

Sociology 25

Sociology of Organizations

Harvard University
Department of Sociology
Fall 2004

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Office Hours By Appointment

Mondays, Wednesdays 11 a.m.
William James Hall
Classroom 4 (in the basement)

This course examines the evolution of the modern organization, focusing on changing approaches to corporate strategy and to managing employees. We read both social scientific analyses and Harvard Business School cases, to trace the history of management, from the harsh principles of the "drive system" to the latest theories of how "work teams" improve productivity and how focusing on a firm's "core competence" improves the bottom line. We will study social science perspectives that question the efficiency (e.g., the garbage can model) and the equity (e.g., neo-Marxist labor market theory) of current organizational practices.

COURSE ORGANIZATION AND REQUIREMENTS

All readings listed below are required and students are expected to come to discussion sections prepared to discuss the readings and the week's case. The final grade will be calculated on the basis of two written assignments (30% each) and a comprehensive final exam (40%). The final grade will be lowered for students who fail to come to the sections prepared to discuss the readings. The assignments are due on October 25 and November 22.

READINGS

Textbooks can be purchased at the Harvard Coop (COOP). Harvard Business School cases can be purchased online. A course reader is available for purchase at Gnomon Copy (Reader). The remaining articles and book chapters are available online at the course website (Website).

- Textbooks are available at the Harvard Coop

Edwards, Richard. Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century, New York: Basic Books (1979).

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss. Men and Women of the Corporation. New York: Basic Books (1977).

Kidder, Tracy. 2000 (1981). The Soul of a New Machine. Boston: Back Bay Books.

- Harvard Business School Cases: Purchase electronic copies at: www.hbsp.com/relay.jhtml?name=cp&c=c37619
- Reading packet: Available at Gnomon Copy, 1304 Massachusetts Ave. Tel. 617-491-1111, Email: gnomon@aol.com. Hours: M-F 8 am – 11 pm, Sat. 9 am – 7 pm, and Sun. 11 am – 7 pm.
- Readings available in electronic form can be found at: <http://www.courses.fas.harvard.edu/~soc25/>

ORIGINS OF THE MODERN FIRM

1. Week of September 20

THE DIVISION OF LABOR AND THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATION

Adam Smith, "Of the Division of Labor." (Reader)

Émile Durkheim, selections from The Division of Labor in Society. (Reader)

Fernand Braudel, "Capitalism and Dividing Up the World." (Reader)

2. Week of September 27

THE RISE OF BUREAUCRACY AND THE NOTION OF RATIONALITY

Max Weber, "The Types of Legitimate Domination," and "Bureaucracy." (Reader)

Diane Vaughan. "The Trickle-Down Effect: Policy Decisions, Risky Work, and the Challenger Tragedy." (Website)

Case: Ronald Kessler, "Moscow Station." (Reader)

MANAGING THE WORKFORCE

3. Week of October 4

SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

Frederick W. Taylor, "Scientific Management." (Reader)

Richard Edwards, CONTESTED TERRAIN, chapters 1-6. (COOP)

Case: People Express (A). Harvard Business School Case 483103.

October 11: Columbus Day holiday observed

4. Week of October 11

FORDISM AND INTERNAL LABOR MARKETS

Richard Edwards, CONTESTED TERRAIN, chapters 7-11. (COOP)

Case: Sprint: La Conexion Familiar (A) and (B). Harvard Business School Cases 97C001 and 97C002.

5. Week of October 18

THE HUMAN RELATIONS SCHOOL AND THEORY Z

Elton Mayo, "Hawthorne and the Westem Electric Company." (Reader)

Fritz Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, "Human Relations." (Reader)

William Ouchi, Theory Z, chapter 1. (Reader)

Tracy Kidder, THE SOUL OF A NEW MACHINE, first half. (COOP)

Case: Toshiba: Ome Works. Harvard Business School Case 696059.

6. Week of October 25

THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY WORKPLACE

Tracy Kidder, *THE SOUL OF A NEW MACHINE*, second half. (COOP)

Case: John Case, "A Company of Businesspeople." (Website)

October 25: ***FIRST ASSIGNMENT DUE***

THE EVOLUTION OF CORPORATE STRATEGY

7. Week of November 1

THE CONGLOMERATE AND PORTFOLIO THEORY

Alfred Chandler, Jr., "The United States: Seedbed of Managerial Capitalism." (Reader)

Neil Fligstein, "The Finance Conception of Control." (Reader)

Case: Asahi Glass Company: Diversification Strategy. HBS Case 794113.

8. Week of November 8

SHAREHOLDER VALUE AND CORE COMPETENCE

Rakesh Khurana. Searching for a Corporate Savior. chapters 1, 2, 7. (Reader)

Case: The Enron Collapse. HBS case IMD164.

MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENT

9. Week of November 15

THE MARKET ENVIRONMENT

Michael T. Hannan and John Freeman, "The Population Ecology of Organizations." (Website)

Williamson, Oliver. "The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost Approach." (Website).

Ronald Burt, Structural Holes, pp. 8-30. (Reader)

Case: Microsoft Goes Online. Harvard Business School Case 798019.

10. Week of November 22

THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." (Website)

Erin Kelly and Frank Dobbin. "Civil Rights Law at Work: Sex Discrimination and the Rise of Maternity Leave Policies." (Website).

Case: Alliant Health System: A Vision of Total Quality. HBS Case 192003.

November 22: ***SECOND ASSIGNMENT DUE***

ORGANIZATIONS AND INEQUALITY

11. Week of November 29

EDUCATION AND LABOR MARKETS

William Bowen and Derek Bok, *The Shape of the River*, chapter 1. (Reader)

Steven Spencer, Claude Steele, and Diane Quinn. "Stereotype Threat and Women's Math Performance." (Website)

Case: Kurt Landgraf and Du Pont Merck Pharmaceutical Company (A) and (B). Harvard Business School Cases 9394202 and 9395035.

12. Week of December 6

GENDER AND LABOR MARKETS

Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *MEN AND WOMEN OF THE CORPORATION*, Chapters 1-6. (COOP)

Case: Hitting the Wall: Nike and International Labor Practices. HBS Case 700047 (HBS Casebook)

13. Week of December 13

SOCIALIZATION AT WORK

Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *MEN AND WOMEN OF THE CORPORATION*, chapters 7-10. (COOP)

Case: Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America. HBS Case 398028.

December 22 – January 3: Winter Recess

Citations for Sociology 25: Sociology of Organizations
Readings available online and those included in the reader

Smith, Adam. 1970 [1776]. The Wealth of Nations. Baltimore: Penguin. Pp. 109-121. (Reader)

Durkheim, Émile. 1933. The Division of Labor in Society, Translated by George Simpson. New York: Free Press. Pp. 39-41, 104-113, 129-131, 193-195, 226-227, 287-291, 277-280. (Reader)

Braudel, Fernand. 1977. Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Pp. 79-117. (Reader)

Weber, Max. 1978 [1968]. Economy and Society. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 213-254 and 956-969. (Reader)

Vaughan, Diane. 1997. "The Trickle-Down Effect: Policy Decisions, Risky Work, and the Challenger Tragedy." California Management Review. 39: 2. (Website)

Kessler, Ronald. 1988. "Moscow Station: How the KGB Penetrated the American Embassy." Time Magazine, Feb. 26, 1988: 50-66. (Reader)

Taylor, Frederick W. 1981 [1911]. "Scientific Management." Pp. 55-66 in The Sociology of Organizations: Basic Studies. Second Edition. Edited by Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller. New York: Free Press. (Reader)

Mayo, Elton. 1984 [1949]. "Hawthorne and the Western Electric Company." Pp. 279-292 in Organization Theory: Selected Readings. Second Edition. Edited by D.S. Pugh. New York: Penguin. (Reader)

Roethlisberger, Fritz J. and William J. Dickson. 1981 [1939]. "Human Relations." Pp. 67-83 in The Sociology of Organizations: Basic Studies. Second Edition. Edited by Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller. New York: Free Press. (Reader)

Ouchi, William G. 1981. Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge. New York: Avon. Pp. 10-32. (Reader)

Case, John. 1993. "A Company of Businesspeople." INC. April, p. 79. (Lexis-Nexis)

Chandler, Alfred D., Jr. 1977. The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Pp. 381-414. (Reader)

Fligstein, Neil. 1990. The Transformation of Corporate Control. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Pp. 226-258. (Reader)

Khurana, Rakesh. 2002. Searching for a Corporate Savior: The Irrational Quest for Charismatic CEOs. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 1-50, 186-220. (Reader)

Hannan, Michael T. and John Freeman. 1981 [1977]. "The Population Ecology of Organizations." Pp. 176-200 in The Sociology of Organizations: Basic Studies. Second Edition. Edited by Oscar Grusky and George A. Miller. New York: Free Press. (JSTOR)

Williamson, Oliver. 1981. "The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost Approach." American Journal of Sociology. 87: 548-577. (JSTOR)

Burt, Ronald S. 1992. Structural Holes. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press. Pp. 8-30. (Reader)

Meyer, John W. and Brian Rowan. 1977. "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony." American Journal of Sociology 83: 340-363. (JSTOR)

Kelly, Erin and Frank Dobbin. 1999. "Civil Rights Law at Work: Sex Discrimination and the Rise of Maternity Leave Policies." American Journal of Sociology. 105:455-492. (JSTOR)

Bowen, William, and Derek Bok. 1998. The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1. (Reader)

Spencer, Steven J., Claude M. Steele, and Diane M. Quinn. 1999. "Stereotype Threat and Women's Math Performance." Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 35: 4-28. (www.idealibrary.com)