

# The Sales Clerks: Worker Discontent and Obstacles to its Collective Expression

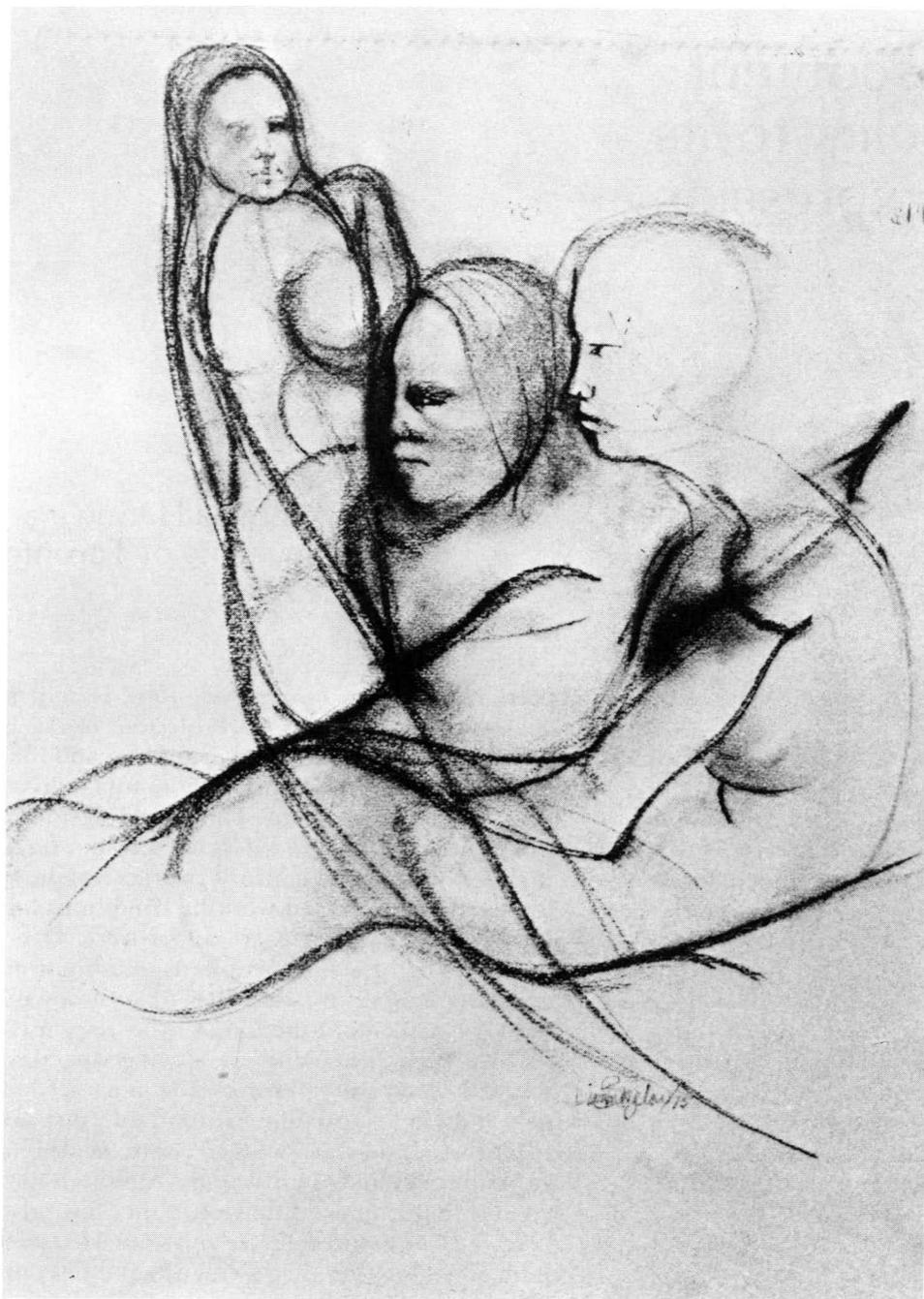
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## Research Problem

The current literature is overflowing with studies which focus on the quality of working life in advanced capitalist societies. One of the problems with this literature, however, is that most of the studies have looked solely at the male "blue-collar" industrial worker.<sup>1</sup> Although this worker remains a significant force in the Canadian economy,<sup>2</sup> there is another force which has acquired an equally important role - the female service worker. During the past few decades, Canadians have witnessed a dramatic expansion of the tertiary sector and a subsequent increase in the number of females entering the paid labour market.<sup>3</sup> As the women who enter this field possess a set of life experiences and problems which are quite different from those of men, one would assume that they would also have distinct work experiences.

The first part of this paper focuses on department store clerks as an example of women who

participate in low level service jobs. Here it is demonstrated that the work of store clerks is stress-inducing, boring and degrading and that the women perceive their jobs with much dissatisfaction and discontent. The second section of this paper examines the sales clerks' responses to this work situation. Generally, worker responses to negatively perceived working conditions fall into two categories: overt and covert. Overt responses include such actions as unionization, collective bargaining, strikes, worker sit-downs, wild-cat strikes and the like. Covert responses, involve such behaviours as absenteeism, day-dreaming and gameplaying. The latter are largely individual reactions while the former are collective. Industrial workers have tended to exhibit both types of behaviour.<sup>4</sup> Although they engage in the hidden behaviours, they have also been fairly organized, active and somewhat militant in expressing their demands and discontents in the workplace. The problem is that, although they are similarly discontented, retail clerks have tended to reveal this discontent



*Drawing, PARANOIA, 18" x 24", by Diane Bigelow, Windsor, Ontario.*

mainly in covert and individual ways. The collective and open expression of discontent in the form of unionization, insurrection, and even unofficial on-the-job confrontation with employers, is exceedingly rare among this group of workers.<sup>5</sup> How can this tendency be explained?

There are several intervening variables to be considered. These may be divided into two major categories: worker adjustments and social structural conditions. Worker adjustments include such behaviours as daydreaming, consumerism and social interaction. Adjustive behaviour is ironically both an indicator of discontent and a barrier against meaningful social change on a societal scale, and even on a company or industry wide scale. The second set of obstacles is social structural. One asks questions such as: have sales clerks remained passive because of the social organization, content or process of their work? Are sales clerks and service workers, as a whole, becoming increasingly "proleterianized," as scholars such as C. Wright Mills<sup>6</sup> and Braverman<sup>7</sup> have argued? Are sales clerks unorganized because there is a large reserve army of labour in this occupation? Is this occupation's overrepresentation of women a significant variable? And can the sales clerks' inaction be attributed to their size and lack of resources in terms of skill, time and concentration? This study provides empirical evidence which allows these questions to be addressed more explicitly and fully than previously.

## Methods

A combination of participant observation and informal interviewing was used in this study. The field work involved my part-time employment as a sales clerk in the book department of a large urban department store in Toronto. Observation was most appropriate for the study's objectives, as the research was largely descriptive. Furthermore, interviewing alone would have been insufficient to study actual working conditions and worker responses because of the

problems of recall, selective perception and reality versus the respondent's perception of reality. It was therefore preferable to observe behaviour, rather than to simply ask individuals about their behaviour. My employment permitted me to develop contacts for later interviews. The size of the interview sample remained small - nineteen sales clerks - because the interviews were very thorough and only supplemented the field work.

## Population and Sample

The subjects of this study consisted of retail clerks in large scale department stores. They were limited to the female sex for four reasons. 1) As noted earlier, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of females entering the paid labour market. 2) The vast majority of retail workers is female. 3) Where males do work in such stores they are overrepresented in high-paid, high-commission departments such as heavy appliances, jewellery, furniture and expensive men's wear-and underrepresented in all others. They are, therefore, not subject to the same work conditions as the majority of sales clerks. They are treated differently by both customers and store bosses and are exempt from many of the stress inducing rules to which women are subjected. 4) Gender may introduce an intervening variable in that males and females may respond differently.

The sample was comprised of both full and part-time staff. Because department stores have drastically reduced the hiring of full-time workers (except at managerial and supervisory levels), a large proportion of my subjects worked on a part-time basis. They included university students, housewives, housewife-mothers, widows and one actress. Their education ranged from a couple of years of high school to a university degree. They also varied in age from nineteen to sixty years and represented several ethno-cultural backgrounds, with a predominance of white, Anglo-Saxons.

## The Store

Metropolitan Toronto has three large scale department stores. They differ little in terms of merchandise, appearance and prices-or the wages, benefits, tasks and bureaucratic rules they impose upon their workers. Indeed many of the clerks work at more than one of these stores at some point in their lives. For five months, from October 1980 to February 1981, I worked as a sales clerk in the book department of one of these stores. The store is located in the uptown area of Toronto. As one steps into it, one immediately sees chrome, glass and mirrors. You must ride several escalators up to the book department. This is a fairly small, dimly lit area. The "terminal" (the modern-day equivalent of the cash register) stands at the centre of the department and is surrounded, as is the department store as a whole, by mirrored columns. After several weeks in this store, one also notices the absence of any visible windows, not just in the book department, but, with the exception of one small stock-room, throughout the entire store. External distractions for both consumer and worker are kept to a bare minimum.

In terms of merchandise, this department is unlikely to carry Dante, Shakespeare or Thoreau. Instead, it focuses on current "bestsellers." At the time of my fieldwork, these included titles such as *Scruples*, *The Emperor's Virgin* and *How to Invest Your Money and Profit from Inflation*. Biographies also sell well here. Titles such as Shelley (i.e., Winters, not Percy Bysshe) and *The Queen Mother* are considered a must. As you pass the displays, carefully arranged on so-called "hi-tech" fixtures, you can be sure to encounter a business self-help section featuring titles such as *How Managers Manage* and *Managers Make Things Happen*. A large portion of the department is devoted to cook books, children's books and bestsellers, but an even larger part is devoted to mass market paperbacks. These include the written versions of the latest

TV mini-series, general novels and the everpresent and popular Harlequin Romances.

Customer demand, to some extent, dictates the stock. The stock then, in part, is a reflection of the department's clientele. During the weekdays, there is an influx of office workers and business people from the adjoining "tower" and neighbouring office buildings. At night and on weekends, there is a wider assortment of customers. More families, including what some of the clerks call "Mr. and Mrs. Suburbia," can be spotted. But still there is a predominance of those who appear to be upwardly mobile and who are Anglo-Saxon whites.

## The Pecking Order

For this company, a multi-national whose origins date back to pre-Confederation days, retailing is only one of many functions. The retailing division itself is split into numerous regions. The region in which I worked is, in turn, divided into one central urban store and numerous suburban and small town branches. The store where I was employed is divided into divisions which, in turn, are split into departments.

The hierarchy or chain of command begins with the sales clerks who are divided into auxiliary, regular part-time and full-time staff. These sales clerks report to their supervisor or department head. Their supervisor, in turn, reports to the assistant department manager who reports to her boss, the department manager. The department manager is responsible to the divisional manager who is responsible to the general manager who reports to the president. Parenthetically, the majority of sales clerks and supervisors are female, whereas most of the positions above that of assistant manager are held by males. Most large organizations have such divisions and hierarchical levels, but they are most striking in this store because lines of communication seldom if ever skip one level. As a divisional man-

ager walks through your department and, for example, does not like the way a particular book is displayed, he does not tell you. He goes back to his office and sends a memo to your department manager. But your manager does not tell you either. Instead, he relays the message to your assistant manager who either informs your supervisor or approaches you directly. The entire process of communication seems ludicrous to the sales clerks. Because of this filtering process, only one out of all the clerks with whom I worked knew who her real bosses were, beyond her department manager. We encountered them everyday, but we certainly could not identify them.

The practice of sending memos is apparently used to avoid conflicting demands upon the clerk. However, conflicting demands are imposed anyway. In addition to all these managerial bosses, there is also the staff specialist. The national book buyer, for example, falls into this category. The buyer, whose office is located next door, comes into the department at least twice a week to make suggestions about the way in which books should be displayed, for example. If things are not being done to her satisfaction, she promptly tells the clerks to change them.

There are also display specialists, whose job, logically, is to set up the displays: but they seldom get around to this task. Thus the sales clerk is eventually forced to set up the display herself, upon order from the manager. The manager wants high volume displays to induce customers to buy massive amounts of merchandise. Inevitably, however, after the clerk has finished setting up the arrangement, someone from the display department approaches her and exclaims that it is all wrong. I quote: "It looks horrible. There are too many books here. Our aim is to use as few books as possible. It's more pleasing to the eye. This looks too messy!" In addition, there are a number of aspiring young executives who constantly roam the departments authorizing cheques and making telephone calls. Although

none of the clerks realize what their exact positions are, they are all aware of the authority of these executives within the organization.

Another important staff department is security. Many of the clerks are unaware of precisely who is and who is not with security. Security consists of people who wander around the department, lingering behind the shelves. Their authority is clearly above that of the clerks, for the job of catching shoplifters, in their view, is far more serious than processing customers' purchases. One often wonders, though, if they are more concerned with catching the sales staff than anyone else. Security demands that the clerks enter and exit by a specified door, and that they not shop during their breaks and lunch hours. Furthermore, these security officers inspect the clerk's store-bought parcels as well as her personal belongings. If the sales clerks fail to put these items in a specified room while they are working, security takes their names as they leave at night. Finally, a department manager must inspect their personal belongings and list the contents, with detailed descriptions, on a parcel slip. If a sales clerk is not able to produce such a parcel slip, security confiscates her belongings. The women whom I interviewed found all of these security measures insulting, not only to themselves, but also to the customers.

### **Authority**

Apart from the staff specialists, authority is clearly defined and recognizable. In simple terms, there are those with coloured badges and those without. People with these badges must authorize all cheques, price changes, refunds, exchanges and voids. People without them must run around the store chasing after those with them. This regulation produces desperation amongst some of the women, as they frequently have to go down to the next floor to find a "signature." This often means leaving the department unattended and facing an angry, impatient customer upon return. It is degrading to the sales

clerks to have to chase after one of these “signatures” for permission to give a refund of \$3.95 or to accept a cheque for \$10.00. But it is even more humiliating when many of these so-called “signatures” regard you as a pest and attempt to brush you off because they are busily on their way home or off to lunch. In the meantime, the clerk must show the utmost in deference and courteousness, both to the impertinent, condescending “signature” and to the impatient customer.

The sales clerk has no authority within the organization. The message is clear. She is constantly reminded of her position within the hierarchy. As one respondent states, “It’s bad enough that they constantly enforce your lowly position through their rules and regulations, but it’s colour-coded as well so that everyone can see your badge is one colour, theirs is another. To them, we’re nothing but a big expense.”

### Rules

Rules about cheque authorizations and security practices are only a few out of many. There are also rules concerning the women’s telephone behaviour, their physical appearance and overall demeanor. The women are told to answer the telephone in a standardized way. Instead of simply saying “hello,” they must say “good morning,” state the company’s name, their particular department, their own name, and politely ask, “may I help you?” All of this must be uttered in a pleasant, deferent tone. One woman describes how angry her manager became when she departed slightly from the mandatory script:

One afternoon, two weeks after I started, the phone rang. I answered it as I was told. But when the man on the other end asked for a clerk who was out, I responded, ‘I’m sorry, she’s out to lunch.’ This man, who then identified himself as the manager, furiously told me never to say that again. He hysterically told me that customers don’t like to hear that the clerks are gone for lunch.

According to him, I could have lost them a sale. I was supposed to ask for his phone number, so that she could call him back.

The company also issues a dress code. Women are told to wear “sensible” clothes. If pants are worn, they must be part of a pantsuit, and stockings are essential. Jeans, except for those who work in departments which sell jeans, are strictly forbidden. All of these dress regulations are instituted to keep up the company’s image. In doing so, however, the employer dictates behaviour which is not related to the clerk’s actual work performance.

Rules about time are also numerous. Upon arrival, the clerk is required to sign her name on the time sheets. If she fails to do this, she will not be paid. And although some managers are more lenient than others, punctuality is generally stressed. One manager hides the time schedule if a clerk is due at 9:15 and his watch reads 9:18. As a result, she cannot sign in. Respondents from one store also note that if they are three minutes late their pay is deducted for fifteen minutes. Yet, in the same store, the clerks are only paid until 9:00 even though they must stay and close the department until about twenty minutes past 9:00.

There are also strict rules about closing the terminal. In the book department, during slack periods, there are virtually no customers from about 8:30 to 9:00 p.m. On one such night, I shut the terminal down at two minutes to nine. Just at that time one of the store executives walked by. He became enraged, exclaiming that “this could lose us a sale.” He argued, “What if a customer should come up and want to buy something?!!” Hence, I was severely reprimanded when the news reached my manager the next morning.

Another illogical rule concerns pretending to look busy. Even if there are no customers in the department, the clerk must appear as though she

is working steadfastly. Furthermore, she is prohibited from sitting down, reading a magazine (reading is a sin for which one woman was fired), and even standing still and staring into space. Partly because of the location of the department, and partly because of the presence of "spies," one must always try to look busy. This demand usually leads to pacing the department and straightening up the shelves-tasks which soon result in incredible fatigue.

The women adhere to all these rules and take them seriously because they have a lingering fear that someone is watching them. And to a large degree, their fears are well-founded. Initially, I thought they were acting in a somewhat paranoid fashion. I soon learned otherwise. "Spies" are the women's term for what the store calls "shoppers." These are people who inspect the clerks while posing as regular customers. The nastiness of this practice is obvious, but it is intensified as these inspectors are sent out during the busiest times of the year, times when the clerks are most likely to be irritable. In the words of one woman, "They test your tolerance level."

The clerk is graded according to her appearance, grooming, mannerisms, speech, pleasantness, salesmanship and the like. She receives extra points if she says, "Will this be on your ———— account?" rather than a simple "thank-you." A perfect score is one hundred. The report is never seen by the clerk, but is immediately transferred to her manager and eventually ends up in personnel files. In fact, most clerks are not even aware of having been inspected.

There are also rules concerning coffee breaks. The store where I worked was fairly permissive about these breaks, but informants from other stores noted that they were obliged to take their breaks at a specified time or else lose the opportunity. If the supervisor wants a clerk to go for lunch at twelve-thirty, then she must go at this

time, whether or not she is hungry, or whether or not she is in the middle of a job.

### A Typical Day

Most of the clerks and especially the younger women, arrive at work in a negative frame of mind. "Are you ready for another boring day?," "I'm so tired," "I don't feel like working today," and "I feel so sick," are phrases which both I and other sales clerks uttered with clock-like regularity about ten minutes after our arrival at the store. I doubt if we were even conscious of our dismal whining. Although we were aware of the time schedule one week in advance, when the time to work finally arrived we frequently tried to get out of it. For example, after about an hour's work, one young woman would evaluate her current financial status. "Do I need much money this week?" If the answer was no, she would try to get out of working her six hour shift by asking others if they would work for her. Rarely would anyone consent, but she made this attempt regularly. It is not that these women are dismal, pessimistic creatures by nature, they do not have bleak outlooks on life in general. However, when faced with the much dreaded prospect of spending another day at the store, a shroud seems to fall over them. Thus, while emotionally and mentally withdrawn, we physically carry out our patterned tasks and engage in a verbal exchange of negative rhetoric.

### Content of the Work

What does a sales clerk do? The answer may seem obvious since this is a job which is performed in the public eye. But as with any occupation, a cursory look tells little about what is actually going on. One must, therefore, examine all aspects of the work from its content, the work process and on-the-job interaction to its social organization.

Today a sales clerk actually does little selling. The main function of the clerk is to "process"

the customers' purchases. The secondary functions are related to the maintenance of stock and similar duties. In the sense that the customer asks the clerk for directions or the price of an item, there is a certain amount of customer-clerk interaction, but the traditional sense of selling by way of promoting and discussing the merchandise is notably absent. Perhaps it has not disappeared as dramatically in the smaller, more personal retail outlets, but in large, bureaucratic department stores such as this one, it has become obsolete. Currently, the sales clerk is given so many other functions that, ironically, the customer is regarded as a nuisance.

Another striking aspect of the work is the similarity it bears to so-called "blue collar work." As Rinehart says, technological and structural changes in the retailing industry have been pushing them closer and closer to this kind of work.<sup>8</sup> "White collar" jobs have traditionally been viewed by many as an escape from factory work. But they now bear a strong resemblance to blue collar work.

Just as the factory system eroded craft skills and centralized decision-making, so bureaucracies have simplified, mechanized and rationalized jobs, placing the vast majority of white collar employees in positions where their work is defined and controlled from above.<sup>9</sup>

With these two themes in mind, this is what happens during a typical day. Upon arrival, you head for the cash office where you state your terminal number, are handed a set of keys and pick up some forms. You then proceed to your department where you "open" the terminal. This consists of inserting the appropriate keys in the appropriate key holes and pressing numbers and codes in the proper sequence. The machine does all the work, recording, multiplying and totalling the figures you enter. All of these steps require a minimum of concentration and effort. And, furthermore, these instructions are carefully

written out under the titles, "opening procedures" and "closing procedures" in a manual which is affixed to the terminal. Anyone who can read can perform these operations.

After opening the terminal, the clerk must tidy up the department, dust the shelves and clean the glass and mirrors. However, of all the clerks I worked with, only one ever completed this ritual. If the supervisor is present, she gives you your orders for the day. On her day off, she leaves a list of written instructions. This list usually includes: unloading stock from boxes, checking books off invoices, placing newly arrived books on the appropriate shelves, filing invoices and writing invoice numbers in books. If two of us are available, the labour is divided.

Another regular task is debiting. The publisher's policy is that if a title does not sell, then it can be returned by a certain date. Thus, the clerk must inspect the book's condition, record the titles and quantities to be returned, erase the pencilled in information, pack up the books, then write out the debit note. The whole process is simple, involving basic mathematical calculations. However, I found that only two of the clerks could perform the job in its entirety. Why? The supervisor tells one clerk to erase all the prices and tells another to pack up the books. She does not allow members of the staff to perform the job from beginning to end. Consequently, the women do not have full information as to what they are doing or why they are doing it.

Another daily task is the counting of "item-records" books. These are large binders filled with pages listing every title in the department. Every month each book must be counted to reorder stock. The task simply entails filling in the quantity on hand in a particular column on a stock card. This task is tedious and frustrating because the clerk has no way of determining where the book is. Each card only contains the title, price and publisher. As a result, the women

are forced to roam the department for ten to fifteen minutes, scanning all the shelves until they find this one book. Compounding the frustration is the fact that these binders must be completed within a certain time limit. Thus it is the fear of a reprimand for unfinished counting which motivates the clerks, rather than any sense of accomplishment or pride.

The meaninglessness and monotony of these repeated tasks help explain the clerks' detachment from their work. The bosses give them isolated tasks in the form of lists or abrupt, verbal instructions, offering little explanation about the purpose of the task or its relevance within a wider framework. Furthermore, the bosses dictate exactly how the job is to be done, when it is to be done and who is to do it. If they feel that Beth can tidy up most efficiently and Louise can count books more accurately, then Beth must tidy and Louise must count. There is little concern for the worker's individual choice in the matter. Similarly, the women are rarely, if ever, told about an upcoming sale or autograph session in their own department. They eventually learn about these events through customers. Few of us were even aware that the store was accepting a certain charge card until the customers handed them to us.

### **The Terminal**

Aside from the above mentioned tasks, the central job of the clerk is to process the customers' purchases. A customer approaches the counter with a book. Sometimes the clerk says "hello," asks how the merchandise will be paid for, slips the bill into the terminal, presses in the codes, categories and prices, places a pen and bill in front of the customer and asks him/her to sign. She then places the merchandise in a bag and utters a prefatory "thank you." The most striking aspect of this process is its resemblance to assembly line work with its standardization of physical movements. This analogy becomes increasingly apparent during the Christmas sea-

son when customers are lined up in front of the counter like bottles waiting to be capped. They keep coming at you, you ring them through. The aim is to get through them as fast as possible. However, this is often difficult since most of the sales clerks are far from adept at operating the machine. They continually make errors by pressing the wrong code or entering numbers in the wrong sequence. Consequently, they can often be seen simply standing in front of the terminal frantically pressing all the keys in the hope of at least retrieving the sales slip.

### **The Profit Incentive**

The profit motive is implicit in the retail industry and is personified by management. The managers under whom I worked closely resembled stereotypical cartoon characters with dollar signs flashing in their eyes. Such a characterization is harsh, but accurate. Low-level management is obsessed with sales, primarily because their jobs depend upon them. If sales for the department fall below the planned quota, it is a reflection on the manager, assistant and supervisor of that department. Thus management, in turn, continually tries to impress the profit motive upon the sales staff. The bosses can be heard enthusiastically shouting, "I've got great news, girls, we made plan this month!" And often at closing time they call the clerks to request the total sales for the day. Conversely, the sales staff have an apathetic attitude towards the rise and fall of the company's profits. They try to muster up some enthusiasm in front of their bosses, but in actuality they are not really concerned at all with the gains or losses of the organization. Seldom do they promote merchandise in the way management wishes. Sometimes, in fact, the women discourage friendly customers from purchasing books they consider to be "trashy" and "worthless." More often, unless the clerks are in some dire need of human interaction as a result of their boredom, they avoid approaching customers.

The women feel that the more they give the company, the more the company will take from them. During the past year, the book department increased its sales by three hundred percent, but the clerks in no way benefitted from this profit. On the contrary, a week after the news of this increase reached us, our time was cut by about four to five hours a week per person. Because management does not want to waste its budgetary allowances on staff, the department is drastically understaffed. The situation usually resembles the following:

You have two telephones ringing at once, a line of impatient customers, and someone coming at you from the other direction asking you how to get to the washroom. In the meantime you make a mistake on the terminal and have to make up a new bill. On the sidelines, your manager is watching you with a very displeased expression on his face. He is muttering lines like, "Hurry it up, we're losing sales," while your customers are dramatically huffing and puffing and otherwise expressing their discontent.

Maintaining, and preferably surpassing "quota" is of utmost importance to the managers. Once the department reaches a certain quota, it must never fall even one cent below that level.

The women also lack control over stock. Many of them suggest that the department carry at least one Shakespeare title, or something of social relevance. But management refuses to fulfill such request because "Shakespeare doesn't sell. We have to keep only merchandise that moves." Consequently, the staff believes that "if it's any good, we don't carry it here."

### Identification With The Company

If anything, the clerks display outright hostility toward the company. Ronald Dore, in his book, *British Factory-Japanese Factory*, notes

how the Japanese workers express company loyalty by singing the company song.<sup>10</sup> Such behaviour is unimaginable in the store where I worked. One summer, several years ago, the store launched a campaign to promote their credit card - as well as employee morale and company identification. In the staff lounge, they amassed a large number of workers, showed films and played commercials and jingles which would soon hit the advertising media. Today some of the clerks still joke about this attempt. Similarly, the company offers sales parties and get-togethers (with the underlying aim of promoting the store's credit card). When the sales clerks hear about these functions, they merely laugh. There is a great deal of mockery and sarcasm, as few of the women would ever seriously consider attending such gatherings. It is largely the older, full-time workers who end up going.

The women sales clerks are clearly estranged from the company. Their situation closely resembles that of the auto workers whom Huw Beynan describes in *Working for Ford*.<sup>11</sup> Beynan notes that the men were not only estranged from the company, but also from the product itself, and to illustrate this point he uses the example of their refusal to buy the cars they assembled. Analogous to this phenomenon is the sales clerk's refusal to shop in the store. Although some of the women do take advantage of the 15% staff discount, many of the younger women with whom I worked outrightly dissociate themselves with the store's merchandise. They make it a personal principle to avoid shopping in the store. Thus they refuse to enter the store on their days off. This is in direct contrast to many of the store's executives who come shopping with their families on weekends. The clerks are appalled by this behaviour, as they see these men as being obsessive about the job. For the clerks, the job is purely a source of income and nothing more. As one woman states, "If I don't have to be here, if I'm not getting paid, I don't want to step into this place."

In addition, many of the women refuse to wear their badges, for they regard them as insulting and degrading. One day, as three women were leaving for lunch (they hate eating in the staff lunch room because, in their words, "it's full of all those company people and all they do is talk of the store"), one of the women forgot to take off her badge. One of her companions noticed it and remarked, "I'm not walking down the street with you if you're wearing that badge!"

### **"Front Stage and Back Stage Performances": Management - Worker Interaction:**

While the workers are estranged from their company, they are even more estranged from their bosses.

"Well, how are you doing, kids?"

"Are you okay, girls?"

"What can I do for you, my dear?"

"If you need my help just give me a buzz, kiddo."

These are just some of the condescending phrases which I heard regularly throughout my observation. Both our supervisor and assistant manager, who were respectively twenty-one and twenty-three years old, repeatedly addressed us in this manner. Their attitude was insulting to those of us who were in the same age group as them, but even more so for the women who were in their thirties, forties and fifties. According to Beth, a forty-five year old clerk, "It's not just what they say, but how they say it. The bosses are so condescending, so saccharin." Although the clerks usually respond to these patronizing remarks with polite laughter, they are actually steaming within. After the boss's departure they invariably unleash some extremely bitter comments.

This type of interaction characterizes management-worker relations in this store. Both man-

agement and workers are Janus-like. On the surface, relations appear fairly good. The supervisor and assistant manager constantly "chit-chat" with the clerks. Quite a few compliments fly back and forth. "Oh, I love that dress you've got on," exclaims one sales clerk to her supervisor. And the next day, the supervisor says to the clerk, "You really look great in blue." Everyone expressed a lot of superficial concern for each other.

From observing such interactions I got the initial impression that there was absolute harmony between these people. However, I soon learned that beneath the surface of calm and congeniality, a lot of hostility and disdain was erupting. One of the many indicators is the staff's nicknaming of management. The manager, assistant manager, and supervisor are respectively called "Venom," "Baby Snooks" and "Baby Snooks Junior." Although humorous, there are some very negative feelings behind this namecalling. Because many of the sales clerks, primarily those who are young and work part-time, have a higher education than the management, they feel superior to their bosses. The women mock their bosses in terms of physical appearance, personality and interests, but foremostly, on their low intelligence, narrow-mindedness and their "business mentality." But all of these criticisms are of course uttered surreptitiously.

### **Discipline and Subordination**

In light of the low opinion and lack of respect workers have toward their bosses, one wonders how discipline is enforced. The answer lies primarily in the employer's ultimate power to fire and, to a lesser extent, upon the supervisor's sole authority in assigning the women their weekly hours. This also helps explain the good surface relations between workers and management.

The supervisor not only dictates the pace, allocation and performance of one's work, but also one's demeanor. The clerks fail to openly express their hostility towards management because a great deal rests on the latter's personal view of them, not as workers, but as individual people. Thus, to use a colloquial expression, much "ass-kissing" goes on. Friendship with management definitely helps the clerk on the job. A wage increase above the standard amount is given to the clerk only upon the boss's special request. The women, therefore, feel that it is wise to "get in good" with the supervisor. Also, as the supervisor makes up the weekly time schedule, being in her favour leads to the assignment of more hours. All of this, of course, has an adverse effect on worker solidarity, as it causes the women to "pass the buck" when a job is improperly performed.

The supervisor's authority in making up the time schedule is indeed used as a threat to the clerks. Several times during the week our supervisor would call me up and ask me to come in to work on that very afternoon because she needed extra help. When I declined she became extremely agitated. Another day, before she called another woman for the same purpose, she remarked to me, "Well, if she doesn't want the hours now, she'll just see how many she gets next week." Often the supervisor reduces a clerk to three or zero hours a week, in order to "smarten her up." The women fear and obey management and its rules because they are clearly aware of the latter's power to fire them. Since the clerks are not unionized they are often fired arbitrarily.

Low level management frequently uses this power as a disciplinary tactic. During my field work our supervisor told us we were not performing satisfactorily. She explained to me that, despite her absence, she knew when a clerk was busy by taking a sales reading from the terminal before leaving, and then taking another one upon her return. A few days later this supervisor fired a clerk, claiming that she was never availa-

ble to work when asked. This was a flimsy excuse, as I later learned that the woman had previously informed the personnel department that she would only be available during specified days of the week and personnel consented to this arrangement. I also learned that, although this woman's name was taken off our department time schedule, she was not formally fired. Management told her that she was put on a waiting list for work in other departments, since the book department had no hours to give her. In the meantime, however, the book department hired another woman. After two months this woman was still on the waiting list, but she was never called. And she never received any separation pay.

In light of all the sophisticated managerial approaches advocated today, I was surprised at the primitive interventive methods used by our bosses. The sales clerks are treated like children. They are reprimanded, punished and threatened in degrading ways. Illustrating this attitude is the following quotation from a memo which our supervisor left for us on her day off:

Saturday Feb.6/81: If all of these boxes are not completed by Saturday 6:00 o'clock, then look out! Have a nice weekend!

It should be mentioned that she was not trying to be funny. As Chris Trower argues, the employee, by virtue of being an employee, "must obey the orders of others in return for a wage. Whether he agrees with the orders or not, whether the orders make sense or not,...he must obey or be guilty of insubordination."<sup>12</sup>

### **Customer-Clerk Interaction**

The public's condescending attitude towards sales clerks is one aspect of this job which is highly acknowledged. Not only is the sales clerk under the subordination of management and staff specialists, but she also takes on an inferior position with many of the customers because the

store adheres to the old motto which states, "The customer is always right." The very essence of the sales clerk's job embodies this idea of subordination and servitude to the customer.

One of my co-workers remarked that, rather than simply saying "excuse me," customers impatiently pound on the bell, snap their fingers and knock on the counter and expect the women to come running from whatever they are doing in order to greet the customers. Furthermore, many of the male customers can be heard addressing the clerks as "sweetheart" and "honey," and instead of handing the cash or charge card to them, they literally throw these things toward them. Another salient aspect of this dehumanizing treatment is the fact that very few customers look at the sales clerk directly. By avoiding eye contact, they are obviously refusing to even acknowledge her presence. According to the average customer, the sales clerk is, by definition, an inferior creature. One day I overheard a conversation between two female customers which blatantly exemplifies the prevailing attitude. One of the women said, "Why don't you ask the girl if they have it?" (i.e., the book) The other responded, "Oh, they don't know anything, they're just off the streets."

Every clerk has her own stories about how rudely she has been treated. Once a young man asked me if we carried a book on calligraphy. We didn't, so I politely told him so. He then responded, "I don't think you even know what calligraphy is, my dear." This example illustrates not only the customer's feeling of superiority over the sales clerk, but also his distrust of her. In general, customers rarely believe the sales clerk when she tells them that a book is currently out-of-stock. Instead of accepting her word, they invariably turn around and ask the clerk next to her.

Much more respect is accorded to the managers. Every week, at least one customer asks a question; then, while the sales clerk is thinking

of the correct response, the customer abruptly retorts, "Oh, isn't there anyone here with more authority?!" In addition, customers frequently lodge complaints against the clerks - complaints which are usually totally unfounded. For instance, during my field work, one customer called to complain about the way one of the sales clerks looked at her. The bosses were, of course, extremely apologetic to the customer, promising that such behaviour would never occur again. The sales clerks rarely bother to assert themselves when confronted with these unjust accusations and complaints because they know that in doing so they would only be inviting more trouble. Besides, they realize that the bosses would never back them up.

For these reasons, and also because customers fragment the clerks' work, the clerks form an intense dislike for the customers. The latter, at times, become "the enemy." The women are often unwilling to help customers and, on the whole, do not care whether or not they find the merchandise that they are looking for. In general, the women perceive the customer as being partly responsible for their feelings of enslavement. As one clerk notes, "Customers take the term 'service' too literally. They treat you like you're a slave. I hate it when they say, 'Are you serving here?'" With the exception of a few "regulars," customers are simply unfamiliar faces. Interactions with them are marked by impersonality and distance. Whatever small talk is exchanged is done so out of courteousness and a sense of duty, rather than sincerity.

### Adjustments

In addition to all of the above, the continuous humming of the terminal and the dim lighting are a further source of aggravation. You go through the day looking at your watch. Your neck becomes stiff. Your legs and feet are sore. Fatigue and tension overcome your body and mind. Of course, in comparison with factory and other workers of the past and present, these con-

ditions seem close to luxury, yet I think it is the combination of the monotony, ambiguity, fragmentation and meaninglessness of the sales clerk's work, along with the rigidity of rules, the humiliation, degradation and tension, induced by both management and the public, that makes this work, in its own way, just as unbearable.

On an especially bad day, as we proceed to leave, the women in my department utter such statements as, "I think I'll quit," "I can't take this any longer," and "I must be a real masochist." But the next morning they are at work in the store again. I wondered why. One possible reason is the adjustments made by the women. Rinehart discusses the "activities that ordinarily elude public recognition...the largely unrecorded behaviours which involve, in part, the *ad hoc* devices workers employ to resist on a day-to-day basis the organization of work."<sup>13</sup> He interprets these not only as "angry reactions to work but also as attempts to humanize work and to establish control over the production."<sup>14</sup> Thus, says Rinehart, "Work is never completely devoid of all meaning and gratifications, if only because working people fall back on their own imaginative and ingenious means..."<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, Donald Roy discovered the worker's ability to combat the "beast of monotony" and meaninglessness in work by making a game out of work and by informal social interaction with co-workers.<sup>16</sup> Walker and Guest in *The Man on the Assembly Line*, and Henri De Man in *The Psychology of Socialism*, note similar findings as well. De Man discussed the factory operative's struggle to cling to the remnants of joy in work. He says that it is psychologically impossible to deprive any kind of work of all its positive emotional elements as the worker will find some meaning in any type of work she/he is given.<sup>17</sup>

Like these factory operatives, the retail clerks I worked with create their own work when there is none. During particularly boring times, the women gather a pile of filed invoices, scatter

them and refile them. Similarly, they take books off the shelves; one clerk erases all the prices and the other rewrites them in. Also on this premise, they take all the books off the shelves and put them back in alphabetical order. I think this particular behaviour, aside from being an attempt at some activity, represents an attempt to assert some control over their work. Because many of the women are fed up with the confusing and haphazard arrangement of stock, they try to rectify the situation. However, they often get in trouble with their supervisor for taking this initiative. Another tactic involves scattering books around the department and then tidying them up. When we were especially bored one woman would say, "Shall I go around the department and knock some books over so you can pick them up?" Initially, I thought she was being sarcastic, but eventually all of us found ourselves resorting to such methods in order to look busy, alleviate the boredom - and perhaps exert some sort of creative control over our work.

It is noteworthy that these tasks which we created were just as routine and mindless as those imposed upon us by our bosses. One reason for this is that the clerk's work is always fragmented by interruptions from customers. Of course, these adjustive responses are not intended to create work for enjoyment, but merely to give the appearance of work and allow for more important adjustments. Foremost among these was social interaction. As the clerks are prohibited from standing around conversing with one another, they create work which allows them to talk without getting into trouble. The filing of invoices is one task which permits them to stand at the counter, side by side, each woman with her own pile of papers. Thus, from a distance, they appear to be busily working, but in fact, they are engaged in lively conversation. Similarly, by rearranging books, one clerk can stand on one side of the shelf and another on the opposite side. Because only a minimum amount of concentration is required for these tasks, a steady flow of

conversation can be carried on without attracting attention.

The content of conversations between sales clerks is also worth noting. They range from complaints, to gossip, to mockery, to vivid and animated, often silly, routines, to moral issues and the discussion of "things." The complaint sessions usually involve a maximum of three workers. The women expel all their discontents, frustrations and resentments. They freely relate to one another their ups and downs with management and customers. Management, of course, never hears these complaints.

Another type of social interaction which the sales clerks practise is "insulting the customer." As the customer approaches the counter, the women make "cracks" about him/her. Of course, these remarks are uttered under their breath, before the customer is within hearing range and after he/she leaves the area. Such remarks are usually directed only at those with airs of superiority and artificiality, for it is universally acknowledged that you do not ridicule someone who seems to have real problems. The clerks also laugh at the type of books people select. Such facetiousness is clearly an effort to make up for the degradation and subordination imposed upon the clerks by both management and the customers. Perhaps the most popular social interactions for the sales clerks were the "routines." They were made possible by the presence of Laura, an imaginative, aspiring actress. Most memorable are her re-enactments from "I Love Lucy" and other old television situation comedies. Although serious discussions also took place between the women, most interactions were marked by levity.

Elinor Langer, in her study of the women who worked for the New York Telephone Company, notes how the women used consumerism to adjust to their work.<sup>18</sup> She vividly describes their discussions and pursuits of shopping, their fixation with brand names, packaging and wigs.

Langer concludes that the clothes and wigs are:

a kind of tax, a tribute exacted by the social pressures of the work-place. For the preservation of their own egos against each other and against the system, they had to feel confident of their appearance on each and every day.<sup>19</sup>

The women define themselves by their consumerism far more than by their work, "as if they were compensating for their exploitations as workers by a desperate attempt to express their individuality as consumers."<sup>20</sup>

Like the women in the telephone company, the sales clerks discuss objects with a passion. The talk of fashion is endless. This is supplemented by frequent trips to the magazine section of the store to leaf through *Vogue*, *Glamour* and *Bazaar*. Perfumes, furniture, recent "loves" and other such topics also dominate the conversations. The women also speak to one another quite frequently about vacations outside Canada and future aspirations. The older women talk incessantly about their children and grandchildren. Robert Blauner calls such dreams and aspirations "safety-valves" against meaningful social unrest. Because the conversations between the sales clerks generally focussed on topics external to their work, they obviously helped these women cope with their degrading working conditions. It is interesting to note that these conversations were shared by only a core of the workers. This core consisted of the four women who had been working in the department the longest. The development of a distinct subculture was inhibited by the high turnover of workers in this department as in the store and industry as a whole. In any case, this informal interaction made the hours go by much more quickly than otherwise. The women referred to their conversations as "therapeutic." As one woman said, "It sounds strange, but there's some kind of gravitational force in this place. It draws you toward the

other clerk. We just can't seem to stop talking. Otherwise, it's so dreary here."

These adjustments, however, changed with the concrete realities we faced. About halfway through my field work, social interaction diminished for two reasons. The bosses decided that there was too much interaction among workers. And secondly, they reduced the department's financial expenditures on staff. Consequently, new shifts were implemented. Instead of having one person working all day and two people coming from ten until five, one woman would work from 9:45 to 1:15, another from 12:00 to 3:00, another from 2:45 to 6:15. In addition, people who were least likely to talk to each other, were given the overlapping hours.

As a result, workers, for the most part, adjusted through apathy. They did their work, but morale was lowered. Many of these women also retaliated in even more individual and private ways. For example, when taking inventory of the books, instead of trying to find titles, the women just filled in any number they could think of. They made personal, lengthy phone calls when no one was around and refused to do any work (when the supervisor was absent) in the last half hour of their shifts. Accompanying this was an increase in absenteeism. But regardless of such covert indications of discontent, the women continued to work under the same conditions as before.

Other obstacles to the collective, open expression of discontent are social structural in nature. These include the social organization, conditions and resources of the work group.

### **Social Organization**

#### *Inter-Departmental Divisions*

Because the store is divided into numerous divisions and departments, there is little social cohesiveness among workers. As clerks are segre-

gated into individual departments, they tend not to associate with each other. This compartmentalization is emphasized by the aforementioned company rules prohibiting talking and even by the physical proximity of the departments. Since departments are divided from one another by walls or corridors, the women cannot leave their territory to speak to the person working next door.

The store promotes this internal regionalism by offering contests between departments and divisions. During divisional meetings the chairperson reads through sales increases of various departments as though they were in a race to make the most money. Similarly, as budgets are continually being cut, the departments have to compete for hours and money. Also noticeable is the disdain which workers in one department feel for those in another. For instance, the women in the book department feel superior to the women in the candy department. They make statements such as, "I'd never be caught working there. If they put me down there I'd quit. It's so degrading." Contributing further to this inter-departmental division is the fact that staff "get-togethers" are almost always given for one division at a time, rather than for all the workers in the store at once.

#### *Intra-Departmental Divisions*

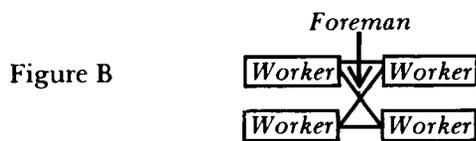
Even within single departments, certain clerks are distanced from one another. Wage earners are divided into full-time, regular part-time and auxilliary staff. The full-time workers are usually given more authority and responsibility than the auxilliary. Often, therefore, many of the full-time sales clerks accept management ideologies and are regarded by the other sales clerks as part of management. In addition, the women who work on a full-time basis are usually scheduled to work during the day, whereas the auxilliary workers are assigned nights and weekends. Thus, there is little time for any interaction between these different groups of workers.

The various shifts also decrease the potential for collective organization. Because of them, few women work at the same time. One often works alone or with a maximum of two others. The only exception to this is the two to three week period preceding Christmas. Such scheduling automatically makes it impossible for clerks who work in the same department to take coffee or lunch breaks together.

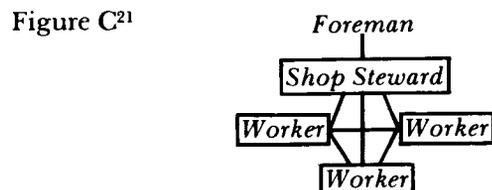
Dore, in an examination of the Japanese Hitachi and Taga factories, notes that the social organization of the work group is like the one shown in Figure A below:



rather than like the social organization of Figure B,



and even less like Figure C,



Clearly, the situation in the store where I worked resembles that depicted in Figure A. Often though, it was even more dramatic, resembling the following:



Rarely do a large number of clerks work in the same department at the same time. The work groups shown in Figures B and C permit the formation of close bonds between workers. They can get together, gripe, share thoughts and eventually, if other conditions permit, organize. However, under the situations depicted in Figures A and D, workers have little opportunity to voice their grievances and organize. As individuals they may be frustrated and discontented, but they tend not to take any collective action to express their discontents. Because of the pattern of social interaction, they lack the opportunities to form bonds, to co-operate with one another and eventually organize. As individuals, the sales clerks are powerless.

As mentioned earlier, rivalry between sales clerks within departments is also fostered by the time schedule. Each week, the supervisor makes up a new schedule which lists the hours assigned to each clerk. The women, therefore, must compete for the best and most hours. Thus, a lot of "backstabbing" occurs. In addition, clerks are divided according to seniority and education, as well as sex, favouritism and family ties. Even though the women are given the same duties, one will earn \$5.60 per hour while another earns \$4.19. Similarly, a young university graduate often receives more money than a middle-aged woman with several years of experience, but only a high school education. Many of the women express resentment towards the arbitrary way in which wages are determined.

### *A Sole Boss and Common Conditions*

One of the reasons why Marx chose the proletariat as the vanguard, mass-base and maker of the workers' revolution was that they were gathered in factories under a sole boss or common enemy and would work under common conditions.<sup>22</sup> The retail clerks, however, work under diverse conditions and lack a sole boss. Workers of the candy department certainly have a job which is drastically different from that in the furniture department. In addition, the people in the furniture department receive high commissions. They are not even called "clerks," but "salespersons." Each individual department has its own supervisor and manager; thus all workers do not direct their discontent at the same source. Moreover, the majority of workers do not know who their common boss, the general manager, is because they never come into direct contact with him.

### *Density of Supervision*

Figure D displays another obstacle which Dore mentions: the density of supervision. That is, there is a low ratio of supervisors to workers.<sup>23</sup> According to Dore, where there is a density of supervisors, the attitude of the supervisor is likely to spread to and influence the workers. The supervisor tries to make him/herself look like part of the team. I found that this was only true for the full-time workers in the store. The data clearly indicate that the majority of workers do not accept management goals. However, another result of this density of supervision is the informality of the boss-worker relationship. Even though the clerks resent their bosses, they maintain a surface "chumminess." This facade of intimacy inhibits the expression of discontent, since it is difficult to openly direct collective action against someone with whom you have a personal relationship.

### *Mobility*

The development of worker solidarity is also inhibited by the fact that, for most of the sales clerks, this job is both temporary and part-time. Women regard the job as a step toward something better. It is a means to an end. As a result, to the disadvantage of those who stay at the job for many years, the majority of workers lack concern about the problems at work. Work is a central life activity and defines one's whole existence, but selling, for many, is not their real work. They define themselves as housewives, students, actresses, models, mothers and the like, but not as sales clerks. Since there is a high turnover of workers in this occupation, a strong, lasting workforce is lacking. The women do not stay in the job long enough to form cohesive bands with one another. A collective consciousness is notably absent.

These factors are inextricably bound to that of gender. Since the state has not taken more steps to provide day care, many women are forced to handle the double burden of working and being responsible for child rearing and household duties. Therefore, many women must drop in and out of the paid labour market according to the needs of their families.

### *Lack of Resources*

The women lack two important resources: skill and time. Because they are unskilled, they are easily replaceable. There is a large reserve army of labour always willing and waiting to fill these jobs. Especially in light of the current economic situation, the women do not wish to risk losing their jobs. Secondly, the women do not have time to attend meetings outside working hours. This shortage of time is also tied to their gender, as society has instilled in them the belief that a woman's primary responsibility is in the domestic area, serving her husband and children.

## Summary and Conclusions

The sales clerks' job is a continual source of frustration, pressure and tension. Conflicting demands, bureaucratic rules and the rigidity with which they are enforced, standardization over human ingenuity, the elaborate division of labour, isolated and meaningless tasks, the routine, repetition and boredom, combined with the necessity of looking busy, the fragmentation of work by continual interruptions by customers and the priority of profit maximization over all else, all contribute to this detrimental effect.

The women have almost no autonomy. Their supervisor allocates the work and determines exactly how and when certain tasks should be completed. In addition, supervision is of the "watch dog" type. When tasks are not performed according to instructions, the women are scolded and threatened. And arbitrary firing is frequent. Supervisors use the women's awareness of this power as a further disciplinary threat. Confronted with this inflexible structure, the sales clerks understandably suffer considerable stress. It is also important to note that the women feel a sense of superiority over their bosses and the customers. There is a lingering feeling amongst the clerks that the latter two groups are somewhat "dim-witted." Likewise, the customers display a condescending attitude towards the clerks. And although management attempts to maintain a surface "buddiness" with the women, both they and the customers, on the whole, treat the clerks as subordinates.

The women clerks lack any type of identification with either the company or the products which it carries. It is also evident that the women feel a sense of detachment toward each other. Within departments, they compete for raises, hours and the favour of the supervisor. Between individual departments, the workers and managers alike, compete for budget increases. And the clerks in one department tend to adopt a condescending attitude to those in another de-

partment, as a result of this institutionalized rivalry. In short, work, in the opinion of the female sales clerks, has a purely instrumental meaning. If not for economic necessity, they would clearly avoid it. Going to work is, in fact, dreaded. One of the reasons for this is that the work does not permit self-expression. The women give as little of themselves as possible to their work.

This paper rests on the assumption that power relations are really behind the work conditions of the sales clerks. Because power is in the hands of a small capitalist class, the worker is compelled to sell her labour power in exchange for a wage. Thus work serves the needs of profit and capital, and not the individual worker. The data further demonstrate that service work, performed predominantly by women, is becoming increasingly like industrial work traditionally performed by men. For this reason, collar distinctions of any kind are useless indicators.

Many theorists have assumed that because a group of people remain passive and conservative in action, they have no desire for change. The assumption is based on the premise that such people are contented and favour the existing order of things. The data show that this is hardly the case. The sales clerks certainly are passive and have a strikingly low level of politicization. However, they are also very cynical about their work and clearly discontented. The problem is that these women express their resentment, anger and discontent in subtle and individual ways. As a result, no change is implemented on their behalf. They fail to collectively and forcefully express their discontent. There are several possible reasons for this.

Some researchers posit that workers are making adjustments to their work situation and, therefore, are becoming integrated into the present system. However, such theories often fail to account for the social structural conditions surrounding the workers. In many situations, dis-

content and the will to organize exist; however, social structural obstacles are equally present at the same time. The data indicate that sales clerks are discontented, yet they face numerous structural obstacles which inhibit any formal, organized expression of these feelings. These obstacles include a low level of social organization, high atomization and a lack of resources. Gender is an additional element inextricably tied to the above factors.

These social structural obstacles are *fundamental* in explaining the passivity of the sales clerks in this particular store. Historically, there has been no correlation between negative feelings which the workers experience and the organized, open expression of discontent. No matter how frustrated any workers *feel*, if the structural conditions surrounding them are not conducive, they tend not to protest collectively. It follows logically, then, that even if these psychological adjustments were absent, workers would still not organize. Adjustive behaviour - in the form of consumerism, social interaction and attempts to create work and appear busy - is a necessary consequence of the inaction caused by structural obstacles. It is a coping response to the grim realities which the female sales clerk must face from day to day.

#### NOTES

1. See, for example, Blauner, 1964; Walker and Guest, 1952; and Roy, 1960.
2. As of May 1982, the total employed labour force in Canada was 10,704,000. Of this, 1,964,000 were employed in the manufacturing sector. (Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey Catalogue 71001.)
3. Between the years 1965 and 1975, in particular, there was a dramatic increase in the number of females entering the paid labour force. The figures rose from 2,066,000 women to 3,697,000. This constitutes a rise of 79%. (G. Hartman "Women in the Labour Market," 1974 cited in The Women's Bureau Ontario Ministry of Labour fact sheets, No.3, 1981).
4. Rinehart, 1975 discusses many of these behaviours in the chapter entitled, "Blue Collar Work."
5. For example, in 1975 slightly more than one out of every three workers was a woman, but only one of every four union members was female. Proportionately fewer women than men are organized. In 1975, 31.8% of the male Canadian work force was unionized whereas only 19.2% of the female work force was unionized. (Women's Bureau Ontario Ministry of Labour fact sheets, No.3, 1981).

6. C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).
7. Harry Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), pp. 371-372. Braverman argues that the "proletarianization" of white collar work has so speedily occurred, that the white-blue collar distinctions are insufficient to explain actual working conditions.
8. James W. Rinehart, *The Tyranny of Work* (Don Mills, Ontario: Academic Press, 1975), p.52.
9. Rinehart, p.76.
10. Ronald Dore, *British Factory - Japanese Factory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).
11. Huw Beynon, *Working For Ford* (Wakefield, England: EP Publishing, 1975).
12. Chris Trower cited in Rinehart, p.66.
13. Rinehart, p.37.
14. Rinehart, p.37.
15. Rinehart, p.76.
16. Donald Roy, "'Banana Time' Job Satisfaction and Informal Interaction," *Human Organization*, 18, 1960, pp.158-168.
17. Henri De Man, *The Psychology of Socialism* (1927; rpt. New York: Arnos Press, 1974).
18. Elinor Langer, "The Women of the Telephone Company," in *The Capitalist System*, eds. R.C. Edwards, Michael Reich, T.E. Weisskops (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1972), pp. 14-22.
19. Langer, p. 21.
20. Langer, p. 21.
21. Dore, pp. 250-251.
22. Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, cited in Hal Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution: Volume II* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978), pp. 33-48.
23. Dore, pp. 250-251.

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