation to external authority (Kohn, 1977), has received widespread acceptance in the literature. However, more recent analyses of authority relations have tended to question the notion of middle-class self-direction in relation to external authority. Changing conceptualizations of social class and authority relations suggest that conformity through identification with external authority is more likely than self-direction, to characterize authority relations for the middle-class (Abbott, 1988; Derber, 1982; Ducat, 1988; Edwards, 1974; Ehrenreich, 1989; Haaken & Korschgen, 1988; Hochschild, 1983; Oppenheimer, 1985; Swanson, 1979).

One aspect of this debate involves how we conceptualize the middle class structurally. Some social scientists claim an historic tendency toward reduced autonomy in the professions as increased segments of the middle-class have become employed by bureaucratic organizations. Furthermore, within the workplace, middle-class individuals tend to occupy positions in close proximity to external authority through their achievement of higher occupational status (Abbott, 1988; Derber, 1982; Ehrenreich, 1989; Edwards, 1974). The location of these positions within the overall relational configuration of the organization, has led researchers to speculate that the middle-class work-site

may be particularly conducive to employee conformity to managerial expectations of compliance with rules, identification with authoritative personnel and the roles they occupy, and internalization of organizational values (Edwards, 1974; LaBier, 1989; Milgram, 1974; Oppenheimer, 1985; Swanson, 1979).

Workplace values in relation to external authority in turn become reproduced through family life (Bernstein, 1973; Ducat, 1988; Ehrenreich, 1989; Kohn, 1977). Parents pass on to their children, lessons and values based on their own life experiences. Kohn (1977) saw conformity through obedience to authority as a value working-class parents pass on to their children, while middle-class parents are more likely to communicate the value of self-direction to their children. The more recent literature on authority relations on the other hand, suggests that middle-class parents also emphasize to their children lessons in conformity to external authority through identification with authority (Ducat, 1988; Edwards, 1974; Ehrenreich, 1989; Hochschild, 1983).

It seems reasonable to assume that individuals who identify more strongly with authority also have more positive attitudes toward authority than those who identify less strongly. Attitude toward authority (Rigby, 1984) may be a useful concept in identifying and defining social-class differences in how peolpe think about authority. To date, limited effort has been made to determine how middle-class individuals conceptualize authority relations (Haaken & Korschgen, 1988), or what kinds of attitudes they tend to hold toward external authority (Rigby, 1984; Rump et al., 1985). Research directed toward

clarification or elucidation of the recent debates on middle-class conformity and/or self-direction mediated by parenting practices is needed.

THE STUDY

This study examines traditional assumptions associated with social class and authority relations and investigates attitudes toward institutional authority. Of particular interest are the experiences or influences that impact attitudes toward authority among individuals with middle-class career aspirations. Do age, occupation or social-class background create a common awareness or set of attitudes leading to acceptance of and identification with external authority? The primary question guiding this study is whether or not social-class background significantly influences orientation toward authority.

A second purpose of this research project is to conduct a partial replication of Rigby's (1984) study of the attitudes of English and Australian university students toward institutional authority. In his study, Rigby (1984) found cross-cultural differences between these populations on the dimension of attitude toward authority. He used a standardized measure of attitude toward authority, The General Attitude toward Institutional Authority Scale, (GAIAS) which contains sets of items specifically designed to assess attitudes toward the police, the army, the law, and teachers (Rigby, 1982).

Rump et al., (1985) demonstrated further cross-cultural differences in attitude toward authority of Italian and Sri-Lankan adolescents using the GAIAS, yet normative data for this instrument based on

a U.S. population has not been reported in the literature. Of interest is how responses on the GAIAS of a U.S. college student population compare with responses of English and Australian college students in the Rigby (1984) study. Of additional interest is whether the GAIAS is an appropriate measure of attitudes toward organizational authority.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

SOCIAL CLASS

One of the difficulties in researching factors associated with social class is that there are widely divergent conceptions in the literature of what constitutes social class composition. In the social science literature, there are three main ways of conceptualizing social class divisions.

The first, derived from Marxist theory, links social relations and the production process, seeing the division of society occurring according to owners and non-owners of the means of production, and whether one is in the position of buying or selling labor power. Owners of the means of production who purchase labor power comprise predominantly the middle and upper reaches of society, while non-owners of the means of production who neither exercise control over the means of production nor their labor power which they sell, comprise the lower reaches of society (Aronowitz, 1973; Oppenheimer, 1985).

A second view, representing a derivative of Marxist theory, sees authority as the over-riding social relation, where society is divided according to holders and non-holders of authority in relation to the production process, whether or not ownership is a factor. Within this conceptualization, holders of authority who are in a position to purchase labor power comprise the middle and upper reaches of society, while non-holders of authority in relation to the production

process who must sell their labor power comprise the lower reaches of society (Dahrendorf, 1969; Lopreato & Hazelrigg, 1972).

Finally, positivist sociologists and psychologists use quantitative measurement to equate the middle-class with the middle stratum of society according to a combination of indices such as occupation, income, level of education, attitude and prestige, (Oppenheimer, 1985). Within this quantitative literature, debate focuses on criteria for determining boundaries between the broad social groupings, e.g. lower and middle-class, and whether or not categories such as "white collar", "middle-class" and "professional class" are synonymous or divergent class phenomena.

A further complication within this literature is that generally no distinction is made between professions that fall within the working-class group of occupations, and professions that fall within the middle-class occupations. Instead, typically the middle-class and the professions are often viewed as being synonymous or the terms "middle-class" and "professions" are used interchangeably. References to the "professions" or "professionals" therefore in connection with the literature under review, should be taken to mean the middle-class professions or professionals in keeping with that literature, at the same time bearing in mind that in actuality, any reference to "professions" and "professionals" necessarily refers to both the working-class as well as the middle-class categories in the absence of further clarification.

This study focuses on class comparisons, and will be grounded in the Marxist distinction between "working-class" and "middle-class"

based on the criteria of ownership and control of the means of production. A review of the extensive literature on the typology and political relevance of occupations within these broad categories is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, these broad social class categories will be defined to include the class locations used by Knoke, Raffalovich & Erskine (1987) and based on the research of Wright, Costello, Hachen and Sprague (1982). In this categorization, higher-level jobs offering more freedom from supervision and more control over the work processes are included under middle-class occupations while lower-level jobs affording less freedom from supervision and less control on the job comprise working-class occupations. These categories are explicated more completely in the section encorporating a discussion of the design for this study.

CONFORMITY

In order to build on the existing literature on social class and conformity, some clarification of what is meant by conformity is necessary. A major difficulty in examining assumed differences between working-class and middle-class conformity to external authority, is that processes of conformity in authority relations are poorly understood (Rosenbaum, 1983). A further complication arises from the fact that conformity, compliance and obedience as the major concepts comprising research on social influence and authority relations, are often used interchangeably within the social psychological literature.

Typically, research on authority relations has involved studies

of obedience and the circumstances under which individuals will obey and disobey authority (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989; Milgram, 1974; 1977). Milgram's (1977) research demonstrated some of the conditions under which obedience and disobedience to external authority will occur. In his studies, subjects believed they were participating in behavior-shaping experiments, as experimenters instructed subjects to deliver increasingly severe to lethal levels of simulated electric shocks to conferderates. Milgram found that physical proximity of experimenter to subjects e.g., whether or not he was in the same room, determined the level of obedience displayed by the subjects. In the absense of the immediate proximity of the experimenter, Milgram noted that disobedience i.e., refusal to administer shocks, or passive rebellion such as reporting that the shock had been administered when it had not, occurred among subjects with greater frequency than when the experimenter was present. Milgram (1977) concluded that in situations where obedience to authority is demanded, dictates or procedures may be followed in the absense of perceived alternatives, but the individual belief system is likely to be retained. For example, the employee who remains in a dissatisfying job for pragmatic reasons such as job security and regular income, but who remains silently critical of organizational authority.

Compliance is a construct which tends to be used synonymously with obedience (Back, 1983; Braun, 1983; Rosenbaum, 1983). As with obedience, there are internal and external components to compliant behavior, where action may or may not conform with opinion or attitude (Braun, 1983). For example, the individual who outwardly cheerfully

agrees to run an errand for a companion, at the same time feeling taken advantage of and resenting the request. The concepts of compliance and obedience imply differing degrees of worth, where compliance often carries a more positive connotation than does obedience. Utilitarian compliance such as adherence to societal laws in the form of traffic rules for example, carries a more positive association with authority than does obedience to instruction to administer electric shocks as per Milgram's (1974) subjects. Differing value judgements may also be ascribed to the same situation eliciting individual acquiescence where the act may be considered utilitarian compliance or obedience, depending on the interpretation of the events at hand. For example, persecuted groups or individuals who conceal their cultural traditions or beliefs in the interest of self-preservation, may be viewed as being obedient for submitting to the dominant group. Conversely, such behavior may be seen as utilitarian compliance and an acceptable course of action for preserving one's ideas in the face of oppression.

Conceptions of the processes of conformity, like those for obedience and compliance, vary within the literature (Asch, 1951; Back, 1983; Beins & Porter, 1989; Milgram, 1977). In Asch's (1951) classical research on conformity, subjects were asked to make judgements in an unambiguous line-matching task after they had witnessed incorrect judgements being made by confederates at the same task. Asch found subjects tended to conform to confederate group pressure, by seemingly adopting incorrect confederate judgements about line lengths. Milgram (1977) in experimenting with the Asch conformity paradigm, concluded

that the difference between obedience and conformity involves explicit versus implicit pressure to comply with the experimental condition in the obedience and conformity paradigms respectively. This difference also involves a difference in power relations. In the obedience paradigm, an unequal power relationship exists between the experimenter and subject where the experimenter has more authority than the subject. In the conformity paradigm, a sense of equality with the group of confererates exists in the absense of an authority figure.

Back (1983) conceptualizes conformity as involving processes of identification with a source of authority as well as internalization of the values and ideology of that authority. He differentiates between a superficial outward compliance which he views as a precursor of conformity, and conformity itself involving "adherence of the whole person who cannot think in any other way anymore" (p. 59). Back sees conformity involving processes of identification and internalization, evolving from superficial compliance in post-industrial society and accompanying the expansion of the middle-class. Recognition of personal status became more difficult with changes in the organization of production, where a merging of "blue-collar" with "white-collar" positions resulted in increased occupational mobility (Oppenheimer, 1985). The resulting expansion in "white-collar" positions meant working-class and middle-class occupations began to occur with more frequency within the same organizational settings, where similar functions were performed, e.g. psychiatrists and social workers within hospital corporations (Abbott, 1988). The middle-class found it necessary to establish its status by defining the way in which people

should think and act, such that their social position should be identifiable by their professional behavior. Back (1983) interpreted this shift within society, from superficial compliance with social mores to the fostering of conformity to external authority through processes of identification and internalization, as the basis of a new type of social control where dominant groups wished to be assured of "more continuity than outward compliance would manifest" (p. 56). Intellectuals and experts within the dominant groups and located typically in universities, imposed conformity requirements upon their members by devising the professional codes and injunctions to which members of the professional middle-class occupations in particular were required to adhere (Abbott, 1988; Back, 1983). In Back's conceptualization, obedience and compliance may function as mechanisms of control. It is when they lead to a corresponding change in attitude as well as behavior that conformity may be said to occur.

Rokeach (1961) makes a similar distinction between compliance and conformity, and like Back (1983), conceptualizes conformity as involving processes of identification and internalization:

> To conceive of compliance as conformity is to miss the crucial point that conformity is a state of mind, not an action...arrived at through complex processes of identification and internalization, which enables the person to believe what he believes and act as he acts under the illusion that he does so of his own free will and without realizing that the pressures to do so really arise from without rather than from within. In other words, the conformist cannot know that he is conforming (p. 250).

Other researchers have described how conformity through identification with managerial authority functions within the workplace, in providing a way for employees to defend against the primary anxiety

stirred in them by an often bewildering and alienating work environment. In this process, conformity to the dictates of management occurs as a function of the simultaneous identification with the authority system, and a forfeiture of responsibility for accompanying actions by virtue of having made that identification. But in the act of ceasing to critically appraise the work process, employees collude in the organizational practices which dominate and oppress them (Derber, 1982; Hirschhorn, 1988; Lyth, 1988; Milgram, 1974).

Lyth (1988) and Hirschhorn (1988) describe a process of identification with authority whereby individuals split off their own internal authority or initiative, and project it onto organizational rituals and routines embodying organizational authority. A corresponding introjection of the organizational authority accompanied by a simultaneous identification with that authority system subsequently permits justification for not taking responsibility for one's own actions. Hospital medication routines where nurses wake patients for medications whether or not patients are more in need of sleep than of meds, is a manifestation of this type of identification and internalization of the hospital authority system. In a depersonalized nurse-patient relationship where, "one is simply following orders", nurses avoid taking individual responsibility for ethical behavior in relation to their patients. Lyth (1988) and Hirschhorn (1988) refer to such organizational rituals and bureaucratic practices as serving the purpose of social defenses, necessary for survival within increasingly dehumanizing work environments.

Derber (1982) refers to the same process as ideological

desensitization, where the individual separates from or denies the ideological context of the job, or that the job should have any social meaning or moral dimensions. Ideological desensitization permits avoidance of responsibility for the way in which one's skills and knowledge are used e.g., the engineers and scientists who participated in the construction of the atom bomb at the same time denying individual responsibility for its use. Milgram (1974) similarly refers to the "agentic state" or the state of consciousness which he believes enables individuals to divest themselves of any sense of responsibility for their actions. By viewing themselves as acting out of the external authority of others, they are released from their own internal authority or conscience.

Divestiture of personal responsibility is the hallmark of this process of divorcement from reality through a regressive identification with authority. In this process, the individual simultaneously introjects the dictates of the authority system and denies responsibility for them i.e., they cease to think and question authority, and in so doing, they conform to external authority without regard for what it is they are conforming to. The theories of Lyth (1988), Derber, (1982) and Milgram (1974) are similar in that they are all theories of conformity based in all liklihood on the same sequence of intrapsychic processes of identification with authority accompanied by a loss of the sense of self in relation to that authority (see also Knight, 1940; Thompson, 1940).

SOCIAL CLASS AND CHILD-REARING PRACTICES

Leading researchers in the area of social class who have studied the effects of parenting practices on the types of messages parents pass on to their children, have concluded that these messages or lessons differ according to social class, and that they prepare children for what they might later come to experience in life and in work. In other words, the parents own lives become a daily model of attitudes and behaviors conducive to perceived social competency for their children (Bernstein, 1973; Kohn, 1977). Bernstein (1973) found that middle-class parents looked more to the future, encorporating goals directed toward facilitating the way in which the child should develop, while working-class parents were concerned particularly with immediate goals of conformity and obedience. Kohn (1977) presented similar findings, but observed that punishment of children according to social class differs in form rather than in degree. Working-class parents punish for the consequences of the behavior, whereas middle-class parents tend to sanction the intent of the behavior i.e., whether the consequences of the behavior were deliberate versus accidental. In addition, he found that these social class differences in upbringing had their origin in occupational circumstance and were related to the values of self-direction and conformity to external authority, associated with differing work experiences. He concluded that parents with higher-level jobs tend to value self-direction and communicate this value to their children, while those with lower-level jobs tend to value conformity to external authority which they communicate

to their children. Kohn (1977) further saw middle-class occupations as involving more manipulation of interpersonal relations and abstract concepts than working-class occupations, which deal primarily with objects and technical manipulation. He defined middle-class occupations as demanding a greater degree of self-direction, while working-class occupations require conformity to pre-established rules and procedures. Kohn (1977) identified these occupational values as permeating child-rearing practices according to social class.

Other investigators have suggested alternate interpretations to Kohn's findings. For example, while Kohn (1977) found an association between the manipulation of interpersonal relations and a greater degree of occupational self-direction in the middle-class, other researchers have imputed different associations to middle-class manipulation of interpersonal relations. Bernstein (1973) found that middle-class individuals grow up learning to control their own feelings and to be attuned to the feelings of others. In this way, they learn not to incur the displeasure of authority figures, but instead to seek compliance with external authority through appealing to the feelings of authority figures. More contemporary theorists of middle-class child-rearing practices elaborate upon this manipulation of interpersonal relations. They identify the intrusiveness of a permissive middle-class parenting style which observes few boundaries between parent and child.

Ehrenreich (1989), describes a parenting style in which parents are so involved in every aspect of their childrens lives, developing middle-class youngsters have no inner space that has not been invaded

by parental opinions, ambitions and expectations. She depicts an individual who grows up to be profoundly insecure in judgement, and who lives in fear of incurring displeasure. As an adult, such a person lives the life of a people pleaser, with no clear sense of self when the attention and approval of external authority is withdrawn. According to Ehrenreich (1989), middle-class permissive parenting:

> ...may ultimately be even more effective than authoritarianism in producing the habits of conformity and discipline that middle-class parents have sought to inculcate throughout this century (p. 89).

Similarly, Ducat (1988) describes the middle-class individual who is raised in such a way as to have no sense of internal authority or sense of separateness from external authority in terms of ideas, aspirations, will or actions whereupon:

> The failure to exercise proper boundary functions...results in uncritical introjection of the environment and obedience to authority (p. 39).

In reviewing psychoanalytic studies of child-rearing, Ducat describes the type of parenting style most likely to produce children who, as adults, are unable to critically destructure their environment. He views these children as a product of the collapse of parental authority secondary to the encroachment upon private family life of economic relations, based on a new wage system in a post-industrial society. Through this process, whereby employees became proletarianized and increasingly alienated from the context of their labor, the purchase of commodities served to mitigate discontent within a dehumanizing workplace. He describes the family as one where parental love is less likely to be associated with discipline than with the satisfaction of material needs. In a society organized on the basis of consumption

of commodities, the accompanying decline in parental modeling of self-restraint in preference for self-indulgence provides a medium for "preparing children for their role as future consumers both of products and ideologies" (p. 40).

In contrast to Kohn (1977) and Bernstein (1973) then, the more recent social-psychological literature provides a different interpretation of the lessons passed on to children by middle-class parents. These competing developmental theories challenge traditional opinion regarding the middle-class experience in the acquisition of social values via the lessons reproduced through the family.

WORK VALUES AND FAMILY VALUES

The impact on the individual of lessons reproduced through the family has been studied within the occupational setting in particular. Hochschild (1983), in speaking of Bernstein's work, concludes that the message learned for the middle class employee is that feelings are important and that one's feelings will therefore be important to others. Unfortunately, within the workplace this includes in the negative sense wherein the individual becomes exploited in the service of emotional labor for profit. According to Hochschild, organizations actively promote having the employee's "true self" come to work whereupon the "true self" can be made a company asset. This trend is reflected in organizational and institutional employee evaluation forms which include sections addressing interpersonal skills. It is no longer enough to simply do the job well. One must do it well in the right sort of way, with the right attitude and demeanor. As

a result, employees come to sell not only themselves, but each other on how good it is to work for their particular organization, where everyone displays the "right" attitude and affect to fellow employees as well as to the clientel. An example of such emotional labor according to Hochschild is illustrated in the popular commercial "Come fly the friendly skies", where the job description of a flight attendant includes "friendliness".

However when the "true self" appears in the form of an employee with a greivance, supervisors who are attuned to employee feelings are in a position to appease worker discontent with "empathy", without actually responding to worker greivances. This type of manipulation of interpersonal relations gives renewed meaning to the old adage, "you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar". Hochschild (1983) provides an example of this process of exploitation of empathy to induce employee conformity. She describes the message given by trainers to flight attendants in response to their anger at male passengers demanding smiles:

> When you get mad at some guy for telling you that you owe him a smile, you're really mad only because you're focusing on yourself, on how you feel. Get your mind off yourself (p. 138).

Hochschild provides the following interpretation of this type of message:

> When a flight attendant feels angry at a passenger in this situation, what does her anger signal?...that she is mislocating herself in the world, that she is seeing the man who demands a smile in the wrong sort of way - that she is oversensitive, too touchy...It indicates something wrong with the worker, not something wrong with the customer or the company (p. 138).

Haaken and Korschgen (1988) also point out how emotional closeness

with supervisors may be a "double edged sword". While feeling good on the one hand, such closeness can promote vulnerability to emotional exploitation on the other. In other words, the boundaries of the division of labor, whereby supervisors and subordinates have differing interests becomes obscured. Supervisors are necessarily involved in promoting the organizational interest, which means extracting as much labor power from subordinates as possible to maximize profits. Subordinates on the other hand, must protect themselves from this type of exploitation in the service of the profit motive (Edwards, 1974). "Closeness" between supervisors and subordinates can obscure these very real differences in purpose as well as in the power relationship existing between them. For example, physicians expect to give orders, while nurses expect to take orders, and it leaves little to the imagination as to who is in the position that most readily lends itself to exploitation when friends supervise friends.

Hochschild (1983) cites a greater demand within the middle and upper classes for emotional labor, through the conscious and unconscious manipulation of one's feelings and emotions on the job in the service of the profit motive. This emotional manipulation results in alienation from the self, where the "signal value" (see Hochschild, 1983; Lyth, 1988) of one's feelings that should indicate to the employee when something is wrong, becomes lost. Under these circumstances, the danger for the individual is in the liklihood of assuming there is something wrong with them or that the problem lies with them, and that they need to "try harder".

This tendency toward employee self-doubt and submissiveness to

authority in the face of conflict, is compounded by the all-pervading yet unspoken message that problems within the workplace are likely to be individual rather than systemic:

> Much is known about neurotic behavior patterns, dysfunctional organizational climates, disturbing interpersonal interactions, and rigidified defense mechanisms. The pervasiveness of these phenomena has been pointed to time and time again in the psychiatric and psychoanalytic literature. Yet we virtually never see these issues discussed in the managerial literature (Kets de Vries & Miller, 1984, p. 2).

Implicit in the circumstance of voluntary termination of employment for reasons of dissatisfaction with management practices, i.e., "the disgusted", as well as involuntary turnover of subordinates rather than superordinates in the face of conflict in the workplace, is the suggestion that supervisors are above having problems or personality disorders,(Berk & Goertzel, 1975; Lorber & Satow, 1977; Lyth, 1988; Schwartz,1989; Wagner, 1989; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Yet, in reviewing the research on turnover, Staw (1983) informs us that those who leave the workplace tend to show above average competency at their jobs, and that most employees report the outcomes of their employment positions to be contingent upon something other than their job performance, (see also Berk & Goertzel, 1975; LaBier, 1989; Lorber & Satow, 1977; Lyth, 1988; Schwartz, 1989; Wagner, 1989; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). LaBier (1989) states that much employee disturbance results from a "trickle-down" effect from higher level managers who are themselves emotionally disturbed. While a few employees are secure enough to leave unhealthy work environments and go elsewhere (LaBier, 1989; Lyth, 1988; Wagner, 1989) the majority who find themselves questioning their sanity in the workplace become increasingly at

risk for conformity within and dependency upon the system.

Compatability of employee interest with the organizational interest (Edwards, 1974; Hochschild, 1983; LaBier, 1989) is another message contained within parental lessons deriving from the middle-class occupational circumstance. However, the paradoxical notion of compatability of employee and employer interest is reflected in related contradictory messages for the middle-class individual. For example, that successful adjustment in life should be measured according to successful on-the-job adaptation to impersonal, exploitative organizational practices, where no one questions exactly what it is a person is adapting to (LaBier, 1989). Or, the lure of organizational advancement offered by those who simultaneously confer the pat on the head or membership within the ranks of the unemployed (Ducat, 1988). Ehrenreich (1989) and LaBier (1989) identify fear as the outcome of these contradictory messages for the middle class individual. A pervasive anxiety and desperation to please, accompany a fear of incurring disfavor with one's employer, as well as fear of not making it in one's social class by virtue of failing to measure up on the ladder of material success. In discussing contemporary organizational theory, LaBier (1989) states:

> You must either live in fear or obedience. Incompetence is rewarded, competence is punished, and confidences are betrayed...people put up with it because they accept the organization's definition of happiness as materialism, and so they engage in a trade-off of autonomy for the illusion of security. This frees them, they think, from making hard moral and intellectual choices...if the worker identifies self-interest with that of the company, he won't be alienated. He will be loyal and unquestioning. The end result..is pervasive fear in the middle levels (p. 42).

A remaining issue to do with the nature of the messages contained

in middle-class parental lessons derives from a tendency to believe that being self-directed is the same as being autonomous. Edwards (1974), points out that "self-direction", or the absense of immediate external controls, and "autonomy", which involves the freedom to make choices and decisions in one's own rather than the organizational interest, are notions which often become confused in the literature. This confusion in turn has led to the assumption that self-direction and conformity are opposing constructs. For example, Kohn (1977) implies that the values of conformity and self-direction are mutually exclusive. However being self-directed within the confines of the organizational interest is a far cry from being self-directed and autonomous in one's own interest. In the act of complying with organizational goals and objectives, even if one is in a position of authority within the system, one is simultaneously being self-directed on the job, and conforming to the external authority of the organization.

Furthermore, in dismissing conformity characterized by imitation of external authority, Kohn (1977) may have dismissed consideration of middle-class conformity. Choosing to view obedience to externally imposed rules as a negative type of conformity, while dismissing altogether, conformity involving imitation which according to Kohn is based on internal standards, overlooks the possibility of morally impaired internal standards. For example, Yankelovich's (1974) research on employment aspirations of college and non-college youth, revealed that college youth may be more occupationally motivated by opportunistic self-interest than by ideation to do with making a contribution to

society. When asked to indicate the things they most valued in a job, most frequently scored items for college youth included opportunities to develop their mind and skills, rather than items indicating a desire for work with inherent moral worth or social value. Interestingly, items of least priority for college youth in things wanted in a job had to do with freedom from conformity in dress or politics, and time for interests outside of work.

Apparently, self-direction as the esteemed behavioral manifestation of middle-class initiative and ambition, may be less a function of liberated individual creativity in the service of socially responsible goals, than of an unquestioning conformity to external authority in the workplace in an effort to get ahead.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIALIZATION

New tendencies in the organization of production in recent decades have generated much debate among psychologists and sociologists concerning the impact of changing occupational circumstance on acquired social values (Abbott, 1988; Edwards, 1974; Oppenheimer, 1985). Central to these debates is the issue of shrinking "blue collar" positions in the face of increasing "white collar" positions within the organizational setting. (Abbott, 1988; Edwards, 1974; Oppenheimer, 1985; Pearson, 1975). At issue is whether there are increasing similarities in socialization experiences and in corresponding acquired social values according to class, particularly on the dimension of conformity to external authority.

After the family, socialization into the culture of the workplace

which, for most middle-class individuals occurs within the societal context of the system of the professions, is the next level of indoctrination into conformity to external authority. Such socialization occurs through competition among the individual professions for jurisdiction over abstract knowledge and its concrete application (Abbott, 1988). This process creates a system of dominant and subordinate professions (Abbott,1988; Austin, 1987; Bliss & Cohen, 1977; Freidson, 1970), within which, through the use of codes and injunctions, its members defend both their work as well as their social superiority in relation to each other, (Abbott, 1988; Dingwall, 1977; Freidson, 1970). Such a system establishes an heirarchy of professions, with the most dominant and socially superior professions acquiring more authority and prestige than the subordinate professions.

However with the establishment of an authority heirarchy among the professions which is in turn reinforced by the authority of science and coupled with restrictive protective controls, the individual within the system is at risk for becoming indoctrinated into the ideology and dictates of their chosen profession at the expense of their individual values and belief system. Research indicates that this process is essentially complete by the time the individual has graduated from college (Derber, 1982; Kilburg, 1986; Pearson, 1975; Yankelovich, 1974). Detailed accounts of this indoctrination into professional ideology are provided through analyses of the processes of socialization of the professional commencing at the level of college education and training, (see Lyth, 1988; Monchek, 1979; Olesen, 1989; Sim & Spray, 1973; Wagner, 1989).

> During the process of socialization to professional norms and standards, the way in which the rookie understands his motives, the way in which he learns to define the job, what he thinks of as proper, rational and acceptable professional behavior -- all these things can undergo a transformation so that they conform more closely to how professional culture describes the world (Pearson, 1975, p. 22).

In his essay on "Mental Labor in Advanced Capitalism", Derber (1982) addresses the issue of ideological desensitization, which is at the heart of indoctrination via the process of professional socialization. In this process, one loses touch with the ideological context of the job, and through denial, the professional can disclaim not only responsibility for how and under what conditions one's knowledge or expertise is used, but for the degree to which these dimensions adequately serve a social or ethical purpose, or ultimately that there is any purpose to work other than remuneration. Raskin (1990) illustrates this argument:

> ..the premise that professionals truly experience their work as fulfilling and enjoyable may be outdated in the sweatshop economy of the 1980's, where big corporate law firms are well paid assembly lines and money, once a mere side-benefit to a professional career, is now seemingly its raison-d'etre (p. 89).

Derber (1982) adds the following comment on this process:

> While many employees view their work either as purposeless or serving interests and objectives alien to their own, they do not experience discontent. They have no sense that work can or should have social meaning, and they feel no sense of responsibility for their employers' uses of their work (p. 181).

Of particular significance in this process is that the resulting conformity results from a failure of the professional to recognise the nature of the exploitation, and in the words of Pearson (1975), "..professionals undergo a process...that is a deformation of the self which might even reach into the character structure" (p. 75).

Other researchers have referred to the identificatory processes of middle-class professionals which mediate ideological desensitization and which serve the interests of the organization rather than the individual. For example, Oppenheimer (1985) attributes a failure of white-collar workers in general to resist and organize to the fact that they wish to optimize their chances for advancement, suggesting an identification with management vis a vis aspirations to move up in the "company". Haaken and Korschgen (1988) refer to the liklihood of the existence of internal representations of surrogate familial social authorities for middle-class adolescents within the workplace, which may serve a defensive function against low-status work.

Within the professions themselves, the existence of increasing numbers of salaried professionals, dependent for financial security upon managerial authority in organizational settings (see Derber, 1982; Freidson, 1984), has sparked research interest in the impact upon the individual of bureaucratic and heirarchical organizational practices (Dressel, 1987; Edwards, 1974). A number of theories documenting changes within the professions as well as growing discontent among the professionals themselves that resembles other workers, have emerged.

Analyses of the growing discontent with work among professionals within the system focus on increasing professional subordination to managerial authority and erosion of professional autonomy (Derber, 1982). These analyses reflect a greater interest in the concept of proletarianization of the professional where the only resource remaining

under the control of the individual is one's ability to work and to exchange one's mental and emotional labor for capital (Aronowitz, 1973; Derber, 1982; Dressel, 1987; Ducat, 1988; Hochschild, 1983; Larson, 1980; Oppenheimer, 1985). There are accounts of disillusionment of the professional from the idealism during professional training, to the actualities of professional life (Kilburg, 1986; Monchek, 1979; Schwartz, 1989; Sim & Spray, 1973; Wagner, 1989). Theories based on the work of Braverman (1974) in relation to the working-class, describe routinization or deskilling of the middle-class. Deskilling is characterized by a division of professional labor which undermines the expertise of the worker leading to diminished control of one's work process as well as to on-the-job monotony (Abbott, 1988; Dressel, 1987). Finally, Freidson (1984) discusses the social control of the professional which constitutes formalized and ritualized membership practices among the professions e.g., liscensure examinations and professional oaths of allegiance. While a more detailed definition or analysis of most of these themes goes beyond the scope of this study, what is noteworthy is that collectively they conjure up imagery of the contemporary professional in terminology that at one time was exclusively associated with the factory worker or the industrial laborer.

While there is considerable disagreement among theorists as to the exact nature and relative influence of these processes within the professions (Abbott, 1988; Derber, 1982; Freidson, 1984), one theory that has particular relevance to this study in examining the organizational context of conformity to authority, has to do with

the social control of the professional (Freidson, 1984). Freidson describes a new trend in this area accompanying organizational development, where a division of labor occurs between rank and file professionals and an elite group of administrators who dictate the company policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are in turn grounded in a body of knowledge, the jurisdiction for which is presided over in professional schools. Abbott (1988), and Freidson (1970), describe the same process occuring within the broader societal context of the professions themselves where elite dominant professions, such as the medical profession, control the subordinate professions such as nursing and social work, subsuming within their general knowledge jurisdiction. This system of defining, claiming and controlling knowledge and related expertise, formalizes the way in which the professions and the organizations within them, control their members.

Of particular significance in this process, and what may in large part account for the tendency of some researchers to misinterpret the motivations behind the apparent self-directed and autonomous behavior of the middle-class professional, is the fact that these individuals <u>appear</u> to be largely free of supervision and to be in control of their work process. In point of fact however, as discussed previously, professionals are only superficially self-directed and autonomous, within the clear but unspoken limits afforded by the supervisory heirarchy, and accompanying relational configurations within which they are embedded and by virtue of which they are constrained:

> While professionals maintain an unusual degree of skill and discretion in carrying out specialized technical procedures, they are increasingly stripped of authority to select their own projects or clients and to make major budgetary and policy decisions (Derber, 1982, p. 188).

The organization therefore provides professionals with an informal yet rigid system of control and supervision. This type of "mixed message" professionals experience regarding their autonomy, is illustrated by Friedson (1984):

> Rank and file practitioners are no longer as free to follow the dictates of their individual judgments as in the past, though quite unlike other workers, their work is expected to involve the use of discretion on a daily basis (p. 1).

and again by Derber (1982):

> Professionals are typically free of time clocks and extensive supervision but must submit in a more profound sense to the underlying regimes and constraints of proletarianized labor (p.182).

In conclusion, the acquisition of social values appears to derive from consideration of the interaction of a number of factors to include the personality of parents; social class and its influence on parents, particularly with respect to child-rearing practices related to discipline; professional socialization during education, training and employment; and the culture of the workplace in general. When all these factors are considered, the image of the middle-class individual in contemporary workplaces that are becoming increasingly heirarchical and bureaucratized, is one of decreasing ownership and control over the labor process. In this respect, working conditions and socialization experiences for the middle-class are resembling more and more those of the working-class. To the extent that parental lessons both inform and are informed by occupational circumstance,

conformity to external authority appears to be the order of the day, while self-directedness and autonomy based on intrinsic motivations and grounded in higher-level moral reasoning regarding social and ethical concerns, has largely become a thing of the past. In terms of the broader societal context, it appears that competitive motivations toward self-advancement of the American middle-class professional, in all liklihood are promoted by conformity through an identification with external authority. Identification with authority in turn appears to incorporate motivations that are self-serving, expedient, and devoid of any professional orientation that would circumscribe intrinsic gratification based on social objectives and ethical concerns.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The literature reviewed here suggests that middle-class conformity to external authority is predicated upon a strong identification with authority. The Yankelovich (1974) data as well as the developmental and professional socialization literature suggest that middle-class conformity to external authority through an identification with that authority, is well established before the professional enters the confines of the occupational setting. In reviewing studies of students in nursing, dentistry, law and medicine, Derber (1982) reports that the high levels of idealism regarding moral and social concerns found to be present in first-year students, are replaced with cynicism and a more pragmatic preoccupation with professional technique and expertise by the time of graduation. The present study was therefore limited to college students because of their middle-class career aspirations, and because they have been described in the literature as a population who are likely to demonstrate a strong identification with authority.

While conceptually interesting, more in depth discussion or attempts at empirical validation of theories of conformity to external authority through complex identificatory processes, go beyond the scope of this study. The more circumscribed concept of attitude toward authority on the other hand, may be useful in identifying social class differences in authority relations, specifically, whether there are social class differences in orientation toward authority. It is reasonable to

suppose that conformity through identification with external authority would be accompanied by an orientation toward or acceptance of authority, whereas one would not necessarily expect this association in the case of conformity through obedience to external authority. Milgram (1977) found that obedience to external authority is motivated by proximity of authority. When the pressure of authority is not immediately felt, frequency of disobedience or passive rebellion markedly increases. This finding suggests that conformity due to obedience is more likely to occur out of a felt lack of choice rather than out of a respect for or desire to imitate the agent of authority.

The main focus of the study was on identifying correlates of attitudes toward institutional authority in college students with middle-class employment aspirations. Of interest was whether acceptance of or orientation toward authority was more likely to be associated with individuals with middle-class backgrounds, a finding which might lend support to the hypothesis of middle-class conformity to external authority through identification. Family background factors such as social class location, and certain demographic factors were identified to see whether there were commonalities of experiences with respect to attitudes toward authority.

Student attitudes toward authority were measured using a relatively new and standardized instrument called the GAIAS, or General Attitude Toward Institutional Authority Scale (Rigby, 1982; Rigby & Rump, 1979). This scale was designed to provide an indication of "the degree of approval or disapproval with which a person views various institutional authorities" (Rigby, 1984; p. 42), and as an indication

of orientation toward authority (Rigby, 1986). Additional items designed to measure attitudes toward institutional authority within the organizational setting were included with the items on the GAIAS, to see if they would correlate with a more general attitude toward institutional authority. Examples of such items included, "I would dislike having to use titles for supervisors at work such as 'doctor' or 'Sir'", and "The organization reduces people to mindless conformity", (see Appendix). The rationale here was to see whether the GAIAS could also be used as an appropriate measure of attitudes toward authority in the workplace, or whether organizational authority should be differentiated from other forms of institutional authority. The GAIAS was selected over authoritarianism scales because measures of authoritarianism do not measure attitude toward authority per se., (Rigby & Rump, 1979). Also, the concept of authoritarianism implies an associated personality structure. According to Kelman & Hamilton (1989):

> There is no logical or empirical reason for interpreting social class differences...in broad characterological terms. It is more parsimonious to account for these differences in terms of the situations in which different population groups find themselves (p. 263).

It is assumed that by definition, college students have middle class aspirations. However data was collected on their work aspirations and projected career direction to test this assumption. A portion of the Yankelovich survey on "Things Wanted In a Job" was also administered, and students were asked to rate their responses to these items on a Likert-type format. Additional items were included to better ascertain student attitudes toward morally and socially

responsible work (see Appendix).

1. It was expected that identification with authority as indicated by high scores on the GAIAS would correlate with endorsement of items related to "getting ahead" on the TWIJ scale, (for example item numbers 4 and 6).
2. It was predicted that low GAIAS scorers would be more apt to endorse items that base work values on moral, social or environmental objectives, (item numbers 3, 28 and 37).
3. It was also expected that high scores on the GAIAS would correlate with a low endorsement of items on the TWIJ questionnaire that would militate against conformity in a job (for example item numbers 15, 21, 22, 23 and 25).
4. It was further hypothesized that socialization and demographic factors would be similar for students showing a strong identification with authority, with middle-class background and age being the factors most predictive of a higher score on a measure of attitudes toward authority. Of interest was whether older students with an established work experience would show a stronger identification with authority than would younger students.
5. It was expected that age would correlate positively with identification with authority for middle-class individuals, but not for working class individuals. The rationale here was that members of the middle-class were more apt to have occupational experiences consistent with their upbringing in relation to identification with authority. For working-class individuals

on the other hand, neither occupational circumstance nor upbringing are as apt to promote identification with authority (Kohn 1977).

With respect to students' work aspirations and career projections, of interest was whether a pro-authority attitude would correlate with intent to work within an organizational setting rather than to be self-employed, as well as with aspirations to occupy positions of authority such as supervisory positions.

6. It was anticipated that students from a middle-class background more than students from a working-class background would endorse self-employment over the organizational setting, and aspire to occupy supervisory positions.

A second purpose of this research project was to conduct a partial replication of Rigby's (1984) study of the attitudes of English and Australian university students toward institutional authority, based on the GAIAS. In this study, Rigby found evidence for cross-cultural differences between English and Australian students on the dimension of attitudes toward institutional authority, with English students scoring significantly more pro-authority. A review of the literature revealed that normative data for the GAIAS based on a U.S. population, has not been reported in the literature. This study administered the GAIAS to an American college student population as a new population for this measure, and compared attitudes toward authority of American students with those obtained for English and Australian students in the Rigby study. Students were also asked their political party affiliation as per the Rigby study.

7. It was predicted that conservative political party supporters

among American students i.e., Republicans, would be significantly more pro-authority than either the English or the Australian conservative political party supporters (see Ray, 1985).

METHOD

SUBJECTS

Subjects were undergraduate college students attending Psychology classes at Portland State University. The study comprised two parts. The first part which examined correlates of attitudes toward authority according to social class used two groups, a middle-class group and a working-class group. Both groups were of equal size, (n=63). Thirty-nine females and 24 males comprised the working-class group, whose ethnic composition was 84% White, Non-Hispanic; 8% Asian-Pacific Islanders; 3% Hispanic and 5% Other. The middle-class group was comprised of 50 females and 13 males, who were 81% White, Non-Hispanic; 13% Asian-Pacific Islanders; and 6% other. The second part of the study which examined correlates of attitudes toward authority in individuals with middle-class career aspirations used a single sample, (n=100). Seventy-five females and 25 males comprised this sample whose ethnic composition was 85% White, Non-Hispanic; 12% Asian-Pacific Islanders and 3% other. All subjects were asked to complete three measures in a single session: a modified version of the GAIAS (Rigby, 1982), a section from the questionnaire on "Things Wanted In a Job" (TWIJ), (Yankelovich, 1974), and a questionnaire on work aspirations and demographic information.

MEASURES

Demographic Questionnaire

This information sheet was designed to assess subject age, sex, years of education, religion, social class, ethnicity, and political party affiliation (see Appendix).

Social Class Categorization. In order to determine social class location, all subjects were asked to respond to items asking about their own and their parents' occupations. One set of items referred to present employment and whether one is self-employed or employed by others. Another set of items referred to supervisory status and whether one supervises others and/or is supervised, while a third set of items referred to managerial status. The format of these items was adapted from Wright's (1985) questionnaire for the construction of class typology (see Appendix). Subjects were asked to respond to this set of items three times, once in terms of each of their parents occupations, and once in terms of their own occupation if employed. Subjects who had a work history but were currently unemployed were asked to respond according to their last position held. Based on responses to these items, social class position for parents and subjects was determined according to criteria provided by Knoke et al., (1987), and Wright (1985). The data obtained permitted assignment of social class according to ownership of the means of production and authority structure, as well as control over the means of production. In other words, assignment to a class location was made according to whether an individual owned their means of production,

and whether they were supervised by others and/or supervised others (Knoke et al., 1987):

1. Capitalist: self-employed and employs other people
2. Petty Bourgeois: self-employment and does not employ others
3. Autonomous Manager: not self-employed, supervises other people, but is not supervised
4. Manager: not self-employed, supervises others, and is supervised
5. Autonomous Worker: not self-employed, has no supervisor, and does not supervise others
6. Worker: not self-employed, has a supervisor, and does not supervise others
7. Other

Social class assignment was based on the criteria of ownership and control in preference to assignment according to the more ambiguous categories such as "white collar" and "professionals" (Cooper & Marshall, 1980; Kohn, 1977), the use of which can lead to a confounding of the notions of social status and social class. Popular notions of which occupations constitute the "professions" versus those comprising "white" or "blue" collar occupations, can lead to assignment of subjects to social class locations based more on social status considerations than upon objective class criteria (see Shingles, 1989). At the same time, there still exists potential for overlapping and ambiguous positions. For example, as professional and technical workers are increasingly employed in organizations where their labor power is purchased by their employers, it becomes less clear whether

or not they are a part of the middle-class, or are members of the working-class. A further complication in making such class distinctions involves the issue of whether or not lower-level professional and technical workers identify with and are willing to form alliances with other workers (Aronowitz, 1973; Bruner, 1957; 1958; Oppenheimer, 1985). While acknowledging the contradictory class locations which characterize certain occupations, this study includes in the working-class category, non-managerial professional and technical workers who are not self-employed. Self-employed professionals, supervisors, managers, administrators and small business owners are included in the middle-class category. The increased degree of control these workers have over their own work process and that of others within these positions is a major distinguishing factor among people who work. The extent to which this degree of control differentiates them from or may create conflicting interests with members of the working-class, it provides the basis for assignment to the middle-class category.

All subjects regardless of their age were assigned the social class location assigned their parents. It was felt that students tend to be involved in the process of preparing for a career whereupon their own social class location has not fully stabilized. Once subjects had been assigned to the social class location of their parents based on the Knoke et al., (1987) class categories, analysis of subject social class categorizations involved assigning the six Knoke et al., (1987) social class categories to the two broader middle-class and working-class groups. This was done in order to examine correlations

of the other measures such as the GAIAS according to the more usual working-class, middle-class conceptualizations of social class categories found in the literature. For purposes of this study, the first four categories were defined to include middle-class occupations based on the fact that they offer more freedom from supervision and more control in the work process. Examples of occupations in this category included small business owners, managers, administrators and self-employed or higher-level professionals (e.g., engineers, physicians, social worker in private practice). The latter two categories were defined to include working-class occupations based on the fact that they are non-managerial, offering less freedom from supervision and less control on the job. Examples of such occupations included non-managerial, technical workers or lower-level professionals employed by organizations (e.g., nurse, teacher, data processor). Even though the first category could conceivably include big capital and therefore qualify as "upper class", what was of interest in this study were the dimensions of relative freedom from supervision and control over the work process, rather than precise assignment to social class locations. Only two questionnaires were obtained from students from this type of big capital background which were discarded as outlyers. Assignment of subjects to social class groups resulted in 63 comprising the working-class sample. Sixty-three subjects were then randomly selected from the larger remaining middle-class subject pool to comprise the middle-class sample.

General Attitude to Institutional Authority Scale (GAIAS)

A shortened version of the original GAIAS (Rigby & Rump, 1979),

was developed by Rigby (1982), (see Appendix). It uses 32 of the original 112 items in a Likert-type format, where all items are scored from 1 to 5, according to how strongly the respondent agrees or disagrees with the sentiment expressed in each item. A high score indicates a pro-authority attitude. Sixteen of the items are reverse scored to control for the acquiescence response set. Reliability and validity information for the scale are provided in Rigby & Rump (1979), and Rigby (1982; 1984; 1986). For purposes of this study, wording of one of the items was modified from the original scale to read "The police in the United States are pretty trustworthy" rather than "The police in Australia are pretty trustworthy". This scale was used to assess subject attitudes toward institutional authority.

Additional items to assess subject attitudes toward authority within the organizational setting were included with the items on the GAIAS in order to see how they would correlate with a more general attitude toward institutional authority. The additional items used the same items used to measure attitude toward the army, with changes in some of the wording to reflect the organization. It was thought that items from the army sub-scale on the GAIAS most readily lent themselves to adaptation to questions about organizational settings. The army sub-scale items reflect how the army functions as an occupation thereby making these items amenable to adaptation to other occupational institutions such as the organization. Items on the sub-scales for teachers and the police on the other hand, are couched in behavioral terms, while items to do with the law sub-scale focus more on the

purpose of the law. By making these additional items as similar as possible to existing sub-scale items, it was thought that scores reflecting attitudes toward organizational authority might be directly comparable with scores on the GAIAS. Reverse scoring of certain of the additional items was consistent with those items in the army sub-scale that were reverse scored (see Appendix).

Things Wanted In a Job Questionnaire (TWIJ)

This questionnaire was adapted from the Yankelovich (1974) survey, with responses to be rated from 1 to 5 on a Likert-type format. Subjects were asked to rate the importance to them of each item in considering a job, with 5 being extremely important and 1 being extremely unimportant. Two additional items were added to assess student attitudes toward work involving moral objectives, and work which makes a contribution to the environment. This latter item was added because environmental concerns have been prominent in the media in this area in recent months, and may have contributed to some consciousness-raising to do with socially or environmentally relevant issues (see Appendix). Twelve of the items in this questionnaire were of particular interest for the information they provided in relation to the literature reviewed (see starred items in Appendix). Reverse scoring was used on items numbered 3, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, and 28, so that high scores on these items would be in the direction of a desire to "get ahead" in the organization, and would reflect a lack of interest in socially useful work as well as a tendency toward conformity in relation to authority within the workplace. A decision was made not to use item 37 in the analyses incase the example provided with this item were to elicit

too limited a subject response set. Responses to these items were analyzed with respect to scores on the GAIAS and according to social class.

Work Aspirations and Career Projections

Subjects were asked to indicate their preference for self-employment versus work within an organizational setting. Subjects endorsing a preference for work within an organizational setting were also asked to indicate their preference for occupying a supervisory position versus a non-supervisory position (see Appendix).

DATA ANALYSIS

Chi-Square analyses were used in the first part of this exploratory study investigating correlates of attitudes toward institutional authority of subjects from middle-class and working-class backgrounds. The study attempted to determine what combination of items (for example age, social class) best separated high and low scorers on the GAIAS, and whether age and middle-class background were two variables particularly predictive of identification with authority.

In the second part of the study, a subject sample (N=100), was randomly selected from the entire subject pool for purposes of comparison with the Rigby (1984) English and Australian samples. The mean age for this U.S. college student group was 26.5 years with a standard deviation of 7.82 years compared with a mean age of 21.2 years and a standard deviation of 4.3 years for the English sample, and a mean age of 23.6 years and a standard deviation of 6.6 years for the Australian sample in the Rigby study. Mean scores and standard

deviations for the scores on the GAIAS were compared with those obtained for Australian and English students in the Rigby (1984) study. T-tests for independent means were conducted to compare pro-authority attitudes of American students with those of English and Australian students on the GAIAS. GAIAS scores of subjects who indicated that they supported either of the main political parties were compared to determine whether any correlations existed between political party affiliation, and high or low scores on a measure of attitudes toward authority. Again, t tests were conducted to compare the scores of American conservative political party supporters i.e., Republicans, with conservative party supporters in England and Australia, and to compare the scores of American "liberal" party supporters i.e., Democrats with Labour Party supporters in England and Australia as per the Rigby study.

A correlational analysis of scores on the GAIAS with scores on the additional items assessing attitude toward authority within the organizational setting was also conducted, to determine whether or not student attitudes toward authority in an organizational setting are the same as or different from generalized attitudes toward institutional authority. An additional Chi square analysis of GAIAS scores with TWIJ scores was also conducted in an effort to determine what kinds of workplace values are endorsed by subjects who are oriented toward authority, compared with the types of workplace values that are endorsed by subjects who are less oriented toward authority.

RESULTS

SOCIAL CLASS, AGE AND ATTITUDE TOWARD AUTHORITY

The first analysis of the data assessed GAIAS scores in relation to social class to determine whether middle-class background would be more predictive than working-class background of a higher score on a measure of attitudes toward authority. The analysis revealed no class differences in relation to attitudes toward authority ($X^2(1)=0.85$, $p>0.05$).

A second analysis involving social class and GAIAS scores was run to determine whether controlling for age would reveal differences between the two social class groups on GAIAS scores. It had been hypothesized that older, middle-class individuals would be more likely than older, working-class individuals, or younger individuals of either class, to show a positive attitude toward authority. This second analysis also revealed no significant relationship between age, social class and attitudes toward authority ($X^2(1)=0.078$, $p>0.05$; and $X^2(1)=0.004$, $p>0.05$), for older age and younger age subjects respectively. A within groups analysis of GAIAS scores according to social class for subjects over and under 30 years of age similarly failed to reveal significant findings ($X^2(1)=0.933$, $p>0.05$; and $X^2(1)=0.18$, $p>0.05$), for middle-class and working-class groups respectively.

The only significant finding in relation to social class groups involved employment preferences ($X^2(1)=3.8$, $p<0.05$). Middle-class

subjects were more oriented toward self-employment (56%, n=35), than were working-class subjects (38%, n=24). Working-class subjects showed a stronger preference for employment within an organizational setting (62%, n=39), compared with middle-class subject preference for employment in the organizational setting, (44%, n=28). Analyses were conducted to determine the relationship between social class and preference for a supervisory position within an organizational setting over self-employment, or for a supervisory versus a non-supervisory position within an organizational setting. These analyses did not produce any significant findings ($X^2(1)=2.60$, $p>0.05$; and $X^2(1)=0.08$, $p>0.05$ respectively).

Analyses were also conducted within social class groups to determine whether GAIAS scores would be predictive of employment preferences. Findings were not significant ($X^2(1)=0.0$, $p>0.05$; and $X^2(1)=0.56$, $p>0.05$), for working-class and middle-class groups respectively. GAIAS scores did not predict employment preferences according to social class.

Subject endorsement of items on the Things Wanted In a Job questionnaire similarly did not produce significant findings according to social class ($X^2(1)=2.13$. $p>0.05$).

COMPARISONS WITH THE RIGBY FINDINGS

A sample of N=100 students was used in order to compare U.S. college student attitudes toward authority as measured on the GAIAS, with the attitudes of English and Australian students in the Rigby (1984) study. Social class influences were not incorporated into

this part of the study. Subjects were treated as a homogeneous group consistent with the Rigby study. Mean scores and standard deviations for the U.S., English and Australian subjects on the GAIAS are given in Table I, with t test results. The analysis reveals significant differences between Australian and U.S. college students in terms of attitudes toward authority, with U.S. college students exhibiting more pro-authority attitudes than Australian college students. No significant differences emerged between U.S. and English college students on this dimension.

TABLE I

SCORES OF ENGLISH, AUSTRALIAN AND U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS ON A MEASURE OF ATTITUDES TOWARD INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY, (GAIAS)

Sample		X	SD	t
English	(n=100)	102.25	20.57	
				0.182
				df=198
				$p > .05$, two-tailed
United States	(n=100)	102.72	15.67	
				5.29
				df=198
				$p < .001$, two-tailed
Australian	(n=100)	90.16	17.86	

* English students were more pro-authority than Australian students in the Rigby (1984) study: $t=4.44, df=11, p<.001$.

In comparing GAIAS scores of U.S., English and Australian subjects who indicated support for either of the main political parties, U.S. college student Democrats were significantly more pro-authority than either the English or Australian students endorsing their respective Labour Parties, (see Table II for means, standard deviations and t test results). There were no significant differences among U.S., English and Australian college student conservative party supporters

however.

TABLE II

GAIAS SCORES OF ENGLISH, AUSTRALIAN AND U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO ARE "LIBERAL" POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORTERS

Sample	X	SD	t
British Labour Party (n=34)	91.97	16.12	
			3.46
			df=80
			p<.001 two-tailed
U.S. Democrats (n=48)	102.08	6.64	
			7.56
			df=93
			p<.001 two-tailed
Australian Labour Party (n=47)	83.49	15.53	

*English Labour Party supporters were significantly more pro-authority than Australian Labour Party supporters in the Rigby (1984) study: t=2.41,df=79,p<.02.

Republican Party supporters in the U.S. sample obtained a mean score of 109.08, SD=25.96, (N=26). English Conservative Party supporters obtained a mean score of 109.24, SD=20.96, (N=37), and the t value for the comparison of these two groups was 0.026,df=61,p>.05. The student endorsers of the Australian conservative political party, the Liberal Party, obtained a mean score of 103.78, SD=17.55, (N=23). The t value for a comparison of Australian conservative party supporters (Liberals), with U.S. conservative party supporters (Republicans), was 0.84,df=47,p>0.05. These results suggest cross-cultural similarities among English, Australian and U.S. conservative party supporters with respect to attitude toward authority. With respect to "liberal" party supporters however, Australians who are politically liberal are less oriented toward authority than either their English or their U.S. counterparts, and it appears that U.S. conservatives are more oriented toward authority than either their

English or Australian counterparts. These comparisons should be interpreted with caution however since the data on the English and Australian samples was collected in 1979 whereas the data on the U.S. sample was collected in 1990. Changes in political climates during this eleven year period may be reflected in the data.

ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTHORITY AND THINGS WANTED IN A JOB

Three sets of items on the Things Wanted In a Job Questionnaire were of particular interest in comparing subject response patterns on this measure with their responses on the GAIAS. The first set of items thought to be related to the "getting ahead" theme (Derber, 1982; Yankelovich, 1974), included "chance to use your mind", "chance to develop skills and abilities", "good chances for promotion", "person in charge who is concerned about you" and "chance to make a lot of money later on". The second group of items thought to be related to autonomy and initiative rather than conformity in the workplace were "opportunities to talk up without getting into trouble", "conformity in dress politics not required", and "freedom to decide how to do your work". The third group of items included "enough time to do the job well", "time for outside interests", "work that is socially useful" and "work that makes a contribution to protecting the environment". It was anticipated that someone looking to get ahead in the "company" would give low priority to this third group of items.

Percentages for high and low GAIAS scorers giving a strong endorsement for each of these TWIJ sub-scale items are given in Tables

III and IV. Analyses on an item by item basis were not undertaken because of the limited reliability to be expected per item as compared with the increased reliability to be obtained by grouping items with similar content together. Analysis of the 12 items as a sub-scale was therefore of more interest in this study than determining how subjects had responded on an item by item basis.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGES OF SUBJECTS GIVING A STRONG ENDORSEMENT TO SELECTED ITEMS IN THE THINGS WANTED IN A JOB QUESTIONNAIRE RELATED TO "GETTING AHEAD"

ITEM		Low GAIAS Scorers (n=60) %	High GAIAS Scorers (n=40) %	TOTAL (n=100) %
#4	Chance to use your mind	91	92	92
#6	Chance to develop skills and abilities	95	97	96
#9	Good chances for promotion	80	98	87
#13	Person in charge who is concerned about you	85	93	88
#19	Enough time to do job well	92	93	92
#23	Time for outside interests	90	90	90
#31	Chance to make a lot of money later on	52	55	53

TABLE IV

PERCENTAGES OF SUBJECTS GIVING A STRONG ENDORSEMENT TO SELECTED ITEMS IN THE THINGS WANTED IN A JOB QUESTIONNAIRE RELATED TO AUTONOMY AND INITIATIVE, AND SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY USEFUL WORK

ITEM	Low GAIAS Scorers (n=60) %	High GAIAS Scorers (n=40) %	TOTAL (n=100) %
#3 Work that makes a contribution to protecting the environment	80	80	80
#15 Opportunities to talk up without getting into trouble	92	85	89
#21 Conformity in dress/ politics not required	67	50	60
#22 Freedom to decide how to do your work	85	65	77
#28 Work that is socially useful	85	85	85

High and low GAIAS scorers were compared with high and low scorers on these twelve items of particular interest on the Things Wanted In A Job (TWIJ) questionnaire. A significant relationship emerged in the predicted direction for responses on these two measures. High GAIAS scorers or subjects showing a higher orientation toward authority, tended to give a higher endorsement to items on the TWIJ related to "getting ahead", than did low GAIAS scorers. High GAIAS scorers also gave a lower endorsement to items related to self-directedness and initiative rather than conformity in the work place e.g., "opportunities to speak up without getting into trouble". Conversely, low GAIAS scorers tended to obtain a lower score on the TWIJ questionnaire items related to "getting ahead", but showed a higher endorsement of items related to self-directedness and initiative

rather than conformity in the workplace, ($X^2(1)=14.4$, $p<.001$). High and low GAIAS scorers tended to give equal endorsement to the following items, "enough time to do job well", "time for outside interests", "work that is socially useful" and "work that makes a contribution to protecting the environment". See Table V for a comparison of high and low scorers on the GAIAS and high and low scorers on the TWIJ questionnaire.

TABLE V

STUDENTS WHO ARE HIGH AND LOW GAIAS SCORERS COMPARED WITH HIGH AND LOW SCORERS ON THE TWIJ QUESTIONNAIRE

Sample	TWIJ Scores		X
	Low	High	
High GAIAS Scorers (n=40)	14	26	14.4 df=1 p<.001
Low GAIAS Scorers (n=60)	45	15	

ATTITUDE TOWARD AUTHORITY AND EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCE

A comparison between high and low GAIAS scorers and their preferences for self-employment over an organizational setting, did not reveal significant findings, ($X^2(1)=0.30$, $p>0.05$). A further comparison of high and low GAIAS scorers and their preference for self-employment versus a supervisory position in an organizational setting also failed to produce a significant relationship, ($X^2(1)=0.35$, $p>0.05$).

However a significant relationship did emerge for those high

and low GAIAS scorers who indicated a preference for working within an organizational setting. When asked to indicate whether they would prefer a supervisory or a non-supervisory position within an organizational setting, high GAIAS scorers i.e., individuals showing a higher orientation toward authority, displayed a greater preference for supervisory positions (77%, n=20), over non-supervisory organizational positions (23%, n=6), than did the low GAIAS scorers, or those individuals displaying a lower orientation toward authority ($X^2(1)=7.79$, $p<.01$). Of the low GAIAS scorers, 58% (n=18), indicated a preference for occupying a supervisory position compared with 42% (n=13), who indicated a preference for a non-supervisory position in an organizational setting. In other words, attitude toward authority as measured by GAIAS scores does not distinguish between those college students who have a preference for one work setting (e.g., self-employment) over another (e.g., the organizational setting). However it does appear to be sensitive to differences between individuals who aspire to "move up in the company" and those who do not (i.e., the rank and file workers).

CORRELATION OF GAIAS AND ORGANIZATIONAL SCALE SCORES

Correlation of responses to the seven items related to the organizational setting (numbers 33 through 39 on page 11 of the questionnaire), did show an acceptable level of predictability from one item to another, $r=0.57$, $p<.01$, $N=100$. These items had been adapted from the army sub-scale items on the GAIAS, and it was thought they might comprise a sub-scale that would measure attitudes toward

organizational authority. Despite the significant correlation, the question as to the suitability of these items as a good practical tool for the measurement of attitudes toward organizational authority remains in need of further empirical validation.

DISCUSSION

SOCIAL CLASS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTHORITY

The overall findings in this study support the argument that there are no significant differences between American college students from a middle-class background, and American college students from a working-class background with respect to their attitudes toward authority.

The use of a college population for this type of study affords both advantages and disadvantages. One of the problems with studies of social class that employ pencil-paper measures, is in the skewing of findings relating to the working-class in particular. This is often due to a lack of familiarity for working-class individuals with the wording of ambiguous items on pencil-paper measures (Duckitt, 1985; Ray, 1983a). A college population therefore serves as a natural control both for practice effects on tests, as well as for level of education.

Duckitt (1985) has also discussed the importance of controlling for occupation in studies of effects of social class. Over time, the influence of class of origin with respect to occupation may become modified by subsequent experience in the workplace along class lines. In this study, it was not possible to differentiate groups according to social class based on present occupation, because of a dominant trend among the subjects to hold working-class jobs. Subjects were therefore differentiated according to social class on the basis of their class of origin. With level of education and occupation controlled

for, the failure to find class differences in attitude toward authority in this study may have been due to the leveling effect of homogeneity among the subjects in educational and occupational experience.

In this study, subjects from a working-class background demonstrated a preference for positions within an organizational setting, while individuals from a middle-class background demonstrated a preference for becoming self-employed. This finding raises the question as to what carries the greater weight in the development of occupational values and preferences, present social class location, or social class location according to class of origin or family. Findings within the literature on this issue are equivocal. Kohn (1977) for example, found present class position to be more important in determining work values and orientation than class origin, whereas Hamilton (1966) found present class identification and work values to be closely tied to class of origin. Hamilton (1966) and Korschgen (1987) both commented on the primacy of early socialization of values associated with social class, and that these values are carried over into later occupational socialization. One might anticipate that family socialization would prevail over more recent work experience in an undergraduate college population without an extensive work history, and whose own social class location has not yet stabilized. However middle-class aspirations to higher-level organizational positions and positions of self-employment among subjects, suggest that college students, regardless of social class background, endorse middle-class occupational values.

These findings do not permit conclusions however as to the relative importance of social class background versus current aspirations and

socialization in determining work values and orientation. Particular features of family life may lead to the development of middle-class occupational values and career aspirations, regardless of social class background. Alternatively, middle-class work values and orientation may be a function of more recent socialization experiences, or of a combination of past and more recent socialization influences.

ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTHORITY AND THINGS WANTED IN A JOB

With groups collapsed into the larger sample (n=100), of particular interest was whether the 12 TWIJ items collectively contained content which might cohere as a theme of "how to get ahead". It was expected that a pattern of item endorsement would emerge revealing items both valued and not valued by subjects as important to career advancement. It was thought that subjects interested in career advancement would value the "get ahead" type items i.e., "chance to use your mind", "chance to develop skills and abilities", "good chances for promotion", "person in charge who is concerned about you" and "chance to make a lot of money later on". Furthermore it was expected that these subjects would devalue items not specifically related to "getting ahead" i.e., "enough time to do job well", "time for outside interests", "work that makes a contribution to protecting the environment" and "work that is socially useful". It was also anticipated that subjects interested in career advancement would not value items related to self-directedness and initiative versus conformity in relation to authority in the workplace i.e., "opportunities to talk up without getting into trouble", "conformity in dress/politics not required"

and "freedom to decide how to do your work". Subjects less interested in career advancement on the otherhand were expected to show the opposite response pattern.

In addition, it was expected that these two groups of subjects i.e., subjects interested in career advancement versus subjects less interested in career advancement, would be distinguishable according to their stronger and weaker endorsement of external authority respectively, on the GAIAS. High GAIAS scorers more than the low GAIAS scorers, were expected to value the "get ahead" items in particular. Low GAIAS scorers more than high GAIAS scorers on the other hand, were expected to demonstrate a stronger endorsement of items related to self-directedness and initiative rather than conformity in the workplace.

As anticipated, when high and low GAIAS scorers were compared with high and low scorers on the TWIJ sub-scale items, high GAIAS scorers (i.e., subjects showing a stronger orientation toward authority), also tended to be the higher scorers on the TWIJ sub-scale. Conversely, low GAIAS scorers (i.e., subjects showing a weaker orientation toward authority), tended to be the lower scorers on the TWIJ sub-scale. This response pattern suggests that subjects who hold a favorable attitude toward authority are likely to value job characteristics that are favorable to career advancement, and to devalue job characteristics not directly related to career advancement. High authority endorsers are also likely to demonstrate a tendency to place less importance on job characteristics that afford opportunities for self-directedness and initiative, and to demonstrate an acceptance

of the need for conformity in the workplace.

Subjects who demonstrate a less favorable attitude toward authority on the other hand, are more likely to place greater value on workplace characteristics conducive to self-directedness and initiative on the job, and to demonstrate less acceptance of a requirement of conformity in the workplace. Low authority endorsers are also likely to attribute lesser value to job characteristics related to "getting ahead", and greater value to job characteristics not directly related to career advancement, than the high authority endorsers.

When responses to individual items were compared for high and low GAIAS scorers, overall, responses to individual items on the TWIJ sub-scale conformed to the anticipated response pattern. At the same time, the types of occupational values held by high and low GAIAS scorers differed in some important respects from the anticipated response pattern. Subjects displaying a more favorable attitude toward authority tended to give a stronger endorsement to items on the Things Wanted in a Job (TWIJ) questionnaire pertaining to "getting ahead" i.e., "a chance to use your mind", "chance to develop skills and abilities", "good chances for promotion" and, "a chance to make a lot of money later on". They also tended to give a higher endorsement to desiring a "person in charge who is concerned about you", (see Table III).

This item was of interest because some studies have reported affiliative ideation in relation to superiors (i.e., management) in the workplace, among middle-class employees in particular (Haaken & Korschgen, 1988; Hochschild, 1983; Kets de Vries & Miller, 1984; Lyth, 1988). It was anticipated that subjects showing a strong

orientation toward authority would be more apt to endorse this item. This prediction was supported in the results, suggesting a stronger readiness among these subjects to form affective ties with people in authority.

Students showing a higher endorsement of authority also gave a lower endorsement to items associated with autonomy and initiative, and demonstrated more acceptance of the requirement of conformity in the workplace than did the low authority endorsers, (see Table IV). Individuals showing a weaker orientation toward authority gave the opposite response set. They displayed a lower endorsement of items pertaining to "getting ahead", and a higher endorsement of items associated with opportunity for autonomy and initiative, rather than conformity in relation to authority.

Items endorsed essentially equally by both high and low GAIAS scorers were, "enough time to do job well", "time for outside interests", "work that is socially useful" and "work that makes a contribution to protecting the environment". Yankelovich (1974) reported a low endorsement of items concerning morally and socially useful work among college students. Derber (1982) interpreted the Yankelovich findings to mean that college students gradually lose their social idealism as they are progressively socialized into expedient motivations during the course of their education and training. The findings of this study potentially broaden our understanding of undergraduate college student motivations in relation to career aspirations, suggesting that endorsement of these seemingly more neutral items is not related to attitudes toward authority. This outcome contrasts with the "getting

ahead" items which appear to be related to a stronger orientation toward authority. Items pertaining to initiative and self-directedness rather than conformity in relation to authority on the other hand, appear to be related to a weaker orientation toward authority.

Collectively the subjects demonstrated an overall tendency to give a stronger endorsement to items related to career advancement e.g., "good chances for promotion" and "chance to use my mind", and demonstrated a markedly weaker endorsement of items not directly related to career advancement e.g., "time for outside interests" and "work that is socially useful". Also receiving a lower endorsement were items associated with opportunities for self-directedness and initiative, rather than conformity in relation to authority e.g., "freedom to decide how to do your work", "opportunities to talk up without getting into trouble" and "conformity in dress/politics not required". This more general response pattern, which supports the Yankelovich (1974) findings, apparently characterizes college students who have middle class career aspirations.

The findings reported here provide some support for the discussions of theorists who have identified contradictory effects of professional training in higher education. Hochschild (1983) for example, has discussed middle-class promotion of autonomy and self-advancement, and endorsement of heirarchical authority which is associated with these same aspirations. The inherent contradiction arises from the simultaneous valuing of self-directedness and initiative, and valuing appeasing of external authority in the interest of self-advancement. Derber (1982), Pearson (1975) and Lyth (1988), have similarly argued

that professionals in advanced capitalist societies are oriented toward competition and heirarchical advancement. Lyth (1988) further comments on the fate of nursing students who choose not to conform to the hospital demands for a depersonalized, bureaucratized nurse-patient relationship.

> It appears to be the more mature students who find the conflict between their own and the hospital defense system most acute and are most likely to give up training...It is the tragedy of the system that its inadequacies drive away the very people who might remedy them (p.77).

A "get ahead" ideology which is promoted through competition and heirarchical advancement becomes reflected by those college students most oriented toward authority, who are more interested in developing their skills and abilities, and who would rather work in situations where promotion is assured than where opportunities to speak one's mind are tolerated.

The level of dissatisfaction with occupational and social status, economic progress and income observed among the middle-classes (Dahrendorf, 1969; Ehrenreich, 1989; Hamilton, 1966), provides a context for understanding these expedient and opportunistic values endorsed by American college students. Dahrendorf (1969) found that it was the middle stratum of society who gave the strongest endorsement to and displayed the greatest willingness towards acquiescence within authority systems in an effort to acquire greater occupational status. Hamilton (1966) found that middle-class identifiers, while seeing themselves as having made significant economic progress in recent years, nevertheless expected further economic progress over and above that anticipated by other "white-collar" and skilled workers. They also showed greater dissatisfaction with their level of income than

working-class identifiers.

The pattern of value endorsement in this study demonstrated by subjects who show a stronger orientation toward authority, may reflect the greater pressures felt among the middle-class to succeed through material accumulation and through attainment of occupational and economic status. Ehrenreich (1989) characterizes the middle-class youth as being encouraged to enter educational channels designed to lead to the professions and positions in higher management. She argues that there are disturbing consequences which accompany this higher priority being placed on economic advancement than on social responsibility. These economic pressures may make it easier for occupational and economic ambition to take priority over the welfare of others, as is sometimes illustrated in the example of the scientists who designed and built the atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. One could say with relative certainty that the opportunity to develop their skills and abilities and the chance to use their minds among these scientists, resulted in a preoccupation with fulfilled ambition and the technical challenges in constructing new warheads. More recently, the space shuttle Challenger disaster occurred when NASA staff ignored repeated warnings that key booster seals might fail. Instead, NASA scientists and engineers overruled their better judgements regarding the liklihood of a successful launch, based on laws of probability, in deference to pressures extending all the way to Congress and the White House (Hirschhorn, 1988). It could be argued that in both situations, ambitions led to an increasing dissasociation among scientists from the destructive impact of the technologies with which

they were involved.

IDENTIFICATION WITH AUTHORITY AND MIDDLE-CLASS CONFORMITY

One of the aims of this study was to elucidate the relationship between attitudes toward authority, identification with authority, and conformity to authority among individuals with middle-class career aspirations. Attitude toward authority refers to how one feels about authority in favorable or unfavorable terms i.e., the degree to which one attaches positive or negative associations to authority. Identification with authority on the other hand, refers to the anticipation of aspiring to occupy authoritative roles and positions. Conformity to authority involves processes both of identification and internalization of authoritative roles and values which lead to a corresponding change in attitude and behavior (Back, 1983; Rokeach, 1961). The data did infact support connections between attitude toward, identification with and conformity in relation to external authority.

Of the students who endorsed a preference for working within an organizational setting, those who gave a strong endorsement to authority also showed a stronger preference for occupying supervisory positions over non-supervisory positions than did the low authority endorsers. Such a connection suggests that positive attitudes toward authority as measurable on the GAIAS are associated with an identification with authority which is indicated by a desire to occupy positions in authority. These same subjects also showed a low endorsement of occupational values that support autonomy and mitigate against conformity to authority, suggesting that authority endorsers and identifiers

are indeed conformers in relation to institutional authority.

Considerable debate has emerged in the social-psychological literature in recent decades regarding the problem of extrapolating from measures of attitudes, to conclusions regarding behavior or personality (Ray, 1976). Validation of the GAIAS on the dimension of consistency between attitudes and behavior in relation to authority has been demonstrated (see Rigby, 1986). It seems likely then that subjects who give a high endorsement to authority, do infact give expression to their orientation toward authority through eventual occupation of higher-level organizational positions. Yankelovich (1974) for example refers to:

> ..the young managerial and professional men and women who have recently graduated from college and professional schools and are now enjoying the fruits of their years of training, (p. 103).

Furthermore, these same subjects indicate acceptance of a requirement of conformity in dress and politics in relation to authority in the workplace. While this study's findings are inconclusive regarding the strength of correlation between endorsement of conformity in relation to authority on an attitude measure, and the actual occurrence of conforming behavior in relation to authority in the workplace, it seems likely that such a relationship may exist. Replication of this study that incorporates some type of behavioral measure of conformity in relation to authority (see Rigby, 1986), would be helpful toward ascertaining the probable coexistence of conforming attitudes with conforming behavior in relation to authority in the workplace.

COMPARISON OF ENGLISH, AUSTRALIAN AND U.S. COLLEGE STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD AUTHORITY, AND POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION

The partial replication of the Rigby (1984) study which showed U.S. college students to be more pro-authority than Australian college students, but equally pro-authority with English college students represents the first attempt to collect normative data on the GAIAS in the United States. However, the data for the English and Australian samples was collected in 1979, making comparisons of the three samples potentially problematic.

With respect to political party affiliation, again interpretations must be made with caution. In the absence of measurements of changes in the political climate for the three countries in the past twelve years, it is possible only to mention some of the known political factors regarding the three countries for this period of time. We do know that in all three countries, the party in power has essentially not changed during this time period. The Labour Government has been in power in Australia for the past twelve years, while the Conservative Party has been in power in Britain during the same period. In the United States, while Congress has changed hands, the Presidency has remained Republican since 1980. We also know that generally speaking, the ruling party may not represent the polity. For example, the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990), shows average attrition rates of 8.3% and 17% between those individuals reporting they registered to vote and those actually voting in the Presidental elections and Congressional elections respectively, during the past 14 years. The percentages

of individuals who registered to vote in the Presidental and the Congressional elections averaged 67.1 and 63.3 respectively for this same time period. The percentages who actually voted on the other hand only averaged 58.9 and 46.3 for the Presidential and Congressional elections respectively. The low overall percentages of registered voters and attrition rates from registration-to-vote to actually voting, speaks to the difficulty in trying to assess the actual population who really vote as they indicate they will on a pencil-paper measure. Comparable figures on the Australian and British voting populations are unavailable for this same period. There are therefore too many variables to make an accurate assessment as to how comparable the Rigby (1984) data is with the data obtained in this study.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore empirically some of the implications of social class background for attitudes toward authority. Social class has played an important part in discussions of conformity and self-directedness in relation to external authority (Edwards, 1974; Ehrenreich, 1989; Kelman & Hamilton, 1989; Kohn, 1977; Swanson, 1979). However little systematic empirical attention has been given to examining the widely accepted view in the literature that the working-class is more conformist than the middle-class in relation to external authority (Bramel & Friend, 1981; Ray, 1983a). Similarly, the corollary assumption that the middle-class is more self-directed in relation to external authority has received little empirical examination (Haaken & Korschgen, 1988).

At the same time, the theoretical literature which has explored transformations in work organizational structure in recent decades (Abbott, 1988; Edwards, 1974; Freidson, 1984; Oppenheimer, 1985; Wright, 1985), as well as literature examining middle class ideology (Ducat, 1988; Ehrenreich, 1989), has revealed increasingly changing conceptualizations of social class and authority relations among social scientists. Changes in occupational structure and diminished possibilities for autonomy among the middle-class, have led some researchers and theorists to conclude that conformity through identification with external authority may be particularly characteristic of the middle-class. This study attempted to establish some empirical

support for the hypothesis that the middle-class is more conforming than the working class, in relation to external authority.

Significant differences along class lines on the dimension of attitude toward authority did not emerge. This finding suggests that middle-class and working-class subjects are equally likely to endorse authority, and to show acceptance of a requirement of conformity in relation to authority in the workplace. They are also equally likely to place less value on opportunities for self-directedness and initiative in relation to their work process. For these subjects, valuing of self-directedness or conformity in relation to external authority in the workplace, appears to be related less to differing values as a function of social class background (Kohn, 1977), than to degree of shared identification with authority. Presumably, this degree of identification with authority is related to their middle-class career aspirations.

The outcome data further suggests that authority identifiers among U.S. college students with middle-class career aspirations can be identified through measurement of their more positive attitudes toward authority. These individuals are also likely to value conformity to authority in the service of career advancement, placing lesser value on opportunities for occupational self-directedness and initiative. Students who identify less strongly with authority on the other hand, can be differentiated from high authority endorsers through their more negative attitudes toward authority. In addition, low authority endorsers tend to place greater value on opportunities for occupational self-directedness and initiative, than on conformity to external

authority in the workplace. Additional findings revealed that high authority identifiers are more likely to aspire to occupy supervisory over non-supervisory organizational positions, while low authority identifiers show a preference for non-supervisory organizational positions.

Although these findings do not permit definitive conclusions regarding middle-class conformity, they suggest that conformity through identification with external authority is more likely than self-direction to characterize authority relations for U.S. undergraduate college students with middle-class career aspirations. These students are likely to be high authority identifiers who value conformity in relation to career advancement over opportunities for self-directedness and initiative on the job, and who are more likely to aspire to higher-level (i.e., management), occupational positions.

Although this study has revealed some interesting response patterns on measures of occupational values and orientation among students with middle-class aspirations, replication of these findings would be helpful toward ascertaining whether or not this same pattern of responses would emerge in a working population.

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APPENDIX

CAREER ATTITUDES AND ASPIRATIONS STUDY

Please answer the following questions and then turn to the next page:

Gender: Male _____ Female _____

Age: How old are you? _____

Years of education completed? ____ Last degree taken? _____

Religion: Protestant, _ Catholic, _ Jewish, _ Other:Write in _____

Born again: yes __ no __

Political Party Affiliation: Fill in one,

Republican ____

Democrat ____

Other: Write in _____

None ___

Please check one:

1. Black, Non-Hispanic __
2. American Indian or Alaskan Native __
3. Asian-Pacific Islanders __
4. Hispanic __
5. White, Non-Hispanic __
6. Decline to Respond __

A. Your Father's Employment status: Check the following. If your father is currently unemployed, retired or deceased, answer according to the last position he held.

1. Is your father self-employed? YES ___ NO ___

2. Does your father work without pay? YES ___ NO ___ If yes, write in what type of work he does in or out of the home _____

_____

If you checked (1) or (2) above, about how many people are employed in your father's business or endeavor on a permanent basis? _____

3. Does your father work for someone else? YES ____ NO ____

If you checked YES to (1) or (3) above, continue. If you checked NO to (1) and (3) above, skip ahead to question 6 and continue.

3a. Check one:

Is your father an owner or part-owner of a business, firm or organization? ___

Is your father an owner or part-owner of a business, firm or organization and does he also own stock in that enterprise? ____

Does your father own stock in a business, firm or organization but does not own or part-own that enterprise? ____

3b. Check one:

As an official part of your father's main job, does he supervise the work of other employees or tell other employees what work to do? YES ___ NO ___

If you answered YES to (3b), continue. If you answered NO to (3b), skip to question 6 and continue.

3c. How many people does your father directly supervise? _____

If your father supervises one person only, what is that person's main activities? _____

_____

Do any of your father's subordinates have subordinates under them? ALL ___ SOME ___ NONE ___

4. Which of the following best describes the position which your father holds within his business, firm or organization? Check one:

4a. He occupies a non-managerial position ____

4b. He occupies a supervisory position ____

4c. He occupies a managerial position ____

5. If you checked 4c. above: check one,

5a. He occupies a top-managerial position ___

5b. He occupies an upper-management position ___

5c. He occupies a middle-managerial position ___

5d. He occupies a lower-managerial position ___

6. How many years has your father been in his current place of work? __

7. Occupation: What is your father's current occupation? _____

_____

B. Your Mother's Employment status: Check the following. If your mother is currently unemployed, retired or deceased, answer according to the last position she held.

1. Is your mother self-employed? YES ___ NO ___

2. Does your mother work without pay? YES ___ NO ___ If yes, write in what type of work she does in or out of the home _____

_____

If you checked (1) or (2) above, about how many people are employed in your mother's business or endeavor on a permanent basis? _____

3. Does your mother work for someone else? YES ____ NO ____

If you checked YES to (1) or (3) above, continue. If you checked NO to (1) and (3) above, skip ahead to question 6 and continue.

3a. Check one:

Is your mother an owner or part-owner of a business, firm or organization? ___

Is your mother an owner or part-owner of a business, firm or organization and does she also own stock in that enterprise? ____

Does your mother own stock in a business, firm or organization but does not own or part-own that enterprise? ____

3b. Check one:

As an official part of your mother's main job, does she supervise the work of other employees or tell other employees what work to do? YES ___ NO ___

If you answered YES to (3b), continue. If you answered NO to (3b), skip to question 6 and continue.

3c. How many people does your mother directly supervise? _____

If your mother supervises one person only, what is that person's main activities? _____

_____

Do any of your mother's subordinates have subordinates under them? ALL ___ SOME ___ NONE ___

4. Which of the following best describes the position which your mother holds within her business, firm or organization? Check one:

4a. She occupies a non-managerial position ____

4b. She occupies a supervisory position ____

4c. She occupies a managerial position ____

5. If you checked 4c. above: check one,

5a. She occupies a top-managerial position ___

5b. She occupies an upper-management position ___

5c. She occupies a middle-managerial position ___

5d. She occupies a lower-managerial position ___

6. How many years has your mother been in her current place of work? __

7. Occupation: What is your mother's current occupation? _____

_____

C. Your Employment status: Check the following. If you are currently unemployed, answer according to the last position you held.

1. Are you self-employed? YES ___ NO ___

2. Do you work without pay? YES ___ NO ___ If yes, write in what type of work you do in or out of the home _____

_____

If you checked (1) or (2) above, about how many people are employed in your business or endeavor on a permanent basis? _____

3. Do you work for someone else? YES ____ NO ____

If you checked YES to (1) or (3) above, continue. If you checked NO to (1) and (3) above, skip ahead to question 6 and continue.

3a. Check one:

Are you an owner or part-owner of a business, firm or organization? ___

Are you an owner or part-owner of a business, firm or organization and do you also own stock in that enterprise? ____

Do you own stock in a business, firm or organization but do not own or part-own that enterprise? ____

3b. Check one:

As an official part of your main job, do you supervise the work of other employees or tell other employees what work to do? YES ___ NO ___

If you answered YES to (3b), continue. If you answered NO to (3b), skip to question 6 and continue.

3c. How many people do you directly supervise? _____

If you supervise one person only, what is that person's main activities? _____

_____

Do any of your subordinates have subordinates under them? ALL ___ SOME ___ NONE ___

4. Which of the following best describes the position which you hold within your business, firm or organization? Check one:

4a. You occupy a non-managerial position ____

4b. You occupy a supervisory position ____

4c. You occupy a managerial position ____

5. If you checked 4c. above: check one,

5a. You occupy a top-managerial position ___

5b. You occupy an upper-management position ___

5c. You occupy a middle-managerial position ___

5d. You occupy a lower-managerial position ___

6. How many years have you been in your current place of work? __

7. Occupation: What is your current occupation? _____

_____

Please circle your level of agreement or disagreement with each item, with 5 meaning you strongly agree and 1 meaning you strongly disagree:

1. The Police in the United States are pretty trustworthy

1 2 3 4 5

2. I would dislike having to salute an Army Officer (R)

1 2 3 4 5

3. The Law rightly claims the allegiance of every citizen at all times

1 2 3 4 5

4. Teachers seldom have "a sense of proportion" (R)

1 2 3 4 5

5. A person should obey only those laws that seem reasonable (R)

1 2 3 4 5

6. The Army develops initiative

1 2 3 4 5

7. It is reasonable to say that as a rule teachers work in the best interests of their students

1 2 3 4 5

8. The Police are quite unfair in their treatment of certain groups in society (R)

1 2 3 4 5

9. The law is the embodiment of Justice and Equality

1 2 3 4 5

10. I disagree with what the army stands for (R)

1 2 3 4 5

11.The Police have a hard job which they carry out well

1 2 3 4 5

12.A teacher is a somewhat ridiculous figure, posing as an authority on the important things in life, when, in fact, he is often ignorant and immature himself (R)

1 2 3 4 5

13.Laws are so often made for the benefit of small, selfish groups that one cannot respect the law (R)

1 2 3 4 5

14.Policemen are unnecessarily violent in handling people they dislike (R)

1 2 3 4 5

15.Teachers freely acknowledge and respect the rights of students

1 2 3 4 5

16.Military drill helps to improve a person's character

1 2 3 4 5

17.The Army reduces men to robots (R)

1 2 3 4 5

18.The Law represents the wisdom ofthe ages

1 2 3 4 5

19.Teachers do not respect the individual personalities of the students (R)

1 2 3 4 5

20.The Police are generally quite impartial and fair in the way they carry out the Law

1 2 3 4 5

21.The Law is an ass (R)

1 2 3 4 5

22.Policemen like to bully people (R)

1 2 3 4 5

23.I expect there is a good reason for most rules and regulations in the Army

1 2 3 4 5

24.Teachers are usually ready to take quite seriously whatever it is that the students feel earnest about

1 2 3 4 5

25.The Police help the weaker members of society

1 2 3 4 5

26.Obedience to the law constitutes a value indicative of the highest citizenship

1 2 3 4 5

27.In this day and age students should not be expected to call a teacher "sir" (R)

1 2 3 4 5

28.The Army brutalizes people (R)

1 2 3 4 5

29.The disciplinary measures taken by teachers are usually well considered and desirable

1 2 3 4 5

30.The Police use their "badge" as as excuse to push people around (R)

1 2 3 4 5

31.The sentences of judges in court are determined by their prejudices (R)

1 2 3 4 5

32.People should feel proud to serve the Army

1 2 3 4 5

33. I would dislike having to use titles for supervisors at work such as 'Doctor' or 'Sir'. (R)

1 2 3 4 5

34. American companies and organizations tend to develop autonomy in their employees.

1 2 3 4 5

35. I disagree with what American companies and organizations represent. (R)

1 2 3 4 5

36. Working for American companies and organizations reduces people to mindless conformity. (R)

1 2 3 4 5

37. I expect policies and procedures are necessary in work settings.

1 2 3 4 5

38. American companies and organizations dehumanize people. (R)

1 2 3 4 5

39. People should feel proud to work for an American company or organization.

1 2 3 4 5

* Note: (R) reverse-scored. R's were omitted from actual questionnaire.

Things Wanted In a Job Questionnaire (TWIJ):

Please circle the level of importance to you of each item in considering a job, with 5 being extremely important, and 1 being extremely unimportant.

The items are as follows:

1. Friendly co-workers 1 2 3 4 5
2. Interesting work 1 2 3 4 5

*3. Work that makes a contribution to protecting the environment (R)

1 2 3 4 5

*4. Chance to use your mind 1 2 3 4 5

5. Work results you can see 1 2 3 4 5

*6. Chance to develop skills and abilities

1 2 3 4 5

7. Good pay 1 2 3 4 5
8. Participation in decisions regarding job

1 2 3 4 5

*9. Good chances for promotion 1 2 3 4 5

10. Respect for the organization you work for

1 2 3 4 5

11. Help available to do the job well 1 2 3 4 5
12. Recognition for a job well done 1 2 3 4 5

*13. Person in charge who is concerned about you

1 2 3 4 5

14. Good job security 1 2 3 4 5

*15.Opportunities to talk up without getting into trouble (R)

1 2 3 4 5

16.Chance to work at a variety of things

1 2 3 4 5

17.Really competent person in charge 1 2 3 4 5

18.Clearly defined responsibilities 1 2 3 4 5

*19.Enough time to do job well 1 2 3 4 5 (R)

20.Good fringe benefits 1 2 3 4 5

*21.Conformity in dress/politics not required (R)

1 2 3 4 5

*22.Freedom to decide how to do your work (R)

1 2 3 4 5

*23.Time for outside interests 1 2 3 4 5 (R)

24.As much responsibility as you can handle

1 2 3 4 5

25.No one standing over you/being own boss

1 2 3 4 5

26.Regular raises whether promoted or not

1 2 3 4 5

27.Job not just anyone can fill 1 2 3 4 5

*28.Work that is socially useful 1 2 3 4 5 (R)

29.Job in growing field/industry 1 2 3 4 5

30.Not being caught up in a big impersonal organization

1 2 3 4 5

*31.Chance to make a lot of money later on

1 2 3 4 5

32.Good pension plan and early retirement

1 2 3 4 5

33.Formal on-the-job training courses 1 2 3 4 5

34.Job that is not too demanding 1 2 3 4 5

35.Job that does not involve hard physical work

1 2 3 4 5

36.Not being expected to do things not paid for

1 2 3 4 5

37.Work involving moral objectives e.g. civil rights issues

1 2 3 4 5

NOTE: (R) Reverse-scored. R's were omitted from actual questionnaire.

* Twelve items of particular interest. *'s were omitted from actual questionnaire.

Work Aspirations and Career Projections

Please indicate the type of job you are preparing for:

What type of employment position do you see yourself occupying 5 years from now?:

What type of employment position do you see yourself occupying 10 years from now?:

Please check one of the following:

1. I have a preference for being self-employed _____

2. I have a preference for working in an organizational setting _____

If you checked (2) above, please check one of the following:

1. I would like to become a supervisor in an organizational setting _____

2. I would not want to be a supervisor in an organizational setting _____

Who do you consider as having the stronger influence on your work attitudes and aspirations?

father _____

mother _____

both parents equally _____

other: write in _____

With whom did you live primarily prior to leaving home?

both parents _____

mother _____

father _____

joint or equal-alternating custody _____

other: write in _____