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**DECONSTRUCTING FORDISM: LEGACIES OF
THE FORD SOCIOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT**

by

Georgios Paris Loizides

**A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Sociology**

**Western Michigan University
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DECONSTRUCTING FORDISM: LEGACIES OF THE FORD SOCIOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

Georgios Paris Loizides, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2004

Institutional theories of organizations state that organizations reflect society's wider values and norms. Less attention has been placed on the questions of whether and how private interest organizations influence wider societal values and norms. This study examines archival material, as well as published primary and secondary sources, relating to the history of the Ford Motor Company, in particular its Sociological Department, in an effort to assess the company's progressive era project to instill in its workforce a particular set of values and attitudes, which were seen by Ford as healthy, and appropriate. Though we are used to seeing Henry Ford and his Ford Motor Company as makers of automobiles, in at least its early history, the company also engaged in "human engineering" through its Sociological Department. Ford was "making men" as much as he was making cars. The company's sociological project attempted to engineer American, working-class (family) men out of the thousands of mainly Southern and Eastern European immigrants that flocked to Detroit. This study pays particular attention to the implications of the Ford sociological project for race, ethnic, class, and gender relations. Therefore, the questions that this research answers revolve around what may be called the social dimensions of early Fordism, and are answered through an examination of the discourse and actions of the Ford Motor Company as a case study, under the light of institutionalization and structuration theories.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

We are used to seeing Henry Ford and his Ford Motor Company as makers of automobiles. There was another project occupying the efforts of the company though, which operated within the boundaries of the wider manufacturing effort. The Ford Motor Company, at least until WW II, was also engaged in “human engineering.” Ford was “making men” as much as he was making cars.¹ Indeed, this study shows that Ford’s sociological project was an important and indelible part of early Fordism, and more generally, of the Progressive period.

A 1916 Ford English School graduation ceremony dramatized Ford’s human engineering effort in a “very pretty and appropriate scene” (S.S. Marquis Papers, acc. No. 293; p. 10):² On the stage sat a large ship representing the vessels that brought immigrants to the new world. In front of it, a gigantic “melting pot.” A Ford official described the rite of graduation:

Down the gang plank came the members of the class dressed in their national garbs and carrying luggage such as they carried when they landed in this country. Down they poured into the Ford melting pot and disappeared. Then the teachers began to stir the contents of the pot with long ladles. Presently the pot began to boil over and out came the men dressed in their best American clothes and waving American flags.³

What this ceremony dramatized was the company’s attempt to transform the social identities of its newly arrived immigrant workforce, into a homogenized American working-class, as was envisioned by Henry Ford and his managers.

The instrument used by the company to carry out its sociological project of “making men” was the company’s Sociological Department, created in 1913. The official aim of the Department was to facilitate the improvement of workers’ living and personal standards, through the enforcement of Ford’s now famous five-dollar day, profit-sharing system. Although the profit-sharing system eventually collapsed by 1921, the Department continued its work, albeit with reduced responsibilities, manpower, and organizational autonomy, until 1949, when it was finally replaced by the Industrial Relations Department. The Sociological Department was instrumental in enforcing the set of social values embedded in the profit-sharing plan, and in time, facilitated their institutionalization. This study explores the role of the Department as an instrument of the Ford sociological project, which aimed at the personal and social transformation of the company’s workforce. This exploration takes place on two levels: the corporate or meso-level of analysis, and the broader society or the macro-level of analysis.

Theoretical Statement of the Problem

I approach this study from the perspectives of institutional theory of organizations and structuration theories. According to institutional theory, institutional and organizational dynamics are interrelated (Ingram, 1998). Indeed, it is argued that organizations represent temporal manifestations of institutions. Furthermore, organizations are known to reflect the broader societal values and norms. This proposition comprises one of the key ideas of institutional analysis of organizations. However, much less attention has been placed on the questions of whether and how organizations – private interest organizations in particular – influence wider societal

values and norms. Ingram (1998) argued that organizations are a viable starting place in explaining institutional change. During the Progressive period, the Ford Motor Company attempted to do just that; namely, to culturally transform immigrant groups into an imagined collectivity that in management's perspective represented American middle-class values and attitudes. This study revolves around the efforts by the Ford Motor Company to instill in their workforce a set of norms and values, as well as a set of behavioral characteristics, that were seen as healthy and appropriate during the Progressive era.⁴ From 1914 until 1942, when the Ford Motor Company signed its first collective contract with labor unions, certain aspects of the particular constellation of social values espoused and promoted by the company for its workforce had become institutionalized, and in subsequent decades, have contributed to what we now consider to be "doxa," to borrow Bourdieu's term.⁵ This research explores the set of values espoused by the Ford Motor Company, and the process of their institutionalization into norms that we would recognize today, by examining the discourse and actions of the Ford Motor Company as a case study, under the light of institutionalization/structuration theories. In particular, Giddens's concept of structuration is utilized to examine the process of institutionalization that transformed the values espoused by the company, into internalized norms and attitudes as part of worker identity.

Empirical Statement of the Problem

This research can be classified under the general term of historical sociology. Historical sociology combines an emphasis on historical particularities with a focus on social structural attributes, thus overcoming the traditional inadequacies of both the

disciplines of history and sociology. Historical sociology, then, offers scholars a way to examine cases in both their particularities, and their generalities. This is the perspective I employed in this study. At least until its unionization, Henry Ford had an iron grip on the Ford Motor Company's labor relations, and his sociological project presented both similarities and idiosyncrasies in relation to the policies of other employers. Some of these idiosyncratic practices proved pioneering and served as models for other organizations, both private and governmental. Each of these features of Ford's sociological project contributes to its value as a case study.

Indeed, the method I utilized in this research was that of the case study, and the particular technique I used was archival research. Its focus was to explore the human engineering project of the Ford Sociological Department, particularly the Department's efforts to instill a set of values and attitudes in the company's workforce during the Progressive period. For this purpose, this research was necessarily archival in nature. The bulk of it was based on two main sources of historical information: the Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn, Michigan, and the Reuther Library of Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. The former houses the company archives, while the latter houses archives related to labor unions. For this research I gathered primary data comprised of documents, photographs, film, and other historical texts revolving around the Ford Motor Company. Other sources were gathered through library research. Although secondary sources are utilized where appropriate or necessary, the bulk of the information used primary sources.

Research Questions

The questions that this research attempts to answer revolve around what may be called the social dimensions of early Fordism. Two sets of questions are addressed here: descriptive and analytical. Descriptive questions help to contextualize and historically illuminate the analytical questions. In particular, they address the following questions:

Descriptive

- What were the policies of the Ford Motor Company regarding labor management?
- What were the mission and aims of the company's Sociological Department?
- What was the structure of the Sociological Department?
- What were the manifest functions of the Sociological Department?
- What methods did the Sociological Department employ in carrying out its mission?

Analytical

- What set of values and norms did the Sociological Department espouse?
- What were the implications of the values and norms promoted by the company's sociological project for class relations?
- What were the implications of these values and norms for race and ethnic relations (including issues of nationality and Americanization)?
- What were the implications of these values and norms for gender relations?
- How effective was the company's sociological project?

Importantly, these questions are examined in regard to their broader social implications, not just in their immediate, localized effects. In short, these questions revolve around the Ford Motor Company's sociological project, specifically regarding its implications for class, race, ethnic, and gender relations in general, during the Progressive period.

Descriptive questions provide the historical and structural background necessary to contextualize labor relations at the Ford Motor Company during the Progressive period, paying particular attention to an important organizational instrument, namely the Sociological Department. Analytical questions focus on the actual constellation of values promoted by the company; the concrete policies that allowed those values to extend

themselves in time, thereby facilitating their institutionalization; their implications for race, ethnic, class, and gender relations; and, finally, the potential success of the Ford sociological project.

Description of the Ford Sociological Department

The 1910s were times as exciting as they were challenging for U.S. industrialists. On the one hand, technological and socio-economic innovations allowed for an increase in production, and thus a decrease in costs and an increase in profits. On the other hand, the radical unionism, as well as the extremely high rates of labor turnover associated with factory work, presented serious challenges to the profits, as well as the power of industrial employers to define labor relations. In January 1914, the Ford Motor Company announced the creation of a profit-sharing system, the five-dollar day plan, which effectively doubled minimum salaries for its workforce, overnight. This system guaranteed a five-dollar per day minimum wage, as long as workers abided by the rules and regulations of the system, which revolved around personal values, habits, and living conditions. The profit-sharing system was to be enforced by the newly created Sociological Department.

Through its Sociological Department, the Ford Motor Company promoted a particular constellation of social values to its workers that it considered as representative of “middle-class” values, including thrift, temperance, diligence, loyalty, Americanism, and family values. The institutionalization of these values was achieved through various company policies and practices that extended their relevance and application in time. These values and the practices that maintained their enforcement had important

implications for social relations. This research focuses on the implications of the Ford sociological project, for race, ethnic, class and gender relations.

Even though it was not staffed with trained sociologists, the Ford Sociological Department carried out work that involved applied social research. Furthermore, the Ford sociological project was a conscious, organized attempt to ameliorate the workforce and as such was in line with Lester Ward's (1906) applied sociology.

General Chapter by Chapter Overview

Following this introductory chapter, I will provide a discussion relating to the theoretical framework of this study. Particularly, in the second chapter, I provide definitions for the main theoretical concepts utilized in this research, and discuss the organizational context of institutions and the role of organizations in disseminating social values and norms according to institutional discourse. Furthermore, I provide discussions on the process of structuration as institutionalization. Finally, I provide a discussion on the importance of the Ford Motor Company as a case study for the examination of the role of employers in disseminating norms and values.

Chapter III discusses the methodological framework of this research. In this chapter, I provide information relating to the research method utilized in this study. In particular, this chapter discusses the relevance of archival research and case studies to comparative and historical sociology. This chapter also includes a presentation of the archival sources used, as well as the methodological and practical limitations of this study.

Following that, Chapter IV comprises a review of primary and secondary literature, including archival material thereby attempting to provide answers to some of the descriptive questions posed by this research.

Chapter V includes a description of the structure of the Ford Sociological Department, the various actors in it, i.e. the Department Heads and its investigators, and the Department's policies. Furthermore, this chapter examines the Department's mission and aims.

In Chapter VI, I examine the constellation of values espoused by the Ford Motor Company for its workforce, in context of the values and norms of Progressive era America. In particular, I describe the Ford profit-sharing system, as well as the social values embedded in it. Furthermore, I discuss the managerial ideologies prevalent in the United States during the Progressive period, as well as examine mainstream ideas concerning racial, ethnic, and gender relations. Finally, I discuss the importance of immigration as a source of labor, as well as the immigration patterns prevalent in the Progressive period.

In Chapter VII, I examine the investigations of workers' personal attitudes, habits, and financial and marital status, carried out by the Sociological Department. I argue that these investigations can be seen as applied research, utilized as an instrument for social action. Furthermore, I examine the procedures used by sociological investigators to gather data and guide employee behavior. I conclude this discussion with the presentation of data relating to the status of the various ethnic groups employed by the Ford Motor Company regarding habits, home conditions and neighborhood conditions for the years 1916 and 1917.

Chapter VIII examines the implications of the Ford sociological project for race and ethnic relations, and shows that the company's sociological project was directed mainly toward its southern and eastern European immigrant employees. I begin the chapter with a description of the demographic composition of the Ford workforce, which shows that during the 1910s European immigrants comprised more than half of the workforce. Following the demographic description, I discuss the use of the terms race and ethnicity as distinct but overlapping concepts used during the Progressive era, the status of African American employees, and the Americanization campaign undertaken by the company to facilitate the assimilation and integration of its immigrant workers. In this chapter, I show how the vision of a virtuous and healthy body of men promoted by the company was very similar to the classical values of industry, frugality, and temperance put forth by Benjamin Franklin.

However, what may be of particular interest are the slight deviations from Franklin's vision. Ford's formulation was somewhat different in the way it envisioned the virtue of frugality – thrift as Ford termed it. Ford's goal was not to invest the fruits of one's thrift (savings) on productive projects aiming at maximizing one's wealth and success, like Franklin suggested, but rather savings should be used to improve family conditions, meaning the purchase of a family house, and a car. Clearly, Ford was not cultivating working-class "entrepreneurs," but working-class producers and consumers, aspiring to "American middle-class" values. Obedience and nationalism (reflected in Ford's Anglo-conformity style of assimilation-Americanization) were also values being rewarded by Ford's profit-sharing system.

Chapter IX examines the implications of the values promoted by the Ford Motor Company for class relations. In particular, I describe the paternalist relations that existed between employer and employees in the Ford Motor Company, the ideological hegemony that facilitated paternalism, and the various aspects of working-class culture that the company attempted to develop through its Sociological Department, such as loyalty, thrift, consumerism, and diligence.

Chapter X examines gender relations at the Ford Motor Company. In particular, this chapter argues that company policies regarding female employees essentially point to the pioneering role of the company in establishing and maintaining what we today know as family wages and family values.

Chapter XI consists of the concluding remarks. In this chapter I provide a discussion relating to the potential success of the Ford sociological project, as well as a summary of conclusions. This chapter ends with comments on further research directions.

CHAPTER II

THEORY

Historically, most of the sociological research on institutions has focused on macro-level analysis. Micro-situations have been assumed to reflect (or be determined by) macro-level structures (Zucker, 1988). This assumption was carried through to institutionalist discourse. In particular, institutionalists extensively discussed the societal effects on organizations. Indeed, the proposition that organizations reflect society's wider values and norms is a key idea of institutional theory on organizations: "Most institutional theory assumes a high degree of reproduction on the microlevel" (Zucker, 1988; p. 41). Yet, following the rise of ethnomethodology, institutionalist discourse has, at least implicitly, shifted to acknowledge that micro-situations may at times undermine (or modify), rather than merely recreate, wider norms. Particularly, "in part, this microorder consists of a replication (or reproduction) of the wider social order, such as the borrowing of role identities from other settings. But it also involves the creation of new order, such as specific judgment standards" (Zucker, 1988; p. 41).

Through an examination of pre-unionization Ford Motor Company (1913-1941), this study explores whether and how large private interest organizations influence wider societal values and norms. Although the idea that organizational structures and actions may affect wider social perceptions, values, and norms, is acknowledged by institutionalist theories, most of the few studies that deal with this dimension of organizations prefer to focus on state structures as organizations. Even less attention has been placed on questions of whether and how private interest organizations such as large

companies or corporations influence wider societal values and attitudes. Thus, this study builds on, and expands institutional analysis of organizations.

Institutions and Institutionalization: Organizations in Institutional Discourse

Classical theorists viewed institutions as inalienable, constituent parts of social life (Abrams, 1982; Scott, 1995). Indeed, Durkheim (1982) considered sociology to be “the science of institutions, their genesis and their functioning” (p. 45). Durkheim viewed institutions as *crystallizations* of beliefs and practices through time, or sets of social facts – collective ways of being possessing an external and coercive power over individuals – in essence, “one may term an *institution* all the beliefs and modes of behaviour instituted by the collectivity” (1982; p. 45). Similarly, for Charles Horton Cooley institutions were “enduring sentiments, beliefs, customs and symbols” (Cooley, 1909; p. 313), which for individuals exist “as a habit of mind and of action, largely unconscious because largely common to all the group... The individual is always cause as well as effect of the institution” (1909; p. 314).

Everett Hughes (1936), who developed Cooley’s model, defined an institution as “some sort of establishment or relative permanence of a distinctly social sort” (p. 180). The essential elements of an institution, according to Hughes, comprise: (1) a set of mores or formal rules, or both, which can be fulfilled only by (2) people acting collectively, in established complementary capacities or offices (Scott, 1995; p. 8). The first element represents consistency; the second, concert or organization. Note that far from viewing institutions to be part of a static social structure, Hughes (1942) saw the study of institutions as part of the study of “society in action” (p. 307). Sociology,

proclaimed Hughes (1942), was “that one of the social sciences which is especially and peculiarly, by intent and not by accident, a science of social institutions” (p. 307).

In an effort to avoid the pitfalls of abstraction inherent in traditional conceptualizations of institutions, and to provide a definition that would better facilitate empirical research, Kaplan (1960) envisioned an institution as:

a complex of status-role relationships which is concerned with a particular area of activity within any specified social system (total or partial). The statuses making up the institution must have the following characteristics if they are to be considered as part of the institution in question. (1) The statuses must be socially recognized and defined. That is, the people who are occupants of positions making up the system must know of the existence of the status and must have knowledge of the normative expectations that define the statuses. (2) The statuses must exist independently of the people who occupy the statuses. This is to say that the institution has continuity over time although specific *manifestations* of the institution may be ephemeral. Thus, *a* specific corporation may cease to operate but *the* corporation continues as an institution (p. 179).

More recently, Scott (1995) offered a similar but more detailed definition of institutions:

Institutions consist of cognitive, normative, and regulative structures and activities that provide stability and meaning to social behavior. Institutions are transported by various carriers – cultures, structures, and routines – and they operate at multiple levels of jurisdiction. In this conceptualization, institutions are multifaceted systems incorporating symbolic systems – cognitive constructions and normative rules – and regulative processes carried out through and shaping social behavior... Institutions ride on various conveyances and operate at multiple levels – from the world system to subunits of organizations (pp. 33-4).

Scott’s definition views institutions as structures and activities providing stability and meaning to social behavior.

Expressing the Neo-Institutionalist camp, North (1998) envisioned institutions as sets of interrelated structural constraints. In particular, he saw institutions as “the

humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction. They are made up of formal constraints... informal constraints... and their enforcement characteristics” (p. 248). I do not follow this definition (for a discussion on the shortcomings of neo-institutionalism, see Stinchcombe’s critique elsewhere in this chapter). Still along the same lines, but in a more eloquent manner, Nee and Ingram (1998) have defined an institution as a formal and informal “*web of interrelated norms*” regulating social relationships (p. 19). They go on to argue that “norms governing interpersonal relationships both constrain and facilitate behavior by defining the structure of incentives – both material and nonmaterial – for individuals situated in a group” (1998; p. 19).

According to institutional theories, institutions have three dimensions (or “pillars,” in Scott, 1995): the regulative dimension, the ways in which institutions “constrain and regularize behavior” (Scott, 1995, p. 35); the normative dimension, “normative rules that introduce a prescriptive, evaluative, and obligatory dimension into social life” (p. 37); and the cognitive dimension, “the rules that constitute the nature of reality and the frames through which meaning is made” (p. 40). Furthermore, according to Scott (1995), institutions are “embedded in various types of repositories or ‘carriers’,” ranging in level, from organizations, to world systems (p. 52). Following Giddens’s (1984) conceptualization of structure and action, Scott (1995) differentiated between three varieties of such carriers: “Cultures, social structures, and routines” (p. 52). Organizational routines, such as assembly lines, “underlie much of the stability of organizational behavior – accounting for their reliable performance as well as for their rigidities” (p. 55). Organizations then, according to institutional theories, “are deeply embedded in institutional contexts. A given organization is supported and constrained by

institutional forces” (p. 55). For institutionalists then, the question becomes the degree to which “organizational elements are institutionalized” (p. 55).

More recently, beginning with Berger and Luckmann (1967), social scientists have shifted emphasis from the “normative” to the “cognitive” aspects of institutions (Scott, 1995; p. 30). Zucker (1977), who stressed the cognitive dimension of institutions, argued that “social knowledge, once institutionalized exists as a fact, as part of objective reality, and can be transmitted directly on that basis” (p. 726). This is an important conclusion, for it lends support to the argument that Ford’s sociological project was not a failure as most historians and social scientists argue (i.e., Meyer, 1981), but on the contrary, it was successful in institutionalizing its basic premises and values to the point that explicit and coercive control could be relaxed, or at least more sparingly enforced.

Almost half a century ago, Nicos Mouzelis (1968) noted that there is no consensus in social scientific discourse concerning the definitions of terms such as institution and organization. This observation holds as true today as it did then. Still, while institutions have occupied a central theme of classical sociological work, “organizations, as distinctive types of social forms, were not distinguished conceptually until relatively recently” (Scott, 1995; p. 16). Mouzelis (1968) defined organization, “or formal organization as a form of social grouping which is established in a more or less deliberate or purposive manner for the attainment of a specific goal” (p. 4). This broad conceptualization was adopted by (North, 1998) who saw organizations as “groups of individuals bound together by some common purpose to achieve certain objectives” (p. 249). In this study, I adopted North’s definition of organizations. The Ford Motor

Company is a private interest, formal organization, which at least until 1941 was run by its owner, Henry Ford, through a handful of managers.

Although some institutional theorists focused on how organizations are affected by institutions, this was done at the macro-societal level. The few that actually focused on organizations or “organizational subsystems” (Scott, 1995; p. 57) still emphasized the effects of wider institutions, such as cultural patterns or belief systems, on these subsystems, rather than vice versa. For example, Burawoy (1979) focused on the effects of the relations of production on workers’ attitudes. Although acknowledged by institutional theorists, the actual process of creation, dissemination, and recreation of norms and values (the actual structuration process) has scarcely been studied.

Paul Ingram (1998) argued that institutional and organizational dynamics are closely interrelated, and that organizational forms are “an important source of institutional change” (Ingram, 1998; p. 258). In particular, Ingram argued that organizations are a viable starting place in explaining institutional change. He cited Hannan and Freeman, who noted that “almost all modern collective action takes place in organizational contexts; and organizations are the main vehicles for action in modern society” (in Ingram, 1998; p. 258). Similarly, North (1998) argued that “it is the interaction between institutions and organizations that shapes the institutional evolution of an economy. If institutions are the rules of the game, organizations and their entrepreneurs are the players” (p. 249). Along the same lines, Zucker (1988) argued that formal organizations comprise “central institutionalizing forces” (p. 24). Furthermore, Zucker (1988) argued that not only must organizations be seen as actors in social

processes, but also that “on at least some dimensions, formally organized collectivities now overshadow the individual actor in influence over the social system” (p. 41).

Philip Selznick (1948), who elaborated on Robert Merton’s early ideas on unintended consequences of action and bureaucratic processes, developed what can be seen as the first institutionalist approach to organizations. Selznick (1948) adopted a broad view of formal organization as “a system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons,” and as such, organizations are “the structural expression of rational action” (p. 25). Still, Selznick (1948) made a distinction between the conceptualization of organizations as *economies*, and organizations as *adaptive social structures*. Studying an organization in its economic (structural) aspects - as “a system of relationships which define the availability of scarce resources and which may be manipulated in terms of efficiency and effectiveness” (p. 26) - may run the risk of reification of the organization in the sense that it may overlook the actual process of negotiation taking place within any organization. On the other hand, Selznick noted that organizations must also be viewed as adaptive systems, thus taking into consideration the contribution of the actual interaction (power-resistance) within an organization over time. Selznick’s (1957) approach, similar to but preceding Giddens’ *dual nature of structure*, viewed organizations, over time, and to different degrees, as transforming into institutions, through the process of *institutionalization*— “something that happens to an organization over time, reflecting the organization’s own distinctive history, the people who have been in it, the groups it embodies and the vested interests they have created, and the way it has adapted to its environment” (p. 16). To institutionalize, for Selznick

(1957), “is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand” (p. 17).

Charles Perrow (1986) classified Selznick’s work and institutionalism in general in “the expose tradition” (p. 159). As he correctly noted,

The explanation for organizational behavior is not primarily in the formal structure of the organization, the announcements of goals and purposes, the output of goods and services. It lies largely in the myriad subterranean processes of informal groups, conflicts between groups, recruitment policies, dependencies on outside groups and constituencies, the striving for prestige, community values, the local community power structure, and legal institutions (p. 159).

In all, for Selznick, organizations were “not the rational creatures they pretend to be, but are vehicles for embodying (sometimes surreptitious) values” (Scott, 1995; p. 19).⁶

Indeed, this is a significant finding for this research, which examines the actual values and norms that early Ford Motor Company embodied and disseminated to its employees.

In a later formulation, Broom and Selznick (1968, p. 215) saw institutionalization as “the development of orderly, stable, *socially integrating* forms and structures out of unstable, loosely patterned, or merely technical types of action.” Furthermore, they distinguished between four essential institutionalizing processes: “(1) formalization, (2) self-maintenance and conservatism, (3) infusion with value, and (4) development of a distinctive social composition and social base” (p. 216).

Stinchcombe (1968), who elaborated on Selznick’s model, emphasized the role of power in organizations. An institution according to Stinchcombe is “a structure in which powerful people are committed to some value or interest” (1968, p. 107). The process of institutionalization, for Stinchcombe, can be seen as an attempt by these powerful actors to maintain and perpetuate their power “by controlling the selection of their successors

and general instruments of communication and socialization” (in Scott, 1995; p. 20). More specifically, institutionalization perpetuates the power of leading actors through “selection, socialization, controlling conditions of incumbency, and hero-worship” (Stinchcombe 1968, p. 111; in Scott, 1995; p. 20).

In a polemical article arguing for the virtues of *old institutionalism*, Stinchcombe (1997) argued that “institutions are staffed and are created to do the job of regulating organizations. This... has been lost in recent institutional theorizing” (p. 1). Furthermore, in his critique of *new institutionalism*, Stinchcombe (1997) argued that it lacks “causal substance and enough variance of characteristics to explain various phenomena” (p. 1). In effect, Stinchcombe accused new institutionalism to have taken a Durkheimian turn, thus neglecting to account for the actions of real agents, in favor of presenting abstract principles operating on the macro-level, but being of no consequence for empirical research. In his words, “Modern institutionalism, to create a caricature, is Durkheimian in the sense that collective representations manufacture themselves by opaque processes, are implemented by diffusion, are exterior and constraining without exterior people doing the creation or the constraining” (p. 2). Unlike the old institutionalism, in which “people built and ran institutions,” in the new institutionalism “collective representations operate on their own” (p. 2). He concluded that

[I]n short, the trouble with the new institutionalism is that it does not have the guts of institutions in it. The guts of institutions is that somebody somewhere really cares to hold an organization to the standards and is often paid to do that. Sometimes that somebody is inside the organization, maintaining its competence. Sometimes it is an accrediting body, sending out volunteers to see if there is really any algebra in the algebra course. And sometimes that somebody, or his or her commitment, is lacking, in which case the center cannot hold, and mere anarchy is loosed upon the world (p. 18).

Stinchcombe's comments are relevant to the study of Progressive period labor policy of the Ford Motor Company. Indeed, to take but one example, it was not some abstract technological or cultural force that facilitated the assimilation of the hundreds of thousands of Detroit immigrants from Europe. It was partly through particular employers such as Henry Ford, and practices such as the ones employed by his company, that Americanization was achieved

Conceptualizing Norms and Values: Structure, Action, Agency, and Power

From Durkheim's "conscience collective" to Weber's Protestant "ethic" and the "spirit" of Capitalism, sociology has a long tradition of studying values and norms. However, as they are used today in social science discourse, the terms "values" and "norms" can be said to have developed in the early 1950s with cooperation between Parsons, Kluckhohn, and others (Spates, 1983). Kluckhohn (1951) saw a value as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action" (p. 395). This outlook on values became a standard for subsequent sociological discourse. For institutionalists, societal values can be defined as "conceptions of the preferred or the desirable together with the construction of standards to which existing structures or behavior can be compared and assessed" (Scott, 1995; p. 37). Norms, on the other hand, "specify how things should be done; they define legitimate means to pursue valued ends. Normative systems define goals or objectives... but also designate the appropriate ways to pursue them" (Scott, 1995; p. 37-38). In this study, I utilize Scott's particular articulation of the institutionalist conceptualization of social values and norms.

Parsons distinguished between values and norms, in that while values were seen as general prescriptions of the desirable, norms provided the actual guidelines for contemplation and action (Parsons, 1961). In other words, as abstract concepts, values were neither “situation-specific nor function-specific” (1961; p. 43) – as such, values cannot be utilized as guiding principles for everyday action.⁷ Norms on the other hand, being function-specific, serve as just that – “they are ‘legitimized’ by values, but operate at a lower level of generality with respect to expected concrete collective and role performance (p. 43). Therefore, according to this outlook, “a given society’s achievement value merely indicated that achieving was a desirable end. Specifying how to achieve, even what to achieve, was the purview of the norms” (Spates, 1983; p. 32).

Seemingly in line with Stinchcombe’s critique of neo-institutionalist theories, Knight and Ensminger (1998) correctly argued that “explanations of social norms must do more than merely acknowledge the constraining effects of normative rules on social action. Such explanations must address the process that culminates in the establishment of one of these rules as the common norm in a community” (p. 105). Knight and Ensminger, who set out to show that rational choice theory can potentially account for power differentials in society, used a “bargaining framework” to explain change in social norms. For them, bargaining is the “primary mechanism for the emergence and change of social norms” (p. 106). According to this approach, actors motivated by either material or non-material interests (i.e. ideological) compete for the establishment or modification of existing norms: “the norm most likely to be established will be the one that manifests the interests of those actors who enjoy a relative bargaining advantage. We define bargaining

power as superiority in resource endowments” (p. 106). Note that the authors seem to espouse an outlook on structure as a set of constraining rules of conduct.

Tolbert (1988) noted that although a number of definitions for *organizational culture* have been offered, “all suggest that culture is expressed in patterns of behavior that are based on shared meanings and beliefs about those behaviors. Such shared meanings and beliefs facilitate coordination of activities within an organization by making behaviors both understandable and predictable to interacting members” (p. 102). However, he also noted the lack of attention to the process of exactly how organizational culture develops: “most research takes the existence of culture as given” (p. 102).

In his *Historical Sociology*, Abrams (1982), presented the *two-sidedness of society* to mean

...the ways in which, in time, actions become institutions and institutions are in turn changed by action... Organising the control of an enlarged labour force on the basis of standardised rules becomes bureaucracy. And slavery, feudalism, and bureaucracy become the fixed, external settings in which struggles for prosperity or survival or freedom are then pursued (p. 2).

Abrams (1982) concluded, “this shaping of action by structure and transforming of structure by action both occur as processes in time. It is by seizing on that idea that history and sociology merge and that sociology becomes capable of answering our urgent questions about why the world is as it is; about why particular men and women make the particular choices they do and why they succeed or fail in their projects” (p. 3).

Structuration

In an effort to move away, or bridge, the opposing emphases of functionalists and interactionists (that tend to present structure and individual action as mutually exclusive categories standing in a binary opposition), Giddens introduced his theory of structuration. In his classic work, *The Constitution of Society* (1984), he argued that “the constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality” (p. 25). The fundamental concepts of Giddens’ theory of structuration are those of the dual nature of structure, practical and discursive consciousness, motivation, and routinization. The dual nature of structure means that structure is both the “medium and outcome of the conduct it recursively organizes” (p. 374). Practical consciousness refers to what human actors know about their own, and wider, social conditions, but which they cannot articulate discursively. Note that this concept is similar to Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of *doxa*. Discursive consciousness, on the other hand, refers to what human actors are capable of articulating concerning (their own and wider) social circumstances. The two types of consciousness described by Giddens are not distinct, for the line separating them is always “permeable” and always in flux. Routinization refers to the “habitual, taken for granted character of the vast bulk of the activities of day to day social life” (Giddens, 1984; p. 376).

Individuals then, according to Giddens, are *knowledgeable* agents, whose action “depends upon the capability of the individual to ‘make a difference’ to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events.” Thus, for Giddens, “action logically involves power in the sense of transformative capacity” (1984, p. 14). Power, is viewed as simply “the capacity to achieve outcomes” (p. 257). In particular, Giddens’ approach conceptualizes

power, exercised through the (usually asymmetrical) appropriation and distribution of resources, as two-dimensional: “Power within social systems which enjoy some continuity over time and space presumes regularized relations of autonomy and dependence between actors or collectivities in contexts of social interaction” (p. 16).

In a sense, this research focuses on the actions taken by the Ford Motor Company during the late Progressive period to transform the values and attitudes of their workforce into a particular vision of an American working-class. This approach does not neglect the capacity of workers for action, something that Giddens called the “dialectic of control” (1984, p. 16), but neither does it assume its particular expression as given, as some Marxist scholars may tend to do. On the contrary, it treats the interaction of action and power as an empirical question. That said, the *emphasis* of this research tends to be on the company’s actions toward the workers. Indeed, the Ford sociological project was exactly aimed at developing a new (or modified), scientifically or at least scientistically designed and managed state of affairs, which in many ways comprised a modern extension of traditional patronage structures, between ownership (conveniently including management) and labor, which had far reaching social implications.

Use of Theory

In a biting critique, Stinchcombe (1986) dismissed Giddens’s structuration theory as too abstract, and in effect being divorced from empirical considerations (he offered a similar critique of new institutionalism eleven years later). Similarly, it has been argued that Giddens’ structuration theory is “all micro-situations and world-empires with nothing much in between” (Stones, 1991; p. 673; Thrift, 1985). Indeed, some argue that

structuration theory is irreparably divorced from fact (for example, see Gregson, 1989). Giddens rejected such a position, and although he acknowledged some distance between theory and actual events, he offered a dialogical view of the relationship between theory and fact (in Gregson, 1989). The few guidelines (or rather, general research sensibilities) that Giddens (1984) offered to researchers are summed up by the following: (1) “All social research has a necessarily cultural, ethnographic or ‘anthropological’ aspect to it” (p. 284); (2) “It is important in social research to be sensitive to the complex skills which actors have in co-ordinating the contexts of their day-to-day behavior” (p. 285); and (3) “The social analyst must also be sensitive to the time-space constitution of social life” (p. 286).

In a response to his critics, Giddens (1989) urged all to recognize what he called the “relative autonomy of theory and research” (p. 294). According to Giddens, while theory may be informed by empirical research, “theoretical thinking needs in substantial part to proceed in its own terms and cannot be expected to be linked at every point to empirical considerations” (p. 294). Similarly, while empirical work would not be possible without abstract concepts or theoretical notions, “these are necessarily drawn upon selectively and cannot be ever present” (p. 295).

Conclusions

By establishing and maintaining a system of regularized behavior in the Ford Motor Company, Ford executives, through the Sociological Department, and subsequently the Service Department, essentially set up a structure of permissible behavior, which itself must be viewed as an act of power (Lukes, 1986; Giddens, 1984).

This structure was institutionalized through three dimensions of institutionalization: regulative, normative, and cognitive (Scott, 1995). As we will see below, the company's sociological project included public discourse and structures, such as the profit-sharing system, that provided a cognitive frame to interpret the nature of reality; policies and practices that constrained and regularized the behavior of its workforce; and normative rules and regulations that introduced a prescriptive and obligatory dimension to the public and personal lives of its employees. By the time the Ford Motor Company allowed collective agreements with unions, the process of institutionalization for some of the aspects of the company's sociological project was taken for granted – became *doxa* of the organization.

Indeed, Bourdieu (1977) noted that the period during which a social organization is engaged in the setting up of “relations of domination” is a period of increased symbolic violence. Bourdieu (1977) paid attention to the idea of the exercise of power of “every established order” through the setting up of a structure of socially acceptable discourse. This asserting domination gradually hides its coercive character through a process of the “naturalization of its own arbitrariness” (p. 164). The relations of domination produced become internalized (or institutionalized) by the organizational members in general and thereby become that organization's “doxa,” or “universe of the undisputed” (p. 168). Therefore, the Ford sociological project can be seen as part of an effort by management to set up and institutionalize a particular system of social relations. According to Giddens (1984), a system is “the patterning of social relations across time-space, understood as reproduced practices” (p. 377).

In summary, my research focuses on the development, enforcement, and use of rules and regulations, values and norms, as well as the distribution of resources at the Ford Motor Company during its early years of existence. In this research, I utilized institutional theories of organizations, as well as structuration theory. I also took into account Stinchcombe's critiques of new institutionalism and structuration theory. Indeed, I believe that utilizing an institutional analysis (with the sensibilities of old institutionalism concerning "the guts of institutions") in a case study at the meso-level of analysis, contributes to an attempt to overcome the deficiencies of new institutionalism presented by Stinchcombe. Furthermore, the utilization of structuration theory in this research attempts to add a concrete case of institutionalization of values to the existing literature.

In this chapter, I provided the theoretical framework of this study. I began by describing the main institutional operationalizations of concepts such as institution, organization, and structuration, which included a critique on institutional theories of organizations. I then proceeded with a discussion on social values and norms, including an examination of such concepts as social structure, agency, and power. I followed this discussion with a short examination of the use of theory, and concluding remarks. The next chapter comprises a discussion on the method utilized in this study.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Comparative and Historical Sociology

As mentioned, this research can be classified under the general umbrella term of historical sociology. It utilized the method of case study, and archival research as the particular technique. The importance of historical sociology lies in its grounding in history, and in its distinct approach, which takes both human agency and social structure into account. One may say that historical sociology stands somewhere in the middle of traditional history, which it may be argued neglected the examination of social structure, and traditional sociology, which neglected human agency.

Traditionally sociology has been seen as a theoretical discipline, whereas history an empirical one. More recently, developments in both disciplines have brought them closer together. Indeed, in his now classic *Historical Sociology*, Philip Abrams (1982) declared that “in terms of their fundamental preoccupations, history and sociology are and always have been one and the same thing. Both seek to understand the puzzle of human agency and both seek to do so in terms of the process of social structuring” (p. x). Sociological explanation, Abrams argued, is inevitably historical, and so, historical sociology does not comprise a *special* variety of sociology, but rather its *essence*. According to Abrams (1982), “all varieties of sociology stress the so-called ‘two-sidedness’ of the social world, presenting as a world of which we are both creators and the creatures, both makers and prisoners; a world which our actions construct and a world that powerfully constrains us” (p. 2). In short, Abrams perceived society to be “a process

constructed historically by individuals constructed historically by society” (p. 227).

Action and structure then are seen as inseparable and interactive parts of historical process. Although action is informed by social structure, it can also transform it: “This shaping of action by structure and transforming of structure by action both occur as processes in time. It is by seizing on that idea that history and sociology merge and that sociology becomes capable of answering our urgent questions about why the world is as it is” (p. 3).

Along the same lines of thought, Griffin (1995) noted,

Culture, structure, and action contribute to the ‘making’ of each other. The challenge for us is to discern and explain how the creations of past human action – that is, social structures and cultural arrangements – become human prisons or, less frequently, a source of human liberation. But we should recognize that culture and social structure constrain or empower social action at any one point *in time*, and cultural understandings and social institutions are continually made and remade by social action occurring *through time*. To underscore the active and continually temporal character of this reciprocal dynamic, Philip Abrams (1982) has labeled the entire process ‘structuring’ (p. 1248).

The ultimate goal of historical sociology, according to Cahnman (1995), is

to render a conceptualized account of societal processes as they actually occur, meaning that the occurrences are considered as an end in themselves, illuminated by theory. Negatively put, one can say that historical sociology (1) does not aspire to construct a generalized theory of a fictitious ‘total society’ or to assume that particular societies are merely stages in a universal development, and (2) does not intend to isolate aspects of human behavior in contrived experiments, on the assumption that an accumulation of incoherent data will yield a valid theory of societal process. (p. 157)

Cahnman (1995), who contrasted a Weberian historical sociology to the evolutionary model and its successor, structural-functionalism, warned that in considering historical sociology, “one must beware of make-believe historical reference. It is not enough to quote uncritically from standard works about one historical period or another in order to

validate arbitrary generalizations” (p. 160). Indeed, a healthier historical sociological theory would depend on historical sociological case studies as building blocks rather than historicist accounts of events.

Although much of what is now considered to be the core of classical sociology consists of historical studies (Skocpol, 1984), more recently, American sociology has typically favored the present over the past (Rynbrandt, 1999). Indeed, Skocpol (1984) spoke of a “partial eclipse” of historical sociology (p. 3). A decade later, Griffin (1995) reported evidence to show the importance the discipline of sociology now places “on the power of history to elucidate the sociological enterprise” (p. 1245). Indeed, Stinchcombe spoke of a “rebirth” of historical sociology, albeit with a shifted focus. In particular, although historical sociology has always focused on large scale and long term social processes, Stinchcombe (1985) argued:

The rebirth of historical sociology in the past couple of decades represents a response to the fact that for a cause to be big enough to shape the behavior of thousands or millions of people, it has to grow to be that big... In short, causal factors big enough to cause major structural transformations or institutional forms do not just happen to have the very large values needed to do the causing. They get to that size by growing in more or less the same direction over a long period of time. Consequently all macro sociological investigation is inherently historical, because only by a historical process of growing the same way for a long time does anything get to be the size needed to produce macrosociological effects. But it is also historical in an epistemological sense: even when there is such a long-term historical dynamic as to produce an extreme value in several countries on some "causal" variable... that process will have gone on for each case in a sufficiently distinctive environment, and will have been shaped by sufficiently distinctive events, that it will never be merely a high value on "capitalist coreness" (pp. 572-3).

Stinchcombe (1985) criticized macro-sociological approaches, and in particular Skocpol’s (1984) edited volume on the “Vision and Method in Historical Sociology,” for not paying adequate attention to the historical particularities of the cases (most essays)

used for constructing macro-theories. Stinchcombe (1985) argued that “the tension between studying the particularity of countries and establishing generalizations about causal processes, would be simplified and made more tractable if institutions and mass movements were analyzed into their component individual behavior” (p. 572).

Although traditionally historical sociological discourse has dealt with the macro level of analysis, historical sociology need not be macro in nature. Indeed, using the term “micro-history,” Abrams (1982) argued that the interaction of structure and action, that is history, does not only take place on the macro level, but it “occurs also in prisons, factories, and schools, in families, firms and friendships” (p. 7).

One major problem of much of historical sociological work is that it tends to focus on generalities, even at the point of neglecting to see the particularities of temporally limited historical moments. In particular, Stinchcombe (1985) criticized historical sociology of “picking out the generality in a situation in which our macrosociological causes always come with causally crucial particularity; they are never merely high values on a causal variable” (p. 573).

Case Studies

In sociology, cases can be seen as comprising two main aspects: Their historical aspect is related to a case’s uniqueness, while its sociological aspect relates to its representativeness of larger social processes. In Wieworka’s (1992) words, a case offers “the opportunity to discover knowledge about how it is both specific to and representative of a larger phenomenon” (p. 170).

The quantitative-qualitative division in the social sciences, is also prominent in the field of comparative sociology (Ragin, 1987). While qualitative researchers tend to examine and then compare cases as wholes, cross-national studies tend to be variable-oriented. "While cases may be analyzed in terms of variables... cases are viewed as configurations – as combinations of characteristics... This holism contradicts the radically analytic approach of most quantitative work" (Ragin, 1987; p. 3; also see Stake, 1998). Indeed, Geertz's declared that "comparative description is the opposite of... thick description" (in Stake, 1998; p. 97). In short, the qualitative tradition tends to be historically interpretive in the Weberian sense (Ragin, 1987). Still, the two traditions need not stand in opposition to each other. Stake (1998) offered a more complimentary view of the use of case studies to cross-national studies, by arguing that comparability cannot be established a priori, but only after a "holistic" understanding of the case as a "bounded system"⁸ (p. 87).

Although the strength of case studies lies in their ability to optimize understanding of a case rather than on facilitating generalizations (Stake, 1998), the use of case studies can contribute to the refinement of theory, as in the instance of *instrumental case studies*, which involve the examination of particular cases, to "provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory" (p. 94). In this outlook, generalization emerges almost as an unconscious process; what Stake calls "naturalistic generalization" (p. 94). Case studies, in short, can be useful as empirically grounded building blocks for larger theoretical configurations.

Some comparativists often contrast case studies with the survey method as if they are competing rather than complimentary methods (Platt, 1992). Platt (1992) argued that

case studies typically carry two main problems; “how to describe the contents of case studies in a sufficiently objective way for the results to be replicable and comparable with those of other case studies, and how to generalize from case studies to a wider population” (p. 22). The former is inevitably connected with the location of cases in the intersection of distinctiveness and homogeneity, and facilitated a historical turn towards statistical methods in sociology. Yet, as Platt argued, there is already a body of work aiming at combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches, so as to counteract the problems arising from the problem of replicability and comparability.

A word of caution regarding the reliability of quantitative indicators used in comparative historical research is raised by Waldow (2001). He argued that even though historical quantitative data are more often than not inaccurate and distorted, this is not adequately acknowledged or discussed, which leads to “unacknowledged distortions in the results” (p. 125).

Stake argued that the strength of case studies lie in their ability to optimize understanding of a case rather than on facilitating generalizations. The way I approach case studies in my research approximates what Stake calls an “instrumental case study,” which refers to a particular case, examined to “provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory” (1998, p. 88). Concerning the “problem” of generalizability, it is of course a problem if generalizability is the research goal. However, this is not the main concern of this study, which aims mainly at suggesting correlations for more systematic research, rather than testing them.

The Ford Motor Company offers itself as an interesting case study. It was one of the largest industrial employers in the United States during the first half of the twentieth-

century; it pioneered various aspects of the modern production process, such as the moving assembly line, and it developed an all-encompassing human relations department, characteristically called the Sociological Department. Indeed, the first 25 years of the Ford Motor Company provide a good case study, not only because it pioneered methods of production and control that became typical of American industry, but also because of its sheer size, and the holistic nature of its sociological project. Ford plants in Detroit employed some 13,000 workers in 1914, 19,000 in 1915, 33,000 in 1916, and 42,000 in 1924. Subsequently, the River Rouge plant would employ 68,000, which made it the largest manufacturing plant in the United States, and arguably in the world; it had become “the universal symbol and stereotype of the large manufacturing plant” (Nelson, 1995; p. 7). As such, its significance as a historical case study falls squarely within Scott’s (1995) call for more historical case studies. It is indicative that one year after the introduction of Ford’s profit-sharing plan, O.J. Abell (1915) wrote in *The Iron Age*: “If it were the fact that the Ford Motor Company presents a condition and an experience entirely impossible of application to other industrial enterprises, there would be little reason for this article. But it is the writer’s belief that in many of its methods the company has blazed trails of great promise, which may be followed by a good many other employers to their substantial profit” (p. 33).

Archival Research

Little has been written on archival research from a sociological perspective. One major exception is Michael Hill's (1993) *Archival Strategies and Techniques*, which I found to be invaluable to my research. Hill's (1993) work comprises "a Goffmanian view of archives," in that it adopts Goffman's

dramaturgical perspective and his comprehensive metatheory of meaning (i.e. frame analysis) to provide an interdisciplinary vocabulary for talking about 'framing,' 'presentations of self,' archival 'performances,' 'interaction rituals,' and the 'front' and 'back' regions of archives; for conceptualizing 'fabrications' in archives; and for hypothesizing working responses to Goffman's general frame analytic question, 'what is going on here?' (pp. 5-6).

Hill's Goffmanian view urges researchers to be careful not to see surviving documents as reflecting any objective truth, but rather, the writer's (and the company's of course) presentation of self. When I first visited the Benson Ford Research Center and declared my interest for the Ford Motor Company Sociological Department, a nice archivist handed me a sheet of paper with the heading "Ford Motor Company Sociological Department" (they have a new guide now with the impressive heading "Bibliography or Possible Sources Sociological Department/Ethnic Employment at Ford Motor Company in Henry Ford Museum Greenfield Village Archives") describing all the boxes in the archives that contain relevant material to the Sociological Department. I was thrilled and remember thinking "this is too easy." I was painfully right. It was not until my second week of daily visits that I began to realize that relevant information was contained under other headings as well, like "Labor," "Union Activity," "Strikes," etc. That was not the first blow, of course. I had already been exposed to what Hill (1993) called "archival sedimentation;" which can be seen as "a series of sedimentary phases

characterized by a multitude of erosions and reorderings" (p. 9). This concern is associated with the bias, scarcity and distortion through time (or institutional manipulation) of available sources. As Schutt (1999) noted, "documents and other evidence may have been lost or damaged and what evidence there is may represent a sample biased towards those who were more newsworthy figures or who were more prone to writing" (p. 330).

A rudimentary look at the Ford archives concerning the Sociological Department shows the fragmented nature of surviving documents; moreover, it is clear that documents not complimentary to the company were deemed "restricted," or, of course, just not archived.

A problem I hadn't anticipated was a linguistic one. I thought that the period under investigation is not so removed from today as to generate linguistic problems. I was painfully wrong this time as well. The most clear example is the word "sociological," and the exact meaning it had for the Ford managers of the time, which I am still to fully understand. In the beginning I thought they used the word as a synonym for "social" but then I began to see the word "social" creep up here and there, and so things got complicated again. Even words like "intelligence" were used in a different and very specific manner.

Sources

Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn houses the bulk of the surviving records of Ford's Sociological Department as part of the archives of the Ford Motor Company, and therefore was the main source for my examination of company discourse

and practices. The Benson Ford Research Center is a research institution, and therefore open (and accommodating) to all researchers. I visited the Center for a period of two weeks in the summer of 2001, and collected copies of 130 documents, a total of 695 pages, which comprise the most relevant documents encountered in my first set of visits. An index and descriptions of all collected documents can be found in Appendix A.

In order to facilitate the exploration of labor discourse, my research also took me to the Reuther Library of Wayne State University in Detroit, which houses many interesting collections regarding labor in early twentieth-century Detroit, and as such it is invaluable to any research concerning the Ford Motor Company. Among them are labor union archives, and labor press collections of the early twentieth-century. A distinctive aspect of the Reuther Library is its labor journal and newspaper collection, which includes archives of proceedings of nearly all major national unions and of union and labor related national and local press. Reuther Library also houses an extensive oral history collection, comprising recorded interviews with workers and union leaders, spanning the first half of the twentieth-century.

Primary and secondary data collected by this study comprised of documents, photographs, film, and other historical texts revolving around the Ford Motor Company from 1913 to 1941. Additional material, such as film, early twentieth-century sociological textbooks, articles in professional journals and the public press, were gathered through library research. The interlibrary loan system at Western Michigan University's Waldo Library was a valuable tool for this research.

An important artifact is the department's manual of procedures, of the late 1940s, which includes instructions to investigators, as well as details on the general structure and

procedures of the department. This manual shows how, although the department has diminished in size and scope of responsibility through the years, its main stated aims and functions remained essentially unchanged. Also of great importance is a set of documents titled S. S. Marquis Files, which include, among other things, speeches, personal photographs, and press releases. The file, which comprises the former Sociological Department Director's personal archive, includes significant documents concerning the Department's functions and procedures. Also available, are the Ford Motor Company Plant newspapers, and the complete collection of the *Ford Times Magazine*. Magazines like the *Ford Man* and *Ford Times Magazine*, as well as newspapers and journals published by Ford like *The Dearborn Gazette*, were invaluable to my research for they comprise official company discourse meant to be read by workers, among others. Other relevant documents available at the Benson Ford Research Center include material such as departmental reports, correspondence, company memorandums, and quantitative information concerning workforce, salaries and salary rates.

Limitations

Due to limited time and resources, I had to curb the scope of this research to archival material revolving around the company's sociological project. Although the data gathered by this research suggest that the project was initially received with mixed feelings by the workers, and certainly with suspicion regarding the more intrusive aspects of the sociological investigations, in the long-run, there was no serious resistance by workers to the company's sociological project. In this, I disagree with Meyer's (1981) contention that worker resistance was a serious threat to, and a factor contributing to the

downfall of, Ford's paternalistic labor relations system. The scant evidence found in the company and labor union archives suggest that in general, workers did not challenge the authority of the Sociological Department, nor did they show aversion to the ideals propagandized by the company. Still, in order to verify this suggestion, a deeper examination of workers' oral histories is needed.

CHAPTER IV

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Following my discussion of the theoretical framework of this study, I now examine the relevant literature regarding the issues stated in the research questions posed by this study. For easier reading, this chapter is subdivided into sections on primary, secondary, and archival sources. This chapter begins with a general introduction, and moves on to a short discussion on what constitutes primary and secondary sources. Following that, I examine the main published literature, primary first, and secondary afterwards. Finally, I comment on archival sources used in this study and offer some concluding remarks.

The project of the Ford Sociological Department is of interest to social science and history in general for many reasons. For one, it can be seen as a pioneering effort of applied sociology, but over and above any reflexive implications for social science, the Sociological Department's importance lays partly in that it developed, or followed, many processes that became central to capitalism. Apart from laying the foundations for what came to be called "Fordism," and "welfare capitalism" (see Foster, 1988), the Ford Sociological Department established training programs for newly arrived immigrants, which at the time comprised almost 40% of the Ford Motor Company workforce, aiming at developing better citizens and better workers.⁹ In effect then, the Sociological Department was contributing to the development of an American working-class.¹⁰

Ford Motor Company's Sociological Department by no means resembles academic sociological departments of today. For one, it didn't employ any trained

sociologists, rather, as it was boasted by Lee (1916), all departmental officers were recruited from within the organization. Still, the adoption of the term "sociological" implies some connection with sociological ideas and discourse circulating in the 1910s. In any case, the Ford Sociological Department can rather be seen as an early attempt of "applied sociology," in the sense that it was client-driven and attempted to apply a set of intellectual models to existing social relations in order to modify them. It must be noted that Auguste Comte coined the term sociology in the mid-nineteenth-century to denote a new science – the "queen of sciences" – that would explain, as well as predict and manage, social behavior. One meaning that comes out of reading the various Henry Ford biographies, particularly the one authored by Marquis himself, linked the term "sociological" with a concern for human and social welfare.

Although famous and of great historical importance in its contributions to modern industrial society, Ford's Sociological Department has been scarcely examined. There are no books solely dedicated to the subject, and only a few articles. A few books on the Ford Motor Company do devote some space to the Sociological Department, but as a rule, this is minimal. Moreover, most of the literature on the Sociological Department has been written not by sociologists, but by historians, and to a lesser degree, economists. The two most prominent authors who devoted some of their attention to Ford's sociological project were historians Stephen Meyer III and Allan Nevins.

Primary Sources

Although, in sociology, primary and secondary data refer to the purpose and population of a particular research, in history, primary and secondary sources are defined by their proximity to the actual historical event. While accounts by authors who had direct access to the events in question are considered to be primary accounts, those accounts by authors that were removed from the actual events, either in time or spatially, are considered secondary. Therefore, I consider primary sources, and primary accounts to be those accounts by authors who were personally exposed to the realities at the Ford Motor Company during the Progressive period. These include accounts by Department managers, company rules and regulations existing in the archives, as well as company public discourse and worker accounts existing as oral histories.

The two main figures in Ford's Sociological Department, apart from Henry Ford himself, were John R. Lee, the department's first director, from 1913 to 1916, and advisor until his departure in 1919, and Rev. Samuel S. Marquis, director from 1916 to his own departure on January 25, 1921 (Nevins, 1957). Both have left little in the way of published accounts of their service with the company. Two more authors with direct knowledge of the company's sociological project have published accounts on the subject: John Fitch and Samuel Levin. John Fitch regularly wrote in the *Survey*, a Social Work journal edited by Paul Kellogg, while Samuel Levin, published two articles on the rise and fall of the company's profit-sharing plan in *The Personnel Journal*. These four authors, Lee, Marquis, Fitch and Levin, comprise the main group of primary sources that published material revolving around the Ford profit-sharing plan and the Sociological Department.

Lee (1916) published an article in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in which he offered some description of the company's 1914 profit-sharing system. In this article, Lee also offered some insight as to the Sociological Department and its structure and aims.¹¹ It is noteworthy that Lee began his description by stating the company's policy of standardization, which started in 1908 (Lee, 1916). Standardization and interchangeability of parts were integral parts of the efficient, scientific management of Fordism from the outset.¹² Indeed, it may be argued that Ford's greatest innovation was applying the principles of standardization and interchangeability of parts to labor management.

Rev. Samuel S. Marquis, who took over as head of the Sociological Department in 1915, wrote a well received biography of Henry Ford (Marquis, 1923), where he focused on Ford's personal attributes (his idiosyncratic relationship with religion for example). Although offering surprising little information on the Sociological Department itself, Marquis's position as head of the department and his intimate relationship with Henry Ford and his family nevertheless make his description of Henry Ford important.¹³

Marquis also published an article published in the *Addresses and Proceedings* of the National Education Association, in which he described the company's educational project for its workforce, particularly its immigrant workers (Marquis, 1916). Despite the poor record of published material, Samuel Marquis left an extensive archive of the Sociological Department, describing in detail its functions, purpose, and policies, which was invaluable to this study.

In 1914, John A. Fitch wrote an article in the *Survey*, titled Ford of Detroit and his Ten Million Dollar Profit-sharing Plan in which he gave an insight into the everyday

process of Ford investigations. Excitement was great in February 1914 among workers in Detroit. The announcement of the Five Dollar Plan was still fresh and thousands were lining up in the hope of employment at Ford. This is the time when the first investigation of the Sociological Department took place, in the guise of determining whether or not Ford workers "possessed the proper home environment" (Meyer, 1981; p. 124). Fitch provided some first hand accounts on the company's sociological project, and the investigations used as a method for its enforcement.

The journal that published Fitch's observations, the *Survey*, later renamed *Survey Graphic*, was a well-respected social work journal of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The *Survey* was important, for it comprised a medium by which social scientists of the time gained information on, and impressions of, the Ford Motor Company, and its labor policy. Interestingly, although there are no articles in early twentieth-century sociological literature on the Ford Motor Company, there are a few references to the Ford situation, citing Fitch's articles.¹⁴

Samuel Levin, a professor at the College of the City of Detroit, wrote two relevant articles, published in the *Personnel Journal* (1927a, 1927b). One describing the growth of the plan (Levin, 1927a), and the other describing the end of the profit-sharing system (Levin, 1927b). In these articles, Levin provided some interesting information regarding the policies of the company regarding its labor force, as well as the structure and factors, external and internal, affecting the profit-sharing plan.

Because of their proximity to the sociological project of the Ford Motor Company, and their first hand knowledge, and involvement in the project, Lee, Marquis, Fitch, and Levin are the main published primary sources that I have utilized in this study.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are generally those sources that were removed in time from the actual events at the Ford plants, most notably historians and other social scientists that wrote after the end of the Progressive period.

In an article revolving around socialist reactions to the profit-sharing system at Ford, or as socialists called it, the "new order," David Roediger (1988) makes important links to the ideologies of the day. Although Ford was by no means a socialist himself, his five-dollar day plan was praised by Progressive socialists all over the world, in the hope that Ford's innovations would transform peasant immigrants into a modern, educated, working-class that would then be ready for socialist indoctrination (Roediger, 1988).

John Reed, a radical journalist and one of the founders of the Communist Labor Party in the U.S. described Henry Ford as the "Industry's Miracle Worker," and praised him for being self-made and "practical" (Lacey, 1986; p. 166). Although Reed and other socialists were surely no sympathizers of rich industrialists, Henry Ford seems to have been set apart by many of them. Apart from John Reed, Antonio Gramsci and Kate Richard O'Hare, a socialist leader of national importance, enthusiastically embraced Ford's mode of production (Roediger, 1988). In lengthy articles in the Socialist monthly, *The National Rip-saw*, O'Hare described labor relations and the factory setup at the Ford Motor Company.

O'Hare spent two days in all visiting Ford's plant at Highland Park and produced an enthusiastically endorsing report (Roediger, 1988).¹⁵ Apart from being invaluable artifacts showing the socialist outlook of the day, O'Hare's articles also shed light on early twentieth-century ethnic stereotypes, shared among conservatives, liberals, and

socialists alike. For example, in the same way that Ford and his Sociological Department were creating an assimilation factory, and judging other cultures as inferior, and their preservation by immigrants as obstacles to immigrant assimilation, O'Hare's descriptions were also full of stereotypes. For example, she began one of her vignettes exemplifying work at Ford as follows: "Tony is just a 'dago,' slender and delicate, with dreamy eyes, a sweet tenor voice and absolutely stupid and impossible for manual labor." (Roediger, 1988; p. 248).

Roediger (1988) noted that O'Hare's motivation for praising Ford's industrial setup stemmed partly from Ford's contribution to the anti-war movement favored by socialists at that time, but also from the expectation that the new setup would lessen the arbitrary powers of the foremen.¹⁶ In general though, O'Hare's ultimate hope – one that she shared with Gramsci and other Marxists – was that Ford's innovations would ultimately serve socialism by transforming old world peasant immigrants into a modern capitalist working-class, through training and education, and thus in a way delivering workers to the socialists, ready for their indoctrination. This hope, in my evaluation, was the distinguishing characteristic of Progressive socialists, for which they were so despised by Walter Benjamin, who saw them as traitors to the revolution.¹⁷ The hope for O'Hare and other socialists then, was that although Ford's ideas and practices would not end social problems, they would ultimately, "advance the cause of social justice, demonstrate the soundness of the socialist theories and bring the mighty pressure of education to hasten the final and complete emancipation of the working class" (Roediger, 1988; p. 252).

A sociologist by training, and a writer for *The Monthly Review*, a socialist journal, Foster (1988) clearly presented a Marxist labor historian's outlook. In his article, *The Fetish of Fordism*, instead of concentrating on inter-personal conflicts and the departure of Marquis and Lee in explaining the change in company policies after 1921, Foster (1988) offered a more systemic view of both the birth and demise of the Sociological Department. Concerning the former, Foster, like Meyer, focused on union infiltrations and pressures, increasing wages elsewhere (wages that exceeded those of Ford's by early 1920s), and labor turnover, while concerning the latter, he focused on the depression of 1920-21, which hit the Ford Motor Company especially hard (total automobile sales dropped from 998,029 in 1919, to 530,780 in 1920) (Foster, 1987). Following the drastic fall in sales, the company underwent an equally drastic reorganization, involving mass layoffs and even more speeding-up of the production line; "the strategy of the Ford Motor Co. turned from one of 'welfare capitalism' to more ruthless forms of exploitation" (Foster, 1987; p. 20).

A labor historian with a neo-Marxist outlook, Meyer (1981) wrote *The Five Dollar Day: Labor Management and Social Control in the Ford Motor Company, 1908-1921*. In his now classic work, Meyer (1981) seems to be in general agreement with Foster (1987) as to the contributing factors facilitating the department's ascent and demise, and as to the significance and aims of its processes.

Clarence Hooker, associate professor of history in the Department of American Thought and Language at Michigan State University, author of many articles on labor history, devoted an article (1997a) and a book (1997b) to work at Ford's. In his article titled *Ford's Sociology Department and the Americanization Campaign and the*

Manufacture of Popular Culture Among Assembly Line Workers c. 1910-1917, Hooker presented the Sociological Department in the context of the wider Americanization movement taking place during that time, and noted the significance of the training offered by the Sociological Department to the creation of a working-class popular culture, and the assimilation of immigrant workers to it. Clarence Hooker's (1997b) book about Ford employees was titled *Life in the Shadows of the Crystal Palace 1910-1927: Ford Workers in the Model T Era*. In it, Hooker followed the same general line of investigation as in his article, although the book had a wider scope. Apart from stressing the influence of company policies and procedures to the development of a working-class popular culture, Hooker's book also aimed at describing the wider conditions of life for Ford workers.¹⁸

The importance of Henry Ford's contributions to modern America is reflected in the number of biographies written about him. There are at least thirty-five biographies with Henry Ford as the main subject, and even more featuring Ford as a partial subject. This study discusses only the few biographies that make more than rudimentary mention of the Sociological Department.¹⁹

Robert Lacey (1986) wrote an extensive biography of Henry Ford, in which he offered some interesting detail concerning line production and the Sociological Department. By early 1914, when Ford announced his five-dollar day plan, the idea of line production in industry was already under development. The Singer sewing machine factory, the McCormick reaper, and Samuel Colt's firearms companies were already using the "process line" method of production, which constructed the product as it passed through the factory "in a series of jerks" (Lacey, 1986; p. 104). Although this method was

very similar to Ford's 1914 line production, there was one major difference – no continuous flow of products as they passed the assembly line. The only industry employing an actually moving line before Ford was the dressing rail of the Chicago slaughter yards: "Butchers cut off legs and haunches as the carcasses traveled past – a sort of dis-assembly line" (Lacey, 1986; p. 104). Since the Ford Motor Company began production of the Model T at the Highland Park plant in early 1910, and at least until 1912, Model T sales had been doubling every year. 18,664 model Ts sold in 1909-10, 34,528 Model Ts sold in 1910-11, and 78,440 Model Ts sold in 1911-12.²⁰ The pressure for more efficiency and more production was a contributing factor to the rise of Ford's moving assembly line in the spring of 1913 in the magneto department at Highland Park (Lacey, 1986).²¹

In a biography of Henry Ford, albeit excluding the pre-Ford Motor Company years, David Lewis focused on Ford's public image. In his work, Lewis offered interesting insight as to the public relations side of Ford's operation, as well as to workers' and wider public expectations following the announcement of the Five-dollar day plan. In the week following the announcement of the plan, New York City press devoted fifty two columns – most of it front news – to Ford and his profit-sharing plan, while nationally the story received "more than 2,000,000 lines of favorable advertising on the front page of newspapers and thousands and thousands of editorial endorsements" (quoted in Lewis, 1976, p. 71). To many newspapers, Lewis concluded, "the five-dollar day was an economic second coming" (1976, p. 71).

An educator, historian, journalist, biographer, Allan Nevins is a major figure in the discipline of history. Nevins' bibliography shows he is a prolific writer, largely

specialized in American and British history, and in particular, British social history and American political (revolutionary and presidential) and industrial history. He is perhaps best known for his eight-volume *Ordeal of the Union*, the two-volume *The Emergence of Lincoln*, and his four-volume *The War for Union*. He is also known for his biographies of John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford. Two of his books, *Grover Cleveland* and *Hamilton Fish*, won Pulitzer Prizes. He worked as a journalist from 1913 to 1931, and from 1931 until 1958 was professor of American history at Columbia University, where he established the nation's first oral-history program.²²

As a scholar, Nevins was difficult to classify into the usual disciplinary categories. Perhaps this is because he was a prophet of the new and an apologist of the old, and ultimately the very embodiment of the transformations facing history as a discipline the last quarter of the twentieth-century. In his visionary presidential address to the American Historical Association in 1959, Nevins made a valiant effort to preserve scientific standards in historical inquiry, without allowing a shift of historical inquiry from its focus on human agency to a focus on large-scale systemic changes. Furthermore, Nevins' 1959 presidential address hinted at his own efforts to open up historical discourse to the wider public.²³

In his "official" biography of Henry Ford (Lacey, 1986; p. 162), Nevins (1957) offered invaluable information and insight concerning many aspects of the Sociological Department. Apart from the obvious organizational and managerial issues, Nevins also paid some attention to cultural issues, and in particular, issues of immigrant assimilation. He noted for example, that one of the most difficult tasks facing Ford investigators was "to convince irascible Slavs, Italians, or Greeks that the company

standards would be pleasanter and healthier than those they had brought from their native lands, or had formed in Detroit's tightly packed foreign settlements" (Nevins, 1957; p. 335).

Meyer and Roediger both noted that extreme alienation was one of the outcomes of Ford's line production, and they both critiqued existing literature for neglecting to see the importance of this consequence. Moreover, both Meyer and Roediger (as well as Hooker, 1997a; 1997b) offered a systemic rather than an individualistic account of Ford's production and labor management methods, which allowed them to consider the significance of other institutional factors (unions, labor turnover, etc.) as contributing to the rise of Fordism.

The history of the Ford Sociological Department is contested, not so much in its basic facts concerning specific actions, but in the historical interpretations of these actions. For example, although most if not all authors dealing with the issue at hand agreed on exactly what the department did and how, the interpretations of the factors contributing to its ascent and descent and the ultimate character and aims of the department seemed polarized. On the one hand, Marxist and neo-Marxist interpretations operated more on the systemic rather than the personal level, like the one Meyer (1981) offered, which presented the department as the outcome of economic and technological changes, as well as the outcome of labor concerns arising from class conflict. On the other hand, some authors presented the department mainly as a manifestation of Ford's humanitarian moment brought forth partly by large profits that line production facilitated, but also partly due to the presence of John R. Lee and Samuel Marquis. Nevins (1957) exemplifies this trend well. For example, while commenting on the spotters' abuses of

power concerning a particular fired worker, Nevins noted that "in the days of John R. Lee so abrupt a dismissal would have been impossible, and appeal against it easy; the main difficulty here was in the despotic enforcement" (1957, p. 515).²⁴ It is noteworthy that Nevins presented the Sociological Department ultimately as having been organized "to promote the welfare the company employees" (1957, p. 13).

Archival Sources

Two sources were invaluable to my study: first, the Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn, which houses most of the surviving documents of the Ford Sociological Department; and second the Reuther Library in Detroit, which houses collections relating to labor history, labor union archives in particular.

Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn houses the main bulk of the surviving records of Ford's Sociological Department. One of the most important artifacts is the department's manual of procedures (Acc. 280, Box 1), which includes instructions to investigators, as well as details on the general structure and procedures of the department. Of importance are also the S.S. Marquis inventory files (Acc. 63, and Acc. 293, Box 1), which include among other things, speeches, personal photographs, and press releases. Also available are the Ford Motor Company Plant newspapers, and the complete collection of the *Ford Times Magazine*.

The Reuther Library of Wayne State University in Detroit houses many interesting collections regarding labor in early twentieth-century Detroit, and as such it is invaluable to any research concerning the Ford Motor Company. Among them are labor union archives, and labor press collections of early twentieth-century. A distinctive

aspect of the Reuther Library is its labor journal and newspaper collection, which includes archives of proceedings of nearly all major national unions and of union and labor related national and local press, like the Industrial Workers of the World newspaper, *The Industrial Worker*. Reuther library also houses an extensive oral history collection, comprising recorded interviews with workers and union leaders, spanning the first half of the twentieth-century.

In this chapter, I have commented on the various published sources, primary and secondary, as well as the archival sources I used for this research. In the following chapter, I offer a description of the Ford Sociological Department, its structure, and aims.

CHAPTER V

THE FORD SOCIOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

This chapter focuses on the history, structure, and officially stated functions of the Ford Sociological Department. It is reminded that this study addressed descriptive questions revolving around the Sociological Department's structure, mission, policies, methods and functions, while analytical questions addressed issues such as the values and norms espoused and enforced by the company, the company's effectiveness in enforcing them, and their implications for ethnic, class, and gender relations, which are examined in subsequent chapters.

General Description of the Ford Sociological Department

In January 1914, Henry Ford stunned the world by announcing the now famous five-dollar day plan, which effectively doubled minimum wages for industrial autoworkers. Up to that time, the average daily wage for an unskilled worker in the automobile industry of Detroit was \$2.40 (May, 1990), while minimum wage at the Ford Motor Company stood at around \$2.70 (Compiling of Rates, S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293). Ford's announcement of the five-dollar-day angered the bulk of industrialists who saw it as a great threat (see for example Fitch, 1914; Abell, 1915; Marquis, 1916), excited workers, and created a mass influx of migrants to Detroit looking for jobs at Ford Motor Company. According to the five-dollar day (or profit-sharing) plan, workers' salaries were split into two portions: the basic wage part, and the profit-sharing part. The basic

wage remained about the same as it was before, at around \$2.70 per day. The profit-sharing part was designed in such a way as to maintain a minimum of \$5.00 per day for the workers. Under the plan, workers still earned a minimum of about \$2.70 per day as base salary, but if they complied with the plan's conditions revolving around work and family values, as well as thrifty habits, they could also qualify for another \$2.30 in profit-sharing. Thus, the profit-sharing portion gained by workers making \$2.50 was larger than that gained by employees already making \$4.50 a day. Consider Table 1 of hourly rates and corresponding profit-sharing rates (Compiling of Rates, S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293):

Table 1. Rate of Profit-Sharing as Part of Total Income

Rate per Hour (\$)	Profit-sharing Rate per Hour (\$)	Total Income per Hour (\$)	Total Income per Day (\$)
.80	.07 ½	.87 ½	7.00
.73	.11 3/8	.84 3/8	6.75
.68	.13 ¼	.81 ¼	6.50
.61	.17 1/8	.78 1/8	6.25
.54	.21	.75	6.00
.48	.23 7/8	.71 7/8	5.75
.43	.25 ¾	.68 ¾	5.50
.38	.27 5/8	.65 5/8	5.25
.34	.28 ½	.62 ½	5.00

The announcement of the five-dollar day plan, was given much publicity, and enthusiasm among workers soon followed. It came on January 12, 1914, with a press release stating that "the greatest and most successful [company] in the world would inaugurate the greatest revolution in... rewards for workers ever known in the industrial world" (in Hooker, 1997a; p. 108, also in Lewis, 1976; p. 70).

Interestingly, the conditions of the plan to which workers had to conform revolved more around personal/social characteristics than those related to work performance. Company management maintained that profit-sharing was a gift to the workers and not remuneration for services rendered. Marquis was emphatic on the issue: “There is no connection whatever between the employee’s labor and share of profits given him. His work in the factory; his efficiency and length of service; his steadfastness and loyalty are not taken into consideration in determining whether or not he is qualified to receive them” (Share of Profits – Wages, S. S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; p. 2). Also note that the so-called profit-sharing plan was only indirectly linked to actual company profits. As Levin stated, profit-sharing in 1914 “was not absolutely contingent on the earning of a definite sum by the company” (Levin, 1927a; p. 78).

So, according to the five-dollar day (or profit-sharing) plan, workers' salaries were split into the basic wage part, and the profit-sharing part. In order to qualify for profit-sharing, workers had to comply with the plan’s stipulations revolving around off-the-work behavior and attitudes. In Marquis’s words:

The moral and economic welfare of the men is the end of the work in which I am most interested. To understand this work one must keep in mind that profit-sharing is something to be attained. Profits are not given unconditionally... A man’s pay consists of two parts, given to him in two separate envelopes – his wage and his profits. The wage is conditional on skill and length of service. The profits are shared on condition that a man measures up to a given moral and economic standard (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, p. 13).

Initially, participation in the profit-sharing plan was limited to the following groups of employees (Levin, 1927b; pp. 78-79; also in Lee, 1916): men 22 and over, who took good care of their families if married, and of good habits (thrift, temperance, etc.); men under 22, and women of any age, if they were the sole supporters of dependants.

Initially then, the plan excluded married men who were either not living with, or did not take care of their families; single men under 22 with no dependents; and women with no dependents. In time the plan was extended to include more workers. For example, women (of good habits) over the age of 22 were allowed to share in profits by October 1916, while “in the course of time even single men of eighteen years ‘known to be living wholesomely and constructively’ were numbered with the other qualified groups” (Levin, 1927a; p. 79).

Henry Ford’s announcement of the five-dollar-day plan in early 1914 created its own dynamic of Detroit-bound immigration. The five-dollar day system was a brilliant coup, which provided an effective response to the major challenges facing industry in one brilliant stroke. In fact, Henry Ford himself considered his new system of management to be something of an “ultimate solution” to the labor problem (Fitch, 1914; pp. 549-550). It was indeed an exciting time for both management and workers. Fitch captured this excitement at Ford: "Fifty investigators are dashing about Detroit in Ford automobiles, accompanied by interpreters and armed with long lists of employees" (Fitch, 1914; p. 547).

Doubling the minimum wage for industrial workers, which the profit-sharing system did at the Ford Motor Company flabbergasted other employers, who saw it as a threat to their own existence, and excited workers who flocked to Detroit in the thousands for an opportunity to work for Ford. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the establishment of a five-dollar daily minimum salary was that the raise was given as “profit-sharing” and was not attached to the basic salary, which remained the same.

Profit-sharing was based on character traits, habits, and family and monetary management, rather than strictly on work related issues such as productivity.

In order to assess how the labor-force at Ford fared in light of the new scheme, Lee organized a "band of thirty men," chosen for their "peculiar fitness for the work," (Lee, 1916; p. 303), to man the Sociological Department and carry out the necessary investigations. The Department was created in March 1913, and a year later, in January 1914, immediately following the announcement of the five-dollar-day plan, it greatly increased in size as well as in the scope of its responsibilities. Its new responsibilities included the collection of data necessary to meet the stipulations of the profit-sharing plan, as well as the proper enforcement of the plan itself (Nevins, 1957).

The Ford profit-sharing system was an indelible part of the company's sociological project, and its enforcement comprised the most important and immediate responsibility for the Sociological Department. The following passage from Marquis shows how the Sociological Department was established to support the profit-sharing plan, but also how sociological investigators were selected:

It is a fact that while money helps a lot of people, it does demoralize some, and for that reason a corp of investigators, so called, was formed, whose duties were to call upon the employees at various intervals and counsel them when necessary in the matter of disposition of profits in a manner which would do the most constructive good for the individual. The men picked for this work were not those who had made a study of sociological work, but from the 13,000 odd men who were then working in our plant, we selected about 200 who were broadminded, conscientious and had good common sense (Acc. 293, S.S. Marquis Papers; p 2).

From 1914 to 1920, the Sociological Department employed varying numbers of investigators (later renamed "advisors"), from an initial number of 100, to a high of 200 and then to a low of 52 employees (Nevins, 1957; Meyer, 1981). Alan Strout reported

that by 1926, only thirteen men were employed by the Sociological Department (Sociological Department or Bureau, Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 96, Box 1). All the investigators were recruited from within the company itself, a point about which Lee was very proud (Lee, 1916).

The investigations of the Sociological Department included family, housing, and neighborhood conditions, as well as personal habits of the workers. A number of thorough and exhaustive investigations were set up to explore these issues. The guidance offered to employees by the Sociological Department took many forms. They would, for example, advise workers as to the company's conception of thrift, legal matters concerning real estate and issues revolving around social and economic behavior, including treatment of one's family, and ways to spend one's money. Furthermore, sociological investigators would intervene whenever deemed necessary and "encourage" workers to alter their behavior. For example, on one occasion, upon establishing that a worker neglected to take good care of his family, investigators withheld his share of the profits and gave it directly to his wife to meet family expenses.²⁵ Thus, the five-dollar day was part of Ford's new profit-sharing plan initiated in 1914, in an effort to "transform the attitudes and behavior of Ford workers" (Meyer, 1981; p. 123). The vessel for the implementation of this plan – the newly created Sociological Department – in effect was designed to be, and functioned as, a medium of social and personal transformation.

The first Head of the department, John R. Lee, was arguably one of the first modern personnel managers (Nevins, 1957). Lee was recruited from Keim Mills, a Buffalo based machine shop, purchased in 1911 by the Ford Motor Company to manufacture automobile parts (Nevins, 1957; Sorensen, 1962; Lacey, 1986).

The Sociological Department initially grew out of the Ford Motor Company Medical Department, which was set up to monitor workers' health, and also aimed partly at reducing absenteeism. In this sense, the medical department can be seen as the progenitor of all Ford's efforts at welfare capitalism. The moment of birth of the Sociological Department came on March 1913, in order to manage labor in accord with the newly developed line production. The department changed its name after Marquis took over in 1916 to "Educational Department," but otherwise functioned in the same way.

In 1917, Departmental procedures were simplified in order to ease the demand for manpower from the department, but also to counteract complaints about the overly intrusive nature of the sociological investigations. A memo dated September 10, 1917, by the Educational Department, states the following regarding the scheduling of worker investigation (S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293):

There has been a change in the Profit Sharing plan. In all its essential features it remains exactly as it has been from the date it was instituted. Men will continue to be hired on six months probation. They will be given Profits at the end of that time, provided they qualify for the same, requisite qualifications being exactly the same as in the past.

First and second investigations in the six months probation period will be made of every man hired in, just as in the past, with the exception that the first investigation will be made at the time of hiring instead of thirty days thereafter, as was formerly the case.

Following the six months period investigations will be made as deemed necessary by the Educational Department, but an effort will be made to eliminate investigations in those cases where it is felt to be unnecessary. A reduction of the number of investigations is the only change contemplated under the new policy of the Department.

The year 1921 is generally considered to be the end of the Sociological Department's significance in establishing labor relations and in determining and carrying out the company's sociological project. In short, 1921 is considered to be the time of

death of the department's original form and mission, due to Marquis's departure from the company.

Therefore, the first and most active period of the Ford Sociological Department began with its establishment in March 1913 under the leadership of John R. Lee, a few months before the announcement of the Five Dollar Plan, and ended in January 25, 1921, with a reorganization that culminated in the departure from the company of Rev. Marquis, Lee's successor. From then on, the Sociological Department's importance was downgraded to having merely advisory powers until its dissolution in 1949, and its succession by the Industrial Relations Department, which is still in operation today.

Marquis's departure from the company may signify the end of the initial stage of the Ford Motor Company Sociological Department, but it would be a mistake to think that his departure automatically and immediately put a stop to the policies established by the department. As Nevins put it, the "new labor regime... had gradually lost force over the preceding three years because of the company's inability to support the high level of real wages" (1957, p. 351). Furthermore, the department's effort to control both the work related behavior as well as the private lives of its workforce did not cease with Marquis's departure. Rather the opposite was true, as the enforcement of the harsh rules regulating worker's behavior became stricter. For example, the "never completely enforced" company rules regarding silence (no whistling, singing, or talking) at work, as well as the rule against sitting down, were more strictly (albeit less systematically perhaps) enforced after Marquis's departure. In fact, the company had hired "spotters" in order to report any infraction of these rules (Nevins, 1957; p. 515).

The founding of the Sociological Department would have far reaching effects, for the Ford Company, but also for U.S. society in general. This eight-year span of the Sociological Department's effective life, which in effect comprises the beginning and foundation of what came to be called "Fordism," is seen by many as Ford's humanitarian moment, under the guidance of reverend Marquis – "the brief golden age of the company, the Lee-Marquis era of social conscience" (Nevins, 1957; p. 345), or the "brief reign of benevolent paternalism" (Sward, 1948; p. 59).

Aims of the Sociological Department

The Ford Sociological Department was established in 1913, "to better the community; to improve home and housing conditions; and to make our employees better men and better citizens" (Marquis, "The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan;" S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. No. 293; p. 9).²⁶ In 1916, Rev. Samuel Marquis, a Detroit based Episcopalian minister (Sorensen, 1962) and Ford's personal confessor, took over and renamed the department "Educational," and the investigators "Advisors." Although little changed with this transformation, it made for better public relations. The aim of the educational department was "to provide for the mental, the physical, and the moral and economic, welfare of the men" (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, p. 10; S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293). Marquis enjoyed the respect of his parish at St. Paul's Church, where he applied the principles of "Social Christianity," and from there he led the effort to construct the Episcopal Cathedral in Detroit. Exhausted by his work at St. Paul's Cathedral, Marquis was advised by his doctor to take a leave of absence in early 1916 (Nevins, 1957; p. 332).²⁷ Henry Ford, who also admired Marquis, seized the opportunity and offered him

the directorship of the Sociological Department; "I want you, Mark, to put Jesus Christ in my factory" (Bryan, 1993; p. 206); Marquis accepted. The first thing Marquis did when he took over in 1916 was to change the name of the department to "Educational Department." The main reason for this move was that workers were beginning to express hostility to the Sociological Department's activities (Meyer, 1981).²⁸ The department's name change was not accompanied by any change of previous policies. On the contrary, under Marquis, the department's processes became even more standardized. In Marquis's own words:

Recently we have changed the name of the department. Formerly it was known as the Sociological Department. It is now called the Department of Education. The latter seemed to designate more truly the character of the work we are doing. For the same reason we changed the name of the men we call upon and advise our employees from Investigators to Advisors... In this Department of Education we attempt to do three things; namely, to provide for the mental, the physical, and the moral and economic, welfare of the men (The Ford Profit-sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, p. 10).

The official aims of the department included the amelioration of the workforce. In particular, it aimed "to uplift the community; make for better manhood and character of his employees; to raise their morals and better their surroundings and modes of living; foster habits of thrift; to make pensions and sick benefit unnecessary; to provide for the rainy day which everyone is liable to encounter and to generate and fix in their minds such ideas of right living as go to make better American citizens" (S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; p. 1). Importantly, through the profit-sharing system, Ford's sociological project attempted, on the one hand, to develop and enforce a set of goals for workers, ranging from values and attitudes, to their material manifestations, such as the purchase of a family home and an automobile, and on the other hand, to afford workers the means to achieve the goals set by the department: "The plan as outlined by Mr. Ford is unique,

in that it not only creates a desire for the better things, but it also gives a man the wherewith to get them” (S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; p. 1).

In essence, Ford’s sociological project aimed at Americanizing the newly arrived immigrants (and modifying its American workers) into a middle-class minded American working-class. This story is about the company’s efforts to engineer American, working-class (family) *men* out of the thousands of mainly southern and eastern European immigrants that flocked to Detroit: “We have opened the great libraries to him, and taught him to use them; we have given him a wage to provide for a LIFE – not a LIVING; greatest of all, he has been placed in the classification of a MAN” (editorial titled Assimilation through Education: What the Ford English School is Doing to Help the Foreign-born Ford Employee in *Ford Times*, vol. 8, no. 9, June 1915; p. 411). The then newly formed Sociological Department was called upon to regulate the application of Ford’s new labor relations scheme.

Even as late as 1946, only three years before its final dissolution, the Sociological Department still had similar aims as the ones stated in its first years of existence in the 1910s. In particular, the official aim of the Department according to its Manual of Procedures (Accession 280, Box 1) in 1946 was "by its services pertaining to the employees' personal problems, to help maintain the employee on the job as a well-integrated and reasonably adjusted individual and thus, a productive workman."

The profit-sharing plan that began in 1914, virtually collapsed under the changing times by the early 1920s. Ford’s minimum wages, double the average in 1914, were no longer considered high in 1921 due to inflation (Levin, 1927b). Indeed, in a 1926 article

published in *The Christian Century*, Reinhold Niebuhr (Ford's Wages, Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 93, Box 1) declared:

Years ago when the five dollar a day minimum was established, which meant thirty dollars per week, the Ford boast that an adequate wage obviated the necessity for charity was not an idle one. Today it is an idle boast, for living prices have well-nigh doubled and the weekly wage still hovers about thirty dollars... the actual wage is immeasurably lower than in 1913... The statistics of practically every charity reveal not only a proportionate but frequently a disproportionate number of Ford workers who are the recipients of charity.

Still, the values promoted by the profit-sharing system did not wither. The enforcement of some may have changed or become more indirect.

In this chapter, I described the structure and aims of the Sociological Department as an instrument of the Ford sociological project. Although some primary sources were used in the construction of this chapter, secondary sources were also utilized. In the next chapter, I focus on the actual constellation of values that the Department attempted to instill in the company's workers. The bulk of the findings section for this study can be said to begin with this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

VALUES AND NORMS IN THE FORD SOCIOLOGICAL PROJECT

In this section, I examine the constellation of values and norms involved in the sociological project of the Ford Motor Company, in particular those associated with race, class, and gender relations. As the examination is necessarily historical, the discussion also includes comments on the historical conditions, on the national and local (Detroit) levels, within which the Ford Motor Company operated. In order to better explicate the main relevant ideologies and historical circumstances of the day, I begin with a discussion on immigration, which is followed by discussions on managerial ideologies, as well as Americanism and the Americanization campaign. Following the initial examination of the wider societal ideologies and circumstances under which the Ford Motor Company operated, I describe the main values relating to labor, as existed in wider society, but also as they were incorporated into the Ford Motor Company discourse and policies. These values included diligence, skills, temperance, housing, racial health, and thrift. This chapter ends with a discussion on the structure of the Ford Motor Company profit-sharing plan, and its implications on values and norms. The structure and enforcement of the profit-sharing plan are seen as part of a company effort at “human engineering,” which itself can be seen as applied sociological action. This short discussion on applied sociology also serves as the entry into the next chapter, where I will be further discussing the Ford sociological project as applied sociology.

Immigration

From 1880 to 1920, the United States witnessed yet another wave of immigration from Europe. Unlike the previous immigration wave that took place from 1830 to 1880 involving north-western Europeans – “the old immigrants” – these “new immigrants” came from southern, central, and eastern Europe, and were primarily Roman Catholic and Jewish (Jenkins, 2001; p. 112). Indeed, from 1890 through 1917, South Europe contributed 24.3% of immigrants to the U.S., central Europe contributed 27.1%, while eastern Europe contributed 18.5% (Burnett, 2001; p. 118). During the same time, northern Europe contributed 20.2%. Totally, Europe contributed 90.1% of U.S. immigration. The new immigrants mainly congregated in the Northern industrial and mid-western cities of the United States (Burnett, 2001). In 1914, the first year of profit-sharing at the Ford Motor Company, European immigration to the United States amounted to 87% of total immigration. In particular, central Europe contributed around 26% of immigrants, eastern Europe contributed some 23%, and southern Europe contributed about 28%. During the same year, Northwestern European immigration made for only 10% of the total (United States Census Bureau, 1975; p. 105).

During the first twenty years of the twentieth-century, the situation in Detroit followed this wider pattern of U.S. immigration. Indeed, during the first two decades of the twentieth-century, some eight million immigrants entered Detroit, most of whom were southern, central, and eastern Europeans. The waves of immigration from Europe decreased to a trickle though, after the start of World War II. In this, Detroit can be seen as a microcosm of the general immigration and immigrant labor trends that characterized the north-eastern and mid-western United States of the period.

Most of the tens or hundreds of thousands that flocked to Detroit after the announcement of the five-dollar-day did not fit the description of an industrial proletariat, although they would soon adapt to the image. Among the initial wave of mass employment were southern and eastern European immigrants, many of whom came from rural areas. As Bernstein (1997) said,

Many were immigrant peasants from Southern and Eastern Europe who lacked both a craft tradition or industrial experience, and brought with them many preindustrial work values including high absenteeism and turnover, lateness, and output restriction. To deal with these problems Ford established the five dollar day for eight hours of work, a pay scale far higher than that paid by most manufacturers in January 1914. This was clearly an incentive to get foreign workers, blacks, and "substandard men" (those who were blind, deaf, tubercular, or epileptic) to accept the repetitive and demanding labor of the assembly line (p. 192).

The waves of immigration from southern and eastern Europe during the first twenty years of the twentieth-century were followed, with some overlap, by the Great Migration of African Americans from the American South. Indeed, the start of World War I, coupled with restrictive U.S. legislation concerning immigration, can be seen as partly facilitating the Great Migration, which lasted roughly from 1910 to 1930 (Peterson, 1979). During these years, the relative presence of African Americans in Detroit rose from 1% (5,700 people) to 8% (120,000 people) in 1930 (Peterson, 1979). Although a major demographic transition, with many social implications, the Great Migration has received less attention than the southern and eastern European immigration that preceded it (Peterson, 1979). Table 2 shows the size of foreign-born immigration, in relation to the Black migration from the South in the industrial cities of the North (Collins, 1997; p. 608).

Table 2. Foreign-Born Immigration and Black Migration from the South

Years	Net Immigration	Black Migration from the South	Net immigration to black migration ratio
1870-1880	1,876,000	68,000	28:1
1880-1890	3,757,000	88,000	43:1
1890-1900	2,888,000	185,000	16:1
1900-1910	5,188,000	194,000	27:1
1910-1920	2,888,000	555,000	5:1
1920-1930	2,443,000	903,000	3:1
1930-1940	-122,000	480,000	1:4
1940-1950	974,000	1,581,000	1:2

Many of the African Americans arriving in Detroit from the South were rural workers fresh in the big city and line production. As a matter of fact, even local urbanites were not yet adapted to the rigorous and dehumanizing demands of line production, for it was the Ford Motor Company that introduced the moving line production, and particularly on such a mass scale. Finally, the decrease of European immigration, coupled with the entry of the U.S. into the war (developments that allowed the Southern migration), facilitated the entry of women into industrial work. Most of these women, like Southern Blacks and European immigrants, were not already established as an urban proletariat. On the contrary, most of the members of these groups did not have industrial work experience, but were previously either peasants, farmers, artisans, or homemakers.

Martin (1944) reported that of all the groups that flocked to Detroit up to the end of the 1930s, “the least urbanized and the least assimilated group... was the Negroes” (p.

280). By the late 1930s, there were about 25,000 African Americans employed in the auto industry of Detroit, the majority of whom worked at Ford Motor Company while many plants refused to hire African Americans (Martin, 1944). African American workers at Ford "manned the foundries and in general were assigned the most arduous tasks with only a few skilled jobs open to them" (Martin, 1944; p. 281).²⁹

Managerial Ideologies

A short examination of the dominant managerial ideologies of the day will allow us to view the Ford sociological project in the context of the values and norms that were prominent in the U.S. and Detroit at the time. Managerial ideologies may be defined as belief systems that serve as value clusters, providing the basis for managerial practices. In the conception and operationalization of labor relations, Henry Ford and his managers operated under their own version of scientific management ideology, coupled with an insistence on open-shop policies which lasted until 1941. The open-shop ideology, which preceded the ideology of scientific management, aimed at safeguarding the absolute authority of employers over their workforce and against labor unions. Ford's open-shop and scientific management policies were coupled with the enforcing, rather than just encouraging, of a Franklinian type of thrift (Nevins, 1957). Scientific management, which originated with Frederick Taylor's (1911, 1967) work, aimed at exercising that authority in an efficient manner, and in light of the increasing complexity of organizations (Bendix, 1956). It involved the de-skilling of labor through simplification of work, and the centralization of decision-making power to the management level (see Rupert, 1995).

Whether Taylor's ideas of scientific management directly influenced Henry Ford and his managers is somewhat disputed. Frederick Taylor had published his seminal work, *Principles of Scientific Management*, in 1911, and became an instant success. In the same year, it became famous in Detroit. Charles Sorensen, Ford's Production Manager and Henry Ford's right hand man, stated that the connection was basically a myth, and claimed that "No one at Ford – not Mr. Ford, Couzens, Flanders, Wills, Pete Martin, nor I – was acquainted with the theories of the 'father of scientific management,' Frederick Taylor" (Sorensen, 1962, p. 46). In his biography of Ford, Robert Lacey (1986) argued that "one craze that Couzens certainly did subscribe to was the science of Taylorism which hit Detroit around this time" (p. 107). Whether Ford and his executives developed their system of management independently of Taylor, or whether there was indeed a direct or indirect influence, the fact remains that Ford's policies and methods comprised a sort of scientific management, with elements similar to that developed by Taylor. In Levinson's (2002) words, "Ford's and Taylor's ideas... correlate very strongly" (p. 302). In any case, Taylor's scientific management, and the policies that came to be known as Fordism can be seen as a "second industrial revolution" (Meyer, 1989).

Americanism and Americanization: Making an American Industrial Working Class

Exactly what Americanism and Americanization was is unsurprisingly contested, for there were various interpretations of what it meant to be or to become American (Barrett, 1992). A wide, critical definition can conceptualize Americanization as "the broader acculturation of immigrants, the day-to-day process by which they came to

understand their new situation and to find or invent ways of coping with it” (Barrett, 1992; p. 997). A more traditional outlook viewed Americanization in its conservative and nativistic connotations: “It was something the native middle class did to immigrants, a coercive process by which elites pressed WASP values on immigrant workers, a form of social control” (Barrett, 1992; p. 997).

Below, I show that the notions of industrialism, Fordism, and Americanism are very much interrelated. While Americanism related to a projected typical, homogeneous character (or type) that the American people were supposed to have, Americanization referred to the actual processes of socialization and enculturation by which newly arrived immigrants would acquire the traits thought of as core values and norms for Americans. Some go as far as arguing that Americanism actually stood for industrialism (Susman, 1974). Furthermore, Susman (1974) equated Americanism of the 1920s and 30s with Fordism: “Above all, perhaps, as many Europeans already knew in the 1920s, Americanism meant *Fordismus*” (p. 450).

By 1914, thousands of United States employers espoused the tenets of Americanism and joined the Americanization campaign (Nelson, 1995). The Ford Motor Company adopted a pioneering role in the campaign. Indeed, Hill (1919) called the Americanization program at Ford, “one of the most extensive and best organized efforts yet made by an industry for the Americanization of its foreign-born labor” (p. 633), while Nelson (1995) called it “the most ambitious ‘industrial Americanization’ program” (p. 157).

The teaching of the English language to immigrants emerged as the most important aspect of Americanization. Indeed, according to Theodore Roosevelt, the

“fundamental step in Americanization was acceptance of the English tongue” (Nevins, 1957, vol. 1; p. 557). Detroit in particular witnessed a massive campaign for Americanization of its foreign workforce. In this campaign, the Board of Education and the Board of Commerce secured the support of the leaders of industry to teach their foreign workers the language, and ways of their new home in what came to be known as the “Americans First” campaign (Mason, 1916; Carlson, 1970). While most employers encouraged the attendance of evening schools set up to accommodate immigrants who wanted to learn English, they did not require it, nor did they organize company-owned schools for their own workforce. This is exactly what the Ford Motor Company did. Under the auspices of the Sociological Department, the Ford School for the English Language was created, with the assistance of YMCA associate Dr. Peter Roberts, “the leading authority” on teaching English to immigrants (Mason, 1916; p. 200). Note that there is a question of whether Roberts was actually head of the school or whether he just helped in setting it up (the school also used his textbooks). Apart from one reference in Hooker (1997a), which states that Roberts actually ran the Ford English School, no other reference was found in company discourse, or public literature to suggest that Roberts actually headed the school. Lee (1916) put it thus: “We sought out Dr. Roberts – he came to Detroit, and there was organized the plan for giving all non-English-speaking employes a good basic knowledge of the English language through this system” (p. 306). The likelihood that Roberts merely trained Ford’s volunteered teachers at the start of the English School is supported by Nevins (1957, vol. 1), and Korman (1967).

The first order of business for Americanizers was to teach the English language to immigrants. Americanizers understood the cultural implications of language, and did not

see it merely as a mechanical medium through which people communicate their needs: “The alien who does not know the English language will never understand America” (Roberts, 1920; p. 68). Americanization was not merely the occupation of the state, social clubs, and private institutions. It was actually a process in which employers, and particularly industrialists, were of central importance: “These manufacturers offered and sometimes, as in the case of Henry Ford, required their immigrant workers to attend courses in English and citizenship. The courses aimed to instill American values and habits among the immigrants and also to acquaint these immigrants, many from preindustrial backgrounds, with factory discipline” (Forbes & Lemos, 1981; p. 152).

Americanization meant nation building. When Ford was saying “we are making men” this meant they were making a particular kind of man – a “middle-class minded” working-class American. The Ford Motor Company was a pioneer in the Americanization project, to the extent that some immigration policies and procedures were modeled after the Ford Motor Company’s “educational” and “welfare” policies. The company offered positive sanctions (profit-sharing) to those immigrant workers who enrolled in its educational program, while basically getting rid of those who did not comply. Americanization at Ford was a success story, its achievement exemplified by the fact that whereas in 1914 about 65% of employees were aliens, in 1916 more than half of the workforce that had by that time doubled in size, were citizens (Nevins, 1957, vol. 1).

Diligence and Industry: The Virtues of Work

The notion of diligence was a main theme of American managerial ideologies concerning labor during the early twentieth-century (Bendix, 1956, Bernstein, 1997). Indeed not unlike today, many blamed poverty on laziness (Bernstein, 1997), one of the “bad habits” that Ford’s sociological project was meant to eradicate. The virtues of diligence and industry were praised by Ford public discourse, and were enforced by the policies of the Sociological Department. Indeed, the promotion of diligence and industry were major themes in Ford’s sociological project. According to the *Ford Times*, “No abilities, however splendid, can command success without intense labor and persevering application” (Vol. 8, no. 3; December 1914; p. 127; available at the Benson Ford Research Center). Intense labor, and its persevering application were ensured through Ford’s moving assembly line, which demanded a steady, and fast-going pace.

Monitoring absentees was one of the first responsibilities of sociological investigators, and remained as such, during the 1930s, when the department was greatly reduced in size and scope of responsibility. A front-page editorial in *Ford Times* (vol. 8, no. 9; June 1915) titled Labor, stated:

Labor was the primal curse, but it was softened into mercy, and made the pledge of cheerful days, and nights without a groan.

Labor rids us of three great evils – irksomeness, vice, and poverty.

Nothing is denied to well-directed labor, and nothing is ever to be attained without it.

Men seldom die of hard work; activity is God's medicine. The highest genius is willingness and ability to do hard work. Any other conception of genius makes it a doubtful, if not a dangerous, possession.

A steady application to work is the healthiest training for every Individual, so it is the best discipline of a state. Honorable industry always travels the same road with enjoyment and duty, and progress is altogether impossible without it.

Labor is one of the great elements of society – the great substantial interest on which we all stand. Not feudal service, or predial toil, or the irksome drudgery by one race of mankind subjected, on account of their color, to another; but labor, intelligent, manly, independent, thinking and acting for itself, earning its own wages, accumulating those wages into capital, educating childhood, maintaining worship, claiming the right of the elective franchise, and helping to uphold the great fabric of the State – that is American labor; and all my sympathies are with it, and my voice, till I am dumb, will be for it (p. 384).

Labor union discourse regularly featured articles criticizing Ford's intensive line production work, and presented Ford's high wages as merely an effective means to attract workers to this type of work; a former employee stated: "You've got to work like hell in Ford's. From the time you become a number in the morning until the bell rings for quitting time you have to keep at it. You can't let up. You've got to get out production... and if you can't get it out, you get out" (Cruden, 1928; p. 2).

Skills

It was not only the European and Southern U.S. peasants that flocked to Detroit that were inexperienced as a proletariat. Even the pre-existing workers had to transform their ideas concerning their relationship with their work and employer after the introduction of the moving assembly line, and the reorganization of production, which involved the mechanization of production and the centralization of power. These skilled workers/artisans, most of whom were of northern European ancestry (especially British and German) would find that their skills were no longer needed. Rather, most factory positions could now be manned with workers having less than two days of training. It is characteristic that between 1910 and 1920, the automobile industry moved from a 75% skilled force, to a 10% (Peterson, 1979; Also see *The Auto Industry and its Workers*,

prepared by the Labor Research Association; *Labor Age*, April 1929; pp. 3-5; Robert W. Dunn Collection, Acc. 96, Box 2). As Meyer (1981) argued:

Molders, coremakers, and machinists were all traditional skilled craftsmen. They had long apprenticeships, high levels of skill, and high wages. They were highly skilled mechanics—the aristocrats in American metal shops and factories. Yet, in the Ford factory, industrial technology and work re-organization so diluted and so undermined their craft skills that a man off the street could learn their jobs in a matter of a few days (p. 52).

In short, following the development of the moving assembly line, and the establishment of the profit-sharing system at Ford, even skilled workers were no longer able to determine their own pace, technique, or innovative practice.

Temperance

The idea that temperance makes for better citizens and workers was of course not something invented by Ford. The temperance movement had existed in the United States for almost a century before the Ford Motor Company was even created (Gusfield, 1955, 1963). Still, the first decades of the twentieth-century witnessed an intensification of the movement, to the point where in 1920, the government officially codified their goals into policy, by passing the laws of prohibition on the sale of alcohol. Part of the dominant ideology of the day was that some immigrant groups, such as the Irish and German, were intemperate by nature, or by cultural conditioning, and thus were in need of reform (Gusfield, 1955). Indeed, all working-class people (mainly immigrants) were seen as suspicious regarding alcohol consumption. A favorite slogan of the temperance movement in the nineteenth century was that “drink is the curse of the working classes;” acceptance of temperance then, became “a mode of assimilation into middle-class life”

(p. 225). Yet, it is interesting to note, and relevant to what later became Ford policy, that “it is not drinking per se that is emphasized [by the temperance movement] but the drinking problems of the poor and the working classes” (p. 226). Therefore, Ford’s insistence on temperance among his workforce, and the Ford Motor Company’s inclusion of alcohol control as part of profit-sharing and investigations, was done in context of the main ideologies of the day regarding the “bad habits” of immigrants. Note that the value of temperance falls squarely within that constellation of values Max Weber called the “protestant ethic,” particularly the protestant doctrines of “the virtue of ascetic qualities of industry, thrift, discipline, punctuality, and sobriety” (Gusfield, 1963; p. 33).

Owning and Maintaining a Home: The Desire of “Every Right-Minded Man”

Another primary concern of the Sociological Department, apart from, but interrelated with Americanization, was the issue of worker housing. Indeed, home conditions were one of the variables that affected whether a worker could participate in profit-sharing or not. The company policy was to relocate its workforce, whose majority resided in the ethnic neighborhoods of Detroit, into working-class housing (called “middle-class housing” by the company) around the Ford plants, in Dearborn. Indeed, during the first year of the profit-sharing plan, 13,000 families moved from ethnic enclaves in Detroit, to integrated housing deemed more appropriate by the company (Nevins, 1957, vol. 1). Furthermore, while in 1914 almost one in five employees were found to be living in “poor” homes, within two years the proportion fell to 2%. Similarly, the proportion of employees found to be living in “poor” neighborhoods fell, from 20% in 1914 to 1% in 1916 (Nevins, 1957, vol. 1).

Catering to boarders was a home industry that was booming in industrializing Detroit. Many immigrants rented rooms, or even beds within homes, some to save money to buy property, others to send back to the home country. Catering to the boarders was more often than not the responsibility of females. This practice was condemned by the company, which essentially forced workers to buy rather than rent living quarters, and practically prohibited workers' wives from engaging in boarding activities, thereby diminishing women's power to contribute to family economy. Indeed, any effort at economic activity by family members considered dependent on a Ford worker was seen by the company as a sign of greed rather than as evidence of thrift or entrepreneurship. Lee cautioned his investigators to be strict when faced with boarders (Lee's Talk to First Group): "Now, here is a man who works here: he has seventeen boarders; his wife takes care of the house, and his kids take care of themselves. He is crowding out of his own life and his wife's life, all the pleasures and joy there is on account of his greed to get the money from his boarders" (p. 1).

Racial Health and Other Attitudes

Assimilation of the various racial or ethnic groups into "mainstream" American culture, which in effect consisted of Anglo-conformity, was generally favored, encouraged, and at times enforced. Amalgamation on the other hand, meaning the actual interbreeding, of different groups, was more cautiously approached. In general, amalgamation of what were perceived as similar groups was accepted, or even encouraged (i.e. northern, eastern, and southern Europeans), while amalgamation of "dissimilar" groups (i.e. racial groups – European and African or Asian) was

discouraged. In their *Textbook of Sociology* published in 1905, Dealey and Ward (1905) argued that:

Progress results from the fusion of unlike elements. This is creative, because from it there results a third something which is neither the one nor the other, but different from both, and something new and superior to either. But these elements, although they must be unlike, must possess a certain degree of similarity so as not to be incompatible and unassimilable (sic). It must be cross fertilization and not hybridization. All cultures are supposed to be assimilable. Whatever is human must have some points of agreement. Still, there are some races whose culture differs so widely from that of others that they seem to form an exception to this law. They are theoretically, but not practically, assimilable (pp. 212-213).

In an article arguing for the superiority of hybrids, Park (1931) argued that tests measuring the “innate racial capacity” in actuality most likely measure the level of cultural, and educational attainment rather than any biological capacity. Yet, Park conceded that, “in general... the intelligence tests have shown that at the present moment the intellectual *niveau* [note: niveau means level] of the Negro is consistently below that of the white man (p. 537). Although Park argued that mulattoes are generally superior to their parent races (or at least from the “inferior” one of the parent races), he acknowledged that “there is a widely accepted theory that the result of a union between white and black, or indeed between white and any coloured and backward people, is a breed which seems to combine all the weaknesses and vices of both parent stocks and none of the virtues of either” (p. 544). These ideas of the dangers of racial amalgamation maintained racial boundaries essentially intact: “intermarriage rates for the Jews and the Negroes are less than those of all other national or racial groups” (p. 537). Indeed, even those who maintained a critical outlook on the issue of “race purity,” were quick to acknowledge the “dangers” of racial amalgamation. For example, Batten (1908), although critical of “the principle of the struggle for existence,” which was similar to

Ward's concept of "race wars," was careful to note that "it must be admitted that this principle is of great service in that it detects the unfit and eliminates them" (p. 237).

Closson (1897) differentiated between three races in Europe: *Homo Europaeus* (dolicephalic blond), *Homo Alpinus* (brachycephalic, Celtic, or Celta-Slav), and the Mediterranean type (otherwise known as southern dolicephalic, or dolicephalic brown), and contrasted them in relation to wealth. The resulting order was presented somewhat as a loose hierarchy of European groups regarding capabilities. In this hierarchy, unsurprisingly, *Homo Europaeus* was highest, followed by *Homo Alpinus*, and then by the Mediterranean type.

Reinsch (1905) provided a good description of how American social scientists in the first decade of the twentieth-century saw the "relative capacity for progress" (p. 146) of the African race. Reinsch found that the overall characteristics of the *Negro race* included: "Low social organization, and consequent lack of efficient social action" (p. 149); "lack of social fellow-feeling" (p. 150); "deficiency... on the side of the mechanical arts" (p. 151); an "art-sense... [that] is rudimentary" (p. 152); and "a powerful strain of sensuality in negro nature, which swallows up all the best energies after puberty has been reached" (p. 155). In the face of "many investigators" denying the "capacity of the negro to advance in the scale of civilization," because of "the fact that the cranial sutures of the negro close at a very early age," Reinsch argued that "even if we accept this unfavorable view, however, it does not necessarily follow that the negro race is permanently uncivilizable (p. 154). Rather, Reinsch concluded that environmental and social conditions played a more pronounced role than "the physiological, personal incapacity of the negro" (p. 154). In fact, given that "in the past the negro race has shown no tendency

toward higher development, except under the tutelage of other races” (p. 156), Reisch suggested that a “civilizing policy” (p. 164) was in order, i.e., “as the African natives are especially deficient on the side of the mechanical arts, the development of industrial education is of great importance” (p. 159). Although Reisch’s article did not refer strictly to African Americans, his views on the characteristics of the race as a whole were typical of the social science literature of the day.

Apart from examining Progressive era journals for articles relating to social relations, I also examined a number of introductory sociology textbooks in order to generally assess the sociological discourse concerning race, class, and gender relations during the first quarter of the twentieth-century.

Park and Burgess (1921) considered the social and behavioral characteristics exhibited by various racial groups to be innate rather than socially constructed. In their words:

The temperament of the Negro, as I conceive it, consists in a few elementary but distinctive characteristics, determined by physical organizations and transmitted biologically. These characteristics manifest themselves in a genial, sunny, and social disposition, in an interest and attachment to external, physical things rather than to subjective states and objects of introspection, in a disposition for expression rather than enterprise and action... He is, so to speak, the lady among the races (pp. 139).

Dealey (1920) considered the amalgamation of African Americans and European Americans as posing a “serious danger to racial vigor” (p. 378), whereas the amalgamation of southern and eastern Europeans would produce a “future American [who] will have in his veins a strong infusion of Romance and Slavic blood, adding thereby imaginative qualities to the somewhat prosaic Anglo-Saxon mind” (p. 380).

Dealey (1920) further explained that “a vigorous racial stock makes no mistake in amalgamating with a similar stock of similar cultural development; the resultant is regularly better than the component parts... If however, higher and lower races are artificially united under the forms of a common civilization, the consequences are both good and bad” (p. 449). What Dealey meant by good and bad consequences was essentially that the higher races suffer while the lower races are elevated. This, for him, carried effects that were “on the whole disastrous to social welfare and race survival. For it means that the better elements in a race die out, their ranks are recruited from the more capable members of presumably inferior stocks...” (p. 450).

In all, although beginning to become contested as to the degree, social scientific knowledge of the day viewed race, and its perceived accompanying characteristics as more or less innate, and thus difficult to override. Furthermore, there was a general agreement as to the hierarchy of races, which saw “white” as more developed than “brown” and “brown” as more developed than “black.” Each of these races (or stocks) was seen as hierarchically structured itself, with the various nationalities (sometimes referred to as races) that comprise them being vertically stratified (i.e. dolicephalic blond, brachycephalic, and dolicephalic brown). One of the main questions then being contested in social scientific discourse was the degree of intervention by the state and other agencies necessary for the welfare of society, but which would not negatively affect progress.

Values and Norms Underlying the Ford Profit-Sharing System

As we have already seen, the requirements for a worker to qualify for profit-sharing related to character, habits, and number of dependents, rather than to work performance or length of service. Marquis, who took over the Sociological Department from Lee in 1915, was quite explicit regarding terms used in the plan, such as thrift, habits, and home conditions, although his definitions may seem overly simplistic in today's social science discourse. He codified the qualifications for profit-sharing as follows (Qualifications for Profit Sharing, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293):

A single man with no dependents should have the following qualifications:

- In the employ of the Company six months.
- Twenty-two years of age. (Verified up to 26 years)
- Home conditions good.
- Habits good.
- Proved signs of thrift.

The qualifications of a single man with proved total dependent whom he is properly supporting are the same as above, with the exception that he need not be twenty-two years of age.

The qualifications of a married man are as follows:

- In the employ of the Company six months.
- Living with and properly supporting his wife and family.
- Legal marriage assurance or Investigator's affirmative opinion, preferably the former.
- Home conditions good.
- Habits good.
- Thrifty.

A woman who has immediate blood relation totally dependent upon her may also participate in the sharing of the profits, providing she has the following qualifications:

- In the employ of the Company six months.
- Home conditions good.
- Habits good.
- Thrifty.

Workers that unquestionably exceeded in all requirements of the profit-sharing plan were put on an (secret) honor roll. These workers were practically immune from any investigation. In order to qualify for inclusion in the honor roll, workers had to comply with the following (Honor Roll, S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293):

Married Men

Should be thirty years of age, living with and taking good care of their families; of excellent habits and positively no domestic troubles; home conditions beyond reproach; unquestionably thrifty and with at least one year in the Company's service.

Single Men

Should be thirty-five years of age; habits unquestionable; home conditions beyond reproach; an excellent showing of thrift, even beyond that of a married man; and with three or more years constant service with the company.

The original structure of the profit-sharing plan was somewhat modified after 1916, to include women with no dependents. The official minimum age for single men with no dependents was reduced to 21. It is evident that the three main issues revolved around home conditions, habits, and thrift. That a company instigated a profit-sharing plan based on character and behavior rather than on job performance alone may be of interest, but of even greater interest may be the way that the company operationalized the assessment of character, and its own intervention where it deemed necessary.

Ford Operationalization of Terms

Although the structure of the profit-sharing system reveals something of the values espoused and promoted by the company, what is perhaps of more interest is the vagueness of the terms "good habits" and "thrifty." Still, Marquis provided explanations to his investigators on how to verify marriages, how to verify age, how to assess the

status of dependents, the financial state of the worker (including descriptions of how to assess the quality of loans as investments), and of course habits, home conditions, etc.

It is important to note that one of the concerns of the day was that a sharp increase in the wages of workers would have a “bad effect” on the workers (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; p. 9). It was believed that workers were not necessarily able to handle the raise, which in turn could fuel the expression of what were seen as unsociable acts, such as drinking and gambling. Marquis himself believed that this would be true had it not been for the services offered by the Sociological Department to workers (“The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan,” S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; p. 9).

Although quite open-ended, Marquis's description of how to assess habits did offer some guidance to investigators (“Habits,” S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293):

To grant a share of profits to a confirmed drunkard, gambler, or to one addicted to any other evil habit, would be largely instrumental in promoting his degradation, and quickening his downfall...

One attempt is not always sufficient to bring about the desired results; but as one of the principles of the Ford Plan is to elevate mankind, every conceivable effort should be made to reform an unfortunate of this type and instill him with new ambition, which will enable him to have higher and better ideals.

Marquis noted that the requirement for good home conditions could not be objectively set at the same standard for all employees, but that each case was to be examined and judged individually. For example, Marquis noted that sociological investigators should not insist that a worker who was deeply in debt radically increase spending on the home, but that a sense of good measure should be applied. On the other end of the spectrum, Marquis warned that investigators be aware of the difference between “comforts” and “luxuries.” Although spending regarding comforts was considered positive, the buying of luxuries was not favored. Instead, Marquis reminded

that regular investment in savings (for a rainy day) was to be promoted (“Home Conditions,” S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293).

Sobriety was a central theme in the structure of the profit-sharing system. Indeed, intemperance was sometimes seen as an innate trait of some racial groups, and blamed for many of Progressive era social problems. An excerpt from a letter written by a high ranking Ford official (Liebold) dated February 22, 1915 shows how the company saw liquor consumption as detrimental (Acc. 940, Box. 17): “Intemperance is the most destructive factor we have to contend with in the employment of many thousands of men, and it means daily absentees, weekly brawls, inefficiency and final discharge.”

Finally, workers’ attitude toward investigators was important to the company, for it was seen as an indicator of worker disposition, in particular concerning the company. Therefore, lack of cooperation meant, among other things, a show of disloyalty to the company. Investigators were asked by Marquis to make a note of the employee’s attitude towards them during the investigation interview: “It is not necessary to make an elaborate explanation, but simply a word or two, for instance, ‘Favorably,’ ‘Very favorably,’ or ‘Disgruntled.’ The investigator must do nothing to aggravate an employee, but will be firm with him in regard to the rules of the profit sharing plan” (Attitude, S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293).

Human and Societal Engineering as Applied Social Science

During the early twentieth-century, applied sociology was in its infancy. It was not until 1906 that Lester Ward published his “Applied Sociology,” which became perhaps the most influential work in early American applied social science. Applied

sociology was seen as a synonym of such terms as “human engineering” (a term that was favored by psychologists; see for example Fish, 1917), or “societal engineering” (a term favored by sociologists; see for example Giddings, 1924), or merely “engineering.” “Once admit the conception of value into sociological study, and it becomes an applied science; a kind of Human Engineering, standing to Anthropology somewhat as Education stands to Psychology” (Myres, 1923; p. 165). Note that societal engineering was also called societal telesis (Giddings, 1924).³⁰

Ford’s sociological project consisted of an effort at human engineering, to produce a stable and efficient workforce. Individual workers were to be interchangeable, as were the various parts of the automobiles they assembled. The need for a stable workforce was great, due to the problems created by the extremely high rates of labor turnover. Furthermore, in the automobile industry in Detroit, about half of the workforce did not speak English. Efficiency, which was a buzzword among industrialists and employers in general during the 1910s (and still is), required, in the minds of Henry Ford and his managers, industrious characters, happy families, temperance, and a number of other behavioral and social traits.

When seen under the light of human engineering, Ford’s sociological project became somewhat redundant when its primary goal was to a large extent fulfilled. In this respect, the Ford sociological project was a success. This outlook comes in contrast with a more traditional perspective, represented by Nevins, who saw it partly as Ford’s humanitarian moment (and thus saw it as a failure for it was succeeded by an even stricter regime, while shedding its welfare traits). It is, however, noteworthy that some thirty years after the introduction of the five-dollar day, Henry Ford II, in collaboration with

union leader Walter Reuther, reinvigorated the efforts of the Ford Motor Company in human engineering. Indeed as late as October 1945, Walter Reuther declared that “it is time management realized that human engineering is just as important as mechanical engineering” (Lewis, 1976; p. 432).³¹

Conclusions

Although set up to meet specific and immediate needs, the Sociological Department’s importance extends far beyond the immediate environment of Henry Ford’s company. For one, it codified and applied a set of values and behavioral guidelines (benchmarks) that established a dichotomy that persists to this day between what we call “deserving” and “undeserving” poor. Indeed, both Marquis and Henry Ford himself repeatedly declared that their profit-sharing plan was not charity, but on the contrary, it served to give deserving workers the opportunity to escape poverty and to achieve “middle-class” standards. This outlook was very much in line with mainstream sociological discourse of the day. For example, in the 1920 edition of his book, *The Principles of Sociology*, Edward Alsworth Ross argued that:

The theory that the poor are simply the ‘unfit’ cannot be accepted, nor yet the opposite theory that poverty is essentially a malignant ulcer which attacks and breaks down adjacent social tissue, sound and unsound alike. It is necessary to discriminate among the dependent. There are ‘God’s poor’ but then too, there are ‘the devil’s poor.’ The wise and benevolent seek out and relieve the former... What we have learned as to the part played by indiscriminate charity in perpetuating degenerate stocks makes us afraid to give money with our eyes shut (p. 388).

The establishment of “good and bad” or deserving and undeserving employees, through Ford’s sociological investigations, had a dual nature; firstly, it had clear practical

application in regulating the profit-sharing plan, and secondly, it functioned as a model, after which workers could mold their behavior. Thus, those who qualified for the profit-sharing program were used as role models for those who didn't. Workers who did not qualify and who were deemed "untrainable" by the company were blamed for their predicament in the discourse, they were fired from the company, and finally, comprised an early model of "undeserving poor."

These were people that, according to the Sociological Department's investigations, were not thrifty, meaning that they drank more alcohol than the company would have liked, they spent their income on things not approved by the company, and generally followed economic practices that were not in agreement with the company's ideal worker. The company, for example, considered it a worker's duty to prove his/her thrifty habits by buying a Ford car, and decent housing (more often than not bought through Ford family owned real-estate companies).³² In other words, to be thrifty meant to work hard, to abstain from alcohol, to save money for a car, to support (or at least aspire to support) a family, and finally to get good housing.

In this section, I described the wider constellation of values and norms regarding labor that were dominant in American society during the Progressive era, and that were espoused by the Ford Motor Company for its workforce. In the following chapter, I discuss the Ford sociological project as an effort at human engineering, which itself can be seen as applied sociology.

CHAPTER VII

APPLIED RESEARCH AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE FORD SOCIOLOGICAL PROJECT

This chapter provides a description of the early attempts at applied social research by the Ford Motor Company in 1914. An additional aim is to show the relevance and significance of these attempts and examine the extent to which early Ford Motor Company research informs us today in our applied research activities. In particular, it examines the investigations of the Sociological Department, which aimed at gathering information concerning habits, family situations, financial state, and economic behavior of the employees, and utilizing that information as a set of criteria to reward or penalize employees.

Research Data Collection and Triangulation

The basic methodology used by the investigators of the Sociological Department was a three-pronged approach involving survey research (interviews), personal observation and verification of findings. In particular, the main methods used for collecting the information consisted of (1) informal, semi-structured interviews with workers and others, (2) personal observation during the interview process and (3) verification of information through official documents. The investigations of the Ford Sociological Department involved, in particular, visits to workers' homes, interviews with workers and members of their families, but also interviews with friends and neighbors, in

attempts to cross-reference the information gathered. Fitch (1914) described the scene of a typical investigation:

'Does Joe Polianski live here,' he asks.
'Yes, he lives here all right.'
'What sort of man is Joe – pretty good fellow?'
'Sure he is a *fine* man.'
'What does he do evenings?'
'Always home evenings, goes to bed early.'
'Does he drink?'
'No! No! He not drink.'
'What does he do with his money – does he save any?' (p. 547; Also in Meyer, 1981; p. 124).

Moreover, investigators required that workers provide documentary proof of their financial status as well. Thus, for example, “thriftiness” was established through triangulation of sources that included interviews described above, observations about home conditions and furniture, and examination of personal documents such as bank account statements, rent payment receipts, and marital and baptismal certificates. Therefore it can be said that even before the term triangulation was introduced in the research literature, Ford Investigators used triangulation techniques in their data collection procedures to validate the quality of the collected data.

The frequency and rigor of worker investigations varied considerably. It varied greatly from individual to individual, depending on how they fared in prior investigations and also from one period to another. By 1916, when Samuel Marquis took over the Sociological Department, a worker would be investigated within thirty days after he was hired into the Ford Motor Company. In Marquis's words, “one of the investigators going to his home, taking note of the conditions of the home, housing conditions, sanitary conditions, evidences of thrift or of the lack of thrift, right conditions in the family and all that sort of thing” (Marquis's address to the American Bankers Association, Acc. No. 63,

Box 1; p. 44). Typically, investigations tended to become less frequent as time went by. After a reorganization in 1917, investigations were to take place once, upon someone's hiring, and thereafter only upon request from either the worker or a company official.

In 1917, the Sociological Department divided Detroit into seventy-seven districts, each averaging five hundred twenty seven employees. Each investigator was assigned some seven hundred thirty employees. Investigators were expected to make about fifteen house calls, and five interviews in the plant each day. For each interview, investigators had to fill-out a standardized report, which would then be evaluated to determine whether any change in the status of each worker for profit-sharing purposes was necessary.

Phases of Research Data Collection

The Ford Motor Company was engaged in at least two major phases of data collection in 1914. The data collection efforts by investigators of the Ford Motor Company Sociological Department were aimed at gathering information concerning workers' habits, family situations, financial state, and socio-economic behavior. This was done in order to (1) assess whether a worker was qualified to participate in profit-sharing or not, and (2) to aid workers to succeed in qualifying for profit-sharing if they were not initially successful. The first phase of data collection at Ford Motor Company took place in early 1914. This phase lasted approximately from January to April 1914. Unfortunately, no detailed records of the research conducted during this period are available either in the company archives or any of the other sources.

The second phase was initiated immediately following the first, in the spring of 1914 and lasted through the summer. There are more adequate records for this phase of

data collection. Lee recorded his advice to the investigators in four documents in order to improve the quality of the data.³³ In these documents, Lee provided detailed instructions mainly regarding methodology. Furthermore, they contain important hints concerning the logistics of the research and the workers' reactions to the first phase of the investigation, and how these issues should inform the second phase. In retrospect, these documents provide an important insight into the development of the social research at Ford Motor Company.

The officially stated aim of the investigation was to establish workers' housing conditions. As Lee told his investigators on April 15, 1914, "Mr. Ford told me he wanted it known that his plan is for every family working for him a comfortable home; a bath tub in it, and a yard with a little garden, and ultimately, he wanted to see every employee of his owning an automobile" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 1). Investigators used the assessment of workers' family situations, to evaluate workers' habits.

Another aim of the company research efforts was to help those who did not qualify initially for profit-sharing to change their habits in order to get them to eventually qualify. The company set-up a system by which profit-sharing was withheld from a worker if he did not qualify, although a varying proportion of it would potentially be returned to him depending on his progress.³⁴ In an address of the American Bankers Association, Marquis explained:

If a man is not going right we take him off profits for thirty days. If he gets straightened out at the end of thirty days, we keep (sic) back all his profits for that month. If it takes him sixty days, he only gets seventy-five percent... If it takes him ninety days he gets sixty percent... If it takes five months, he gets only twenty-five percent of his profits... and then at the end of six months if he does not make good, he is directed to go somewhere else (The Ford Profit Sharing Plan, Acc. No. 63, Box 1; p. 47).³⁵

The Ford Motor Company collected research data about workers to enable the company to make such decisions regarding the distribution of profit-sharing and the steps that would be taken toward the workers' improvement.

The first phase of data collection began in January 1914, and lasted about four months. Its immediate goal was to assess who would qualify for profit-sharing and who would not. This was established through an examination of workers' marital status, habits (mainly concerning temperance and thrift), number of dependents, if any, neighborhood conditions, and conditions of his home. The manner in which this phase of investigation was conducted was aggressive and many workers experienced it as intrusive, thus creating some worker antipathy towards the company. Furthermore, during this phase of the investigation, investigators ran across some linguistic difficulties, as the majority of the workers at that time did not speak English. Although the company did provide investigators with interpreters, these were shown to be too few and not of the highest competence. Often, family members, friends, or neighbors of workers under investigation would act as interpreters, which further hindered the flow of information from workers to investigators and vice versa. An examination of Lee's advice to his investigators in the beginning of the second phase of the investigation makes it evident that the problems encountered during the first phase served as lessons for the Sociological Department, and better informed the research design and data collection of the second phase.

During the second phase of data collection, Lee separated his investigators into three groups. The first of these had been assigned to investigate the employees that had been initially approved by the company for profit-sharing. One of the aims of this group was to make sure that employees that had qualified for profit-sharing following the initial

investigation and were included in the profit-sharing scheme had not "dropped back into their old traits" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 1). Furthermore, in his advice to the first group of investigators, Lee made it clear that agitators were to be singled out. These "petty emperors" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 4) were not to be allowed to share in company profits. Indeed, loyalty and obedience were strictly expected from workers.

The second group of investigators consisted of five members, and was in charge of "the class of doubtfuls," or employees who had qualified for profit-sharing following the first investigation, about whom management was "doubtful of their being able to continue on the profit sharing basis" (Lee's Talk to Second Group, p. 1). Lee noted that this group consisted of more singles than married workers, and that he expected the majority to consist of "American or English-speaking men" rather than "foreign speaking fellows" (Lee's Talk to Second Group, p. 2). As he did in the case of the first group of investigators, Lee also noted that more frequent meetings between himself and investigators were to be set up for discussion, exchange of ideas and suggestions, and for better communication in general.

The third group of investigators aimed to "look after and to boost the men who have not qualified on the first investigation, and to bring them around so that they will receive a share, and to bring them up so they will continue to receive it" (Lee's Talk to Third Group, p. 1). This was to be done with care to avoid the antipathy generated by the first phase of the investigation: "We have in our first work engendered a lot of antipathy and ill-feeling on the part of outsiders towards the Ford Motor Company, and you are going to run into a lot of people, who probably have relatives here who are not receiving the money, and they are sore, and they blame the Company for it" (Lee's Talk to Third

Group, p. 1). Note that the vast majority of workers included in this group consisted of “foreigners” (Lee’s Talk to Third Group, p. 4).

Lee cautioned his investigators that "it is going to take a great deal more tact, originality, and a lot of stick-to-itiveness to get what we want this time than it did the first time," (Lee’s Talk to First Group, p. 1) to prevent the company from risking "antipathy" by the workers. He urged his investigators to "not go into anybody's house in a way that you would not want them to come into yours" (Lee’s Talk to First Group, p. 5). In particular, Lee cautioned:

Now, in a general way, we are going to be up against a number of things this time that we did not have to contend with the last time. The last time the scheme was brand new, and the people were anxious to find out what they had to do, or what we wanted them to do, but now it will be entirely different. We have got to use all the diplomacy, ingenuity, courtesy and gentlemanly qualities we can muster, in order to accomplish the right results (Lee’s Talk to Second Group, pp. 2-3).

In the second phase of data collection, investigators were equipped with “yellow sheets” containing the results of the first investigation, in order to aid the investigators: "We are going to let you take the yellow sheets, just as a guide to go by, but please do not let the man you are investigating see them. Of course, if you read off the yellow sheet, thus, 'you have \$100 in the bank,' he will answer, 'Yes,' and all along down the sheet" (Lee’s Talk to Second Group, p. 6). Although what Lee called a “yellow sheet” was not available at the company archives, it is very likely that the contents corresponded to the “Record of Investigation” form. Records of investigation for the years 1914 and 1946 are included in Appendices A’ and B’. In order to "safeguard" his investigators, surely also to make them look more important in the eyes of workers, Lee issued picture identification

cards (“passes”) to all his investigators. These were issued to protect the workers from people posing as agents of the company (Lee’s Talk to First Group, p. 4).

While the first phase of data collection was oriented toward the assessment of workers, the emphasis during the second phase was to help them qualify for profit-sharing. In his advice to the second group of investigators, Lee (Lee’s Talk to Second Group) urged his investigators to “go out with the idea that we are not trying to find all the flaws of the man, but to find his good points... So far, we have been out on a muck-raking campaign, to see if we could pull him down” (p. 3). In his advice to the third group of investigators, Lee (Lee’s Talk to Third Group) reiterated: “We went out the first time on the basis of finding out all the faults and bad things about the men, but this time we are not out to get these faults, but to find the good things in the men” (p. 3). Lee noted that the first attempt was considerably aggressive and he wanted the second phase to be more diplomatic and facilitating than the first one. In particular, he noted that while one of the goals of the first investigation was to cut down on the number of workers receiving profit-sharing, during the second phase, the investigators should aim to aid workers to qualify for profit-sharing. Lee cautioned his investigators that if the second phase of the investigation was conducted along the same lines as the first, “a great many of the fellows who have been enjoying the profits will be deprived of same... You do not have to go out to work on the basis of getting the money for them, but you have to go to them on the basis of helping them to keep it” (Lee’s Talk to First Group; p. 2).

Lee was very conscious of reliability issues in social research. For example, he was aware of external influences on workers during the interview process and he emphasized the importance of one-on-one interview techniques. He particularly warned

his investigators that they "can get more information from a man alone than you can when his neighbors or friends are around" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 4). Furthermore, Lee was aware of reliability issues relating to variations over periods of time, as well as variations that are cyclical in nature. For example, in his "Talk to the First Group of Investigators," Lee warned that judgment over the home conditions should be made carefully: "One may have struck it on Monday morning after Sunday's revelry, and before the house could be cleaned up – another on Tuesday morning, when everything was cleaned up nicely, and another on Saturday, when it had not been cleaned for a week" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 2). Lee made similar comments to the other two groups of investigators.

During the second phase of the investigation, investigators were not only responsible for collecting data, but also for disseminating information about the five-dollar-day plan. For example, Lee advised his investigators to "impress upon the people that this Ford Profit Sharing Plan is permanent" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 3), and to distribute specially made notices (in fourteen languages) with information relating to all the things "the Ford Motor Company is doing, and can do for him" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 3). Lee was interested in giving due publicity to the five-dollar-day plan, and the workings of the Sociological Department. In particular, he stated: "Do not hesitate to answer all questions regarding the plan, whether asked by the employees themselves, or parties entirely outside of our organization. We are glad to have it known at large" (Lee's Talk to Second Group, p. 6).

Although the company promoted the dissemination of particular information, such as related to housing, and other issues, some information was to be safeguarded from the

media. In particular, Lee wanted to keep information relating to ethnic composition of the workforce at Ford confidential, mainly due to the fact that there were more non-English speaking immigrants working in the company than English speakers. Note that up to 70% of Ford workers in Detroit were foreign born (Meyer, 1981; Rupert, 1995). In his talks with investigators, Lee (Lee's Talk to First Group) noted:

Out of the 8,000 men working here, there are 73 that did not know what they were, 1,829 Americans, 1,812 Poles, 1,465 Russians, 522 Rumanians, 366 Germans, and 137 Servians (sic). So you can see that the foreign element predominates. This information, the newspapers are crazy to get, and it has taken all the ingenuity I can get, outside of lying, to keep it from them (pp. 3-4).³⁶

As the majority of immigrant workers at the time did not speak English, interpreters were assigned to each investigator. Conscious of the importance of good interpretation, Lee promised his investigators better interpreters so as to avoid misunderstandings generated in the first phase (Lee's Talk to Second Group).

We found that our interpreters, lots of times, on the first investigation were not on the level, or were not qualified to interpret, but Mr. Henkel is going to be careful this time to select men we can depend upon – men who are a little older, and who have a knowledge of interpreting a little better. I believe a great many of the men were deprived of their share of the profits by mistakes in the interpretation. We want to be more careful this time and see that we go out pretty well equipped (p. 6).

To avoid any complications, in his talk to the first group of investigators Lee asked that upon facing any problem of linguistic barriers, such as the interpreter assigned to them not being able to fully understand or translate a particular language or dialect, investigators should return to the company headquarters to be reassigned "the best man" as interpreter (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 4).

In a meeting between Lee and his investigators, on July 7, 1914, around the end of the second phase of investigation, Lee cautioned his men about the dangers of "delving

into strictly personal things" (Lee's Talk on July 7, p. 1). In response to workers' complaints about the nature and repetitiveness of the questions being asked by investigators, he noted that the need for asking demographic type of questions had receded since the information was already at the hands of the company. Instead of asking many questions, Lee prompted his men: "I WANT YOU TO DO MORE SELF-OBSERVATION. You all ought to be keen judges of human nature, and you ought to be able to tell from outward appearances whether people are getting ahead, or standing still, or going back" (Lee's Talk on July 7, p. 2). Indeed this proved prophetic in the 1920s and 30s, when house visits by investigators had largely been a thing of the past, and some of the functions of the sociological investigators were carried by "spotters" who covertly observed, rather than interviewing workers to assess their personal and public demeanor and habits.

Utilization of Data

Although set up to meet the specific and immediate needs of the Ford Motor Company, the importance of the Sociological Department extended far beyond the immediate environment of Henry Ford's company. Primarily, the Department codified and applied a set of values and behavioral guidelines (benchmarks) that developed and maintained a dichotomy that persists to this day between what we now call "deserving" and "undeserving" poor. This cognitive distinction between "good" and "bad" workers was developed to establish which workers were eligible for the "profit-sharing" portion of their salary, and which ones were partially eligible, or not eligible. The company had its own early model or image of those whom we call "undeserving poor today." Thus,

those deemed ineligible for profit-sharing were trashed in the discourse and fired from the company. These were people who, according to the Sociological Department's investigations were not thrifty, or were intemperate, or generally failed to comply with the projected model of deserving employees, meaning that they drank more alcohol than the company would have liked, they spent their income on things not approved by the company and generally followed financial practices that were not in agreement with the company's image of an ideal worker. The company, for example, considered it a worker's duty to prove his/her thrifty habits by buying a car, and "decent" housing.³⁷ In other words, to be thrifty meant to work hard for God, country, and family, to abstain from alcohol, to save money for a house and car and finally to manage his finances in a way that allowed for "middle-class" living.³⁸

The outcome of this research resulted in the classification of all workers into four main categories:

1. Employees who were "firmly established in the ways of thrift and who would carry out the spirit of the plan."
2. Employees who "had never had a chance, but were willing to grasp the opportunity."
3. Employees who qualified for profit sharing, but investigators were in doubt as to the strength of their character.
4. Employees who did not or could not qualify (Lee, 1916, p. 303).

Employees classified in the first group were enlisted in the profit-sharing plan and were rarely bothered by investigators. This group included almost all of Ford's "white American" workers. Investigators directed further inquiries to the last three groups, comprising mainly of newly arrived, non-English speaking, southern and eastern European immigrants living in Detroit's ethnic neighborhoods. Employees of the second group could expect a number of visits considered to be necessary "as often as in the

judgment of the investigation department" (Lee, 1916; p. 303) for guidance, encouragement, and to ensure that their behavior was in line with the behavioral guidelines of the Department. Employees in the third group were treated more or less similarly to the ones in the second group, although "some detailed plans had to be laid for them" (Lee, 1916; p. 303). Employees in the fourth group were considered problematic and were given assistance to overcome their "inadequacies." If they did not adequately modify their behavior, they were of course considered undeserving and were ultimately fired.³⁹

Following the first phase of investigations, during the first quarter of 1914, 40% of workers did not qualify for profit-sharing (Lee's Talk to Second Group, p. 5). By mid-1914 – at the end of the second phase of investigations – about 69% of Ford's workforce qualified for profit-sharing, while 87% qualified by the end of the year. By 1916 about 90% of workers qualified for profit-sharing (Lee, 1916).⁴⁰

Henry Ford himself considered his profit-sharing plan as the "ultimate solution" to the labor problem, and presented it as such to mass media. He arrived at his startling conclusion just a few weeks after the introduction of the five-dollar-day, in January 1914, and based it on two "striking results" of the plan: an increased efficiency, and a development of personal character (Fitch, 1914; p. 550). Ford cited as an illustration of the former an increase in the productivity of the motor-assembly department, where production went up from 85 units an hour before the introduction of the plan, to 105 after the plan was introduced. Concerning the development of personal character, Ford cited a "remarkable epidemic of house cleaning" among workers, as observed by the sociological investigators (in Fitch, 1914, p. 550). Ford considered this to be an

indication of the beneficial effects of the profit-sharing plan: “When a man gets a higher wage he will not only be a better workman, but he will be a better man and will carry the influence home to his family” (in Fitch, 1914; p. 550).

The Ford Motor Company utilized the data collected by the sociological investigations in a manner consistent with the principles of applied sociology. In particular, the company utilized the collected data (1) to improve the quality of their research by incorporating solutions in the subsequent phases of data collection and (2) to ameliorate their workforce according to the company ideology regarding labor relations.

Applied Sociological Procedures in the Context of Ford’s Sociological Project

In general, American sociologists during the early years of the development of the discipline were interested in the utilization of social knowledge as a means for social improvement and reform. The first generation of American sociologists, with spokesmen such as Albion Small, and Lester Ward, was not professionally trained in sociology (Lasslett, 1991; also see Bannister, 1987; Coser, 1978). Indeed, Lester Ward, a Progressive era reformer (Coser, 1978) was an “autodidact” sociologist (Ross, 1991; p. 92, also see Coser 1978), and a botanist and zoologist by training (Bannister, 1987), while Albion Small was a Baptist minister (Bannister, 1987). Lester Ward, first president and, the acknowledged founder of American sociology (Bannister, 1987), wrote his classic *Applied Sociology: A Treatise on the Conscious Improvement of Society by Society* in 1906. In that work, he declared: “the purpose of applied sociology is to harmonize achievement with improvement” (Ward, 1906; p. 21). Ward equated *achievement* with *civilization*, while he used the term *improvement* to denote the state or

“condition” of humanity in general. In short, achievement relates to the state of technology, science, and knowledge in general, while improvement relates to living conditions (including education) of the population at large. Clearly, while Ward’s *pure sociology* was meant to be “ethically and politically neutral,” *applied sociology* was “concerned with the means of changing society (Bannister, 1987; p. 27).

The research policies of the Ford Motor Company fitted exactly with this description of early applied sociology. The research conducted by the Ford Motor Company was clearly intended and used as a means of changing one group in the society, namely the company employees, to be better workers, better citizens and better family providers:

The aim and object of Mr. Ford’s profit sharing plan is to uplift the community; make for better manhood and character of his employees; to raise their morals and better their surroundings and modes of living; foster habits of thrift; to make pensions and sick benefit unnecessary; to provide for the rainy day which everyone is liable to encounter and to generate and fix their minds such ideas of right living as go to make better American citizens.

The plan as outlined by Mr. Ford is unique, in that it not only creates a desire for the better things, but it also gives a man the wherewith to get them (S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293, p. 1).

The Ford Motor Company clearly tried to avoid the goals-means inconsistency for its workers, an issue which was discussed by Merton two decades later. It was not until 1938 that Merton (1938) modified the Durkheimian concept of anomie to indicate a state of inconsistency between socially accepted goals and institutionalized means. By emphasizing the goals of Americanization, providing the required means to achieve those goals, and establishing a reward structure to guide the workers through the offered means and toward the promoted goals, Ford clearly experimented with the Mertonian concept of anomie as an inconsistency between societal goals and institutionalized means.

Furthermore, the Ford Motor Company guided (“engineered”) its workers in adopting a conformist stance regarding the profit-sharing guidelines put forth by the company, thus perhaps foreshadowing one aspect of the Mertonian typology of responses to anomie.⁴¹

At around this time, in 1915, two traditions had developed in sociology and social research in the U.S. (Bulmer, 1998). On the one hand, there was a tradition of abstract sociological theory, distinct from empirical work, and on the other hand, “a tradition in empirical social inquiry toward fact gathering either in a spirit of disinterested inquiry or more commonly in the context of social reform...” (Bulmer, 1998; p. 79). The Ford research and investigations clearly adhered to the latter tradition.

Only later, during the 1920s and 30s, American sociologists started to “observe strict neutrality in matters of ethics and public policy,” while “sociology itself passes no moral judgment... and sets up no ethical standards for human conduct.” (Bannister, 1987; p. 3). In the ensuing decades, this meant that “basic research and theory had to come first, they should take priority over activism” (Lipset, 1994; p. 205). Judging by these standards that were developed later and accepted today as the norm, the applied sociological research undertaken by the Ford Motor Company lacked a well-articulated theoretical basis. In effect, the research undertaken by the Ford Sociological Department was informed more by ideologies than by theoretical premises or explicit theoretical guidelines. After all, as Lee (1916) stated, “The Ford Motor Company have done all this work with their own men; there has been no theory used... we have employed no minds trained in philanthropy or sociology, or any other knowledge gained through books or university courses” (p. 310).

Although the Ford Motor Company operated under the ideologies and stereotypes of the day, its action toward the workers was not based solely on those stereotypes or ideologies. Indeed, an examination of the sociological statistical reports for 1916 and 1917 (referring to the years 1915 and 1916 respectively) shows how, according to the company, southern and eastern European immigrant workers did indeed score lower than “Americans” and western European immigrants on the various variables used by the company to assess workers standards of living. Tables 3 through 8, constructed with information from the 1916 and 1917 reports, show the relevant standing of the various ethnic and racial groups of employees on habits, home conditions, and neighborhood conditions.

Although according to Ford, the individual rather than the group to which one belongs should be the basis for judgment, sociological reports listed employees by nationality and race. Given that companies usually do not expend resources with no reason, it is evident that racial and ethnic group membership was still considered important for the company.

The Ford Motor Company did not rely solely on ideologies and stereotypes of the day as a base for the differential treatment of their southern and eastern European immigrant workers. On the contrary, sociological investigators carried out research to establish issues that were problematic for the company. It is indicative that eastern and southern European immigrants in general scored lower than their western European counterparts, on such variables as habits, home conditions, and neighborhood conditions. It is interesting that racial minority groups that were wholly or partly English speaking,

and naturalized, such as African Americans and Jews, scored high on habits, but lower on neighborhood and home conditions.

It is interesting to note that although about a third of the Jewish employees, and all “Negroes” were United States citizens, they were however listed separately from other “Americans.” This is indicative of the value placed by the company to what at the time was known as “racial characteristics.”

Table 3. Habits by Nationality, 1916

Nationality	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Good Habits %	Fair Habits %	Poor Habits %	Fair and Poor Habits %
Jewish	995	2.4	86	14	0	13.9
English	906	2.2	86	14	0	13.9
Canadian	1392	3.4	81	19	1	19.2
Scotch	374	0.9	80	19	0	19.5
American	12328	30.1	80	19	0	19.7
Swedish	104	0.3	77	23	0	23.1
Armenian	313	0.8	76	24	0	24.3
Syrian	447	1.1	76	23	1	24.4
Irish	288	0.7	74	25	1	25.7
Bohemian	166	0.4	73	26	1	26.5
German	1001	2.4	69	30	0	30.7
Austrian	360	0.9	66	34	0	33.6
Lithuanian	382	0.9	64	36	0	35.9
Greek	174	0.4	64	36	0	36.2
Serbian	342	0.8	64	36	0	36.3
Roumanian	1002	2.4	64	36	1	36.4
Russian	854	2.1	63	37	0	37.4
Hungarian	431	1.1	63	37	0	37.4
Polish	5280	12.9	62	38	0	38.4
Ruthenian	186	0.5	61	39	0	39.2
Croatian	117	0.3	61	38	1	39.3
Italian	1197	2.9	53	46	0	46.7

Table 4. Home Conditions by Nationality, 1916

Nationality	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Good Home Conditions %	Fair Home Conditions %	Poor Home Conditions %	Fair and Poor Home Conditions %
Irish	288	0.7	96	4	0	3.8
Bohemian	166	0.4	92	7	2	8.4
Jewish	995	2.4	91	8	1	8.5
Scotch	374	0.9	91	9	0	9.4
German	1001	2.4	90	9	1	9.7
Canadian	1392	3.4	90	10	0	9.9
English	906	2.2	90	10	0	10.5
American	12328	30.1	89	10	0	10.8
Armenian	313	0.8	89	11	1	11.2
Hungarian	431	1.1	88	9	2	11.6
Russian	854	2.1	88	10	2	11.8
Serbian	342	0.8	88	10	2	12.3
Swedish	104	0.3	88	13	0	12.5
Austrian	360	0.9	87	11	2	13.3
Lithuanian	382	0.9	85	12	4	15.4
Roumanian	1002	2.4	83	11	6	16.8
Croatian	117	0.3	83	12	5	17.1
Ruthenian	186	0.5	82	16	2	17.7
Greek	174	0.4	82	17	1	17.8
Polish	5280	12.9	82	15	3	18.5
Syrian	447	1.1	81	12	7	19.0
Italian	1197	2.9	78	15	6	21.6

Table 5. Neighborhood Conditions by Nationality, 1916

Nationality	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Good Neighborhoods %	Fair Neighborhoods %	Poor Neighborhoods %	Fair and Poor Neighborhoods %
Swedish	104	0.3	91	9	0	8.7
Scotch	374	0.9	90	10	0	9.6
English	906	2.2	90	9	0	9.7
American	12328	30.1	90	10	0	10.4
Canadian	1392	3.4	88	12	0	11.7
Irish	288	0.7	84	16	0	16.0
German	1001	2.4	82	17	0	17.8
Armenian	313	0.8	82	17	1	17.9
Bohemian	166	0.4	77	23	1	23.5
Austrian	360	0.9	76	23	1	23.6
Polish	5280	12.9	75	23	2	25.2
Lithuanian	382	0.9	74	23	3	25.7
Russian	854	2.1	73	26	1	27.4
Hungarian	431	1.1	72	27	1	27.6
Serbian	342	0.8	70	27	3	30.1
Ruthenian	186	0.5	69	27	4	31.2
Greek	174	0.4	68	32	1	32.2
Syrian	447	1.1	66	28	6	34.0
Croatian	117	0.3	65	31	4	35.0
Roumanian	1002	2.4	65	33	2	35.4
Jewish	995	2.4	62	37	1	38.1
Italian	1197	2.9	51	44	5	49.0

Table 6. Habits by Nationality, 1917

Nationality	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Good Habits %	Fair Habits %	Poor Habits %	Fair and Poor Habits %
English	1159	2.8	93	7	0	7.2
Scotch	480	1.2	92	8	0	7.7
Canadian	1819	4.4	90	10	0	10.1
Jewish	1437	3.5	90	10	0	10.2
Swedish	166	0.4	88	12	0	12.0
Armenian	437	1.1	87	13	0	12.8
Negro	106	0.3	87	13	0	13.2
Irish	399	1.0	86	14	0	14.0
Finnish	106	0.3	86	14	0	14.2
Syrian	555	1.4	86	14	0	14.2
American	16457	40.2	85	15	0	15.0
German	1360	3.3	79	21	0	21.1
Austrian	573	1.4	78	21	1	22.3
Croatian	159	0.4	77	23	0	23.3
Bohemian	240	0.6	77	23	0	23.3
Greek	281	0.7	75	25	0	25.3
Russian	1160	2.8	73	27	0	27.4
Serbian	456	1.1	72	27	0	27.6
Hungarian	690	1.7	72	27	0	27.7
Lithuanian	541	1.3	72	28	0	27.9
Italian	1954	4.8	72	27	1	28.0
Roumanian	1750	4.3	68	32	0	31.6
Polish	7525	18.4	67	32	0	32.5
Ruthenian	368	0.9	66	34	0	33.7

Table 7. Home Conditions by Nationality, 1917

Nationality	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Good Home Conditions %	Fair Home Conditions %	Poor Home Conditions %	Fair and Poor Home Conditions %
Canadian	1819	4.4	97	2	0	2.6
Scotch	480	1.2	97	3	0	2.7
Armenian	437	1.1	97	3	0	3.0
Swedish	166	0.4	96	4	0	3.6
English	1159	2.8	96	3	0	3.8
Irish	399	1.0	95	5	0	4.5
Finnish	106	0.3	93	7	0	6.6
German	1360	3.3	92	7	0	7.8
American	16457	40.2	92	8	0	7.9
Jewish	1437	3.5	91	9	0	9.1
Lithuanian	541	1.3	88	10	2	11.8
Austrian	573	1.4	87	11	2	13.3
Greek	281	0.7	86	14	1	14.2
Serbian	456	1.1	85	12	4	15.4
Russian	1160	2.8	84	14	2	15.7
Bohemian	240	0.6	84	14	2	15.8
Negro	106	0.3	84	14	2	16.0
Hungarian	690	1.7	83	15	2	17.1
Polish	7525	18.4	83	16	2	17.5
Croatian	159	0.4	82	14	4	18.2
Syrian	555	1.4	76	18	6	23.8
Roumanian	1750	4.3	76	19	5	24.3
Italian	1954	4.8	76	21	3	24.4
Ruthenian	368	0.9	74	23	2	25.8

Table 8. Neighborhood Conditions by Nationality, 1917

Nationality	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Good Neighborhoods %	Fair Neighborhoods %	Poor Neighborhoods %	Fair and Poor Neighborhoods %
Swedish	166	0.4	96	4	0	4.2
Armenian	437	1.1	95	5	0	4.6
Irish	399	1.0	95	5	0	4.8
Canadian	1819	4.4	94	5	0	5.6
Finnish	106	0.3	94	5	1	5.7
Scotch	480	1.2	93	7	0	6.9
Bohemian	240	0.6	93	8	0	7.5
American	16457	40.2	92	8	0	7.6
English	1159	2.8	92	8	0	7.6
Austrian	573	1.4	92	8	0	8.4
Russian	1160	2.8	91	9	0	9.1
Lithuanian	541	1.3	91	9	0	9.4
German	1360	3.3	90	10	0	9.6
Polish	7525	18.4	88	11	1	11.7
Greek	281	0.7	88	12	0	12.1
Serbian	456	1.1	87	12	1	12.7
Hungarian	690	1.7	87	13	0	13.0
Ruthenian	368	0.9	87	13	0	13.0
Jewish	1437	3.5	86	13	0	13.5
Syrian	555	1.4	85	13	2	15.1
Croatian	159	0.4	84	14	2	16.4
Roumanian	1750	4.3	81	17	2	19.0
Italian	1954	4.8	81	18	1	19.2
Negro	106	0.3	79	21	0	20.8

Conclusions

As we have seen above, the Ford Motor Company espoused a set of values and attitudes that it deemed appropriate for its workers. In this section, I have examined the applied sociological procedures used by the company to assess its workforce as to their habits and living conditions. Furthermore, I have examined the utilization of the data gathered by the investigators. In the next section, I discuss the various practices and policies through which the company tried to instill the constellation of values it espoused in its workers.

CHAPTER VIII

ETHNICITY, RACE, AND AMERICANIZATION

Immigration was an important aspect of American labor relations during the first two decades of the twentieth-century. The steady flow of unorganized immigrant labor facilitated open-shop policies, and kept wages down. On the other hand, the efficiency of immigrant labor regarding industrial work was deemed wanting by a management that was increasingly conscious of the importance of employee on and off the job behavior to industrial production. This chapter examines race and ethnic relations at Ford during the Progressive period. In this, I will begin with an examination of the various ethnic and racial groups employed by the company, and proceed with a discussion on the differences between ethnicity and race. I will then examine the efforts of the company to transform its European immigrant workforce into an American working-class. I will conclude with a discussion on the differential treatment of racial minorities.

Ethnic and Racial Groups Employed by the Ford Motor Company

Reflecting the wider situation in Detroit, immigrant labor at the Ford Motor Company during the 1910s made up more than half of the workforce. Indeed, up to 70% of Ford workers in Detroit were foreign born (Meyer, 1981; Rupert, 1995). Through Ford's sociological project, these immigrants would be transformed into an American working-class.

Sociological investigations allowed the Ford Motor Company to construct indexes of employees, by nationality and race, relating to living conditions, neighborhood conditions, habits, money in the bank, and life insurance among others. The Educational Department's annual reports for 1916 and 1917 provide an inside story of the ethnic status of the various immigrant groups of workers in the company eyes. The 1916 and 1917 statistical reports of the Educational Department list 62 and 58 nationalities working in the home plant, respectively.⁴² Table 9 shows the relative size of the various ethnic and racial groups at the Ford Motor Company for the years 1916 and 1917. Note that the company claimed that the classifications used in the table were self-declared. It is also noteworthy that about a third of Jewish employees were naturalized, as well as practically all employees of African descent.

Race vs. Ethnicity

It is important to distinguish between two notions: race, and ethnicity. As seen above, race, or stock, referred to perceived unchanging characteristics. The racial superiority of Europeans over other races was taken for granted in sociological discourse of the Progressive period. Although hierarchically structured themselves, ethnic and national groups within a racial group (or of the same racial stock) were seen as cultural entities, and as such, malleable to a large degree through societal engineering. Ford Motor Company discourse and practices, to a great extent reflected the social discourse of the Progressive period concerning race discussed above. Although the terms race and nationality or the terms nationality and ethnicity were used interchangeably in company

Table 9. Ethnic and Racial Groups at the Ford Motor Company, 1916-17

Nationality	1916		1917	
	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees	Number of Employees	% of Total Employees
American	12328	30.1	16457	40.2
Polish	5280	12.9	7525	18.4
Canadian	1392	3.4	1819	4.4
Italian	1197	2.9	1954	4.8
Roumanian (sic)	1002	2.4	1750	4.3
German	1001	2.4	1360	3.3
Jewish	995	2.4	1437	3.5
English	906	2.2	1159	2.8
Russian	854	2.1	1160	2.8
Syrian	447	1.1	555	1.4
Hungarian	431	1.1	690	1.7
Lithuanian	382	0.9	541	1.3
Scotch	374	0.9	480	1.2
Austrian	360	0.9	573	1.4
Serbian	342	0.8	456	1.1
Armenian	313	0.8	437	1.1
Irish	288	0.7	399	1.0
Ruthenian	186	0.5	368	0.9
Greek	174	0.4	281	0.7
Bohemian	166	0.4	240	0.6
Croatian	117	0.3	159	0.4
Swedish	104	0.3	166	0.4
Danish	61	0.1	81	0.2
Maltese	61	0.1	62	0.2
French	52	0.1	55	0.1
Finnish	52	0.1	106	0.3
Turkish	51	0.1	50	0.1
Negro	50	0.1	106	0.3
Bulgarian	45	0.1	56	0.1
Hollander	41	0.1	75	0.2
Belgian	30	0.1	48	0.1
Swiss	28	0.1	39	0.1
Indian (American)	27	0.1	33	0.1
Welsh	26	0.1	39	0.1
Norwegian	22	0.1	38	0.1

discourse, there was a difference between the way the company viewed nationality/ethnicity, and race. On the one hand, nationality and ethnicity were viewed as cultural entities, ones whose behavioral traits could be shed with the proper enculturation

into American “middle-class” values. Race on the other hand, was viewed as a biological entity, whose behavioral characteristics were more deeply embedded in its members, and might or might not be possible to overcome particular traits.

Note that I use the terms race, nationality, and ethnicity as they were used during the Progressive period. A letter sent by the Ford Company concerning the employment of Jews makes a good example of the interchangeable manner in which the terms race and nationality were treated in company discourse. In it, a Ford official noted: “It should be remembered that many Hebrews do not give their correct nationality, possibly due to the fact that the race has been down-trodden for centuries (Acc. 940, Box 16).

On July 14th, 1916, the Ford Motor Company Executive Committee met to discuss “the promotion of members of the Jewish Race to executive positions” (Acc. 940, Box. 16). Apprehensive to make any decisions without consulting with Henry Ford, the company executives called him into the meeting, at which:

He said that the weakness of the Jew was in commercial business and therefore should be guided along the right path.

He said that they should be advanced along mechanical lines but for final judgment the individual should be considered rather than the race as a whole (Acc. 940, Box. 16).⁴³

Ford’s racial stereotypes were surely significant in determining his company’s policies. However, his comment about final consideration being afforded to the individual rather than the race as a whole, comprises perhaps the best indication of the liberal (for the day) nature of Ford’s policies, for it took place at a time when mainstream social scientific discourse was presenting “racial characteristics” as innate, and thus unchangeable.

A number of documents concerning race and ethnic relations revolve around Ford’s anti-Semitism, the reactions it sparked, and the defense mounted by the company.

Accession 940 Box 17 for example, contains excerpts from the 1919 correspondence between Marquis, Liebold, and a Sociological Department officer, in which Marquis defended the company against the accusations of a former employee for discrimination against Jewish people. Marquis stated that "the company has never made any race distinction among its employes" (Acc. 940 Box 17). After receiving more information from the Omaha branch Marquis wrote to Liebold confirming that the former employee's story was wrong, and added: "Our experience with men of Mr. Goldman's nationality here at the Home Office is that they are not always truthful, and in many instances they are absolutely no good on shop work" (Acc. 940 Box 17). This, among other documents, I believe, shows the different ways in which the company differentiated between ethnic and race relations (different perceived capacities for European ethnics, and racial minority groups). Another document shows clearly the conditions under which "other" races were employed by the company: "... He is a Jew boy and we want to try him out and see if anybody will holler about it. We want men and we can't get them so we hired this Jewish boy" (Wm. C. Klann, Reminiscences, Rough Draft – undated; Acc. 940, Box 17; p. 2).

The most often recurring defense in company discourse relating to accusations of discrimination against various groups (i.e., Black or Jewish workers) was that employment of such groups in the company was proof enough that the company did not discriminate against any of its employees. The following excerpt from a letter by a company executive (Liebold) dated June 20, 1920 comprises a good example (Acc. 940, Box 16): "Upwards of three or four thousand Jews are in the employ of the Ford organization, both here and other parts of the country, and the fact that we never

discriminated against their employment disproves that Mr. Ford or the organization has in any way shown prejudice.” Hiring of course is not the only arena in which discrimination can occur in the workplace. Treatment of employees in general, promotion policies, etc. were distributed prejudicially. For example, at least until the late 1930s, Black workers were almost exclusively relegated to working at the company foundry, which by general admission comprised the hardest type of work available.

The relegation of racial groups to hard work did not go without justification by the company. Indeed, the idea that different “types” of people were suitable for different types of work was prominent in company discourse. Indeed, it was a prominent aspect of Taylor’s ideology of scientific Management. In an interview concerning labor policies in 1914, a Ford executive (Baxter) commented on the different “types” of American and foreign employees (Acc. 940, Box 16):

More skilled help was naturally the American type, but we did secure a lot of Austrians and Germans, you know, good die makers. Swiss were very, very good diemakers, you know. I would say the highest percentage was of an American type.

In the lower classifications, such as drill press operators or grinders or laborers, well, we had the foundry here, foundry help. In the beginning it was a lot of Russian, Polish, Croatian, Austrian, people of that type. We didn’t have very many Negroes until World War I. That was the beginning of the migration of the colored people into Detroit.

It is clear that the positions occupied by newly arrived immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were subsequently filled by African Americans migrating to Detroit from the South.

Following complaints of racial discrimination by the Ford Motor Company against a Black applicant, the Assistant Secretary to Henry Ford responded thus in a letter dated Sep. 16, 1920 (Acc. 940, Box 16):

There is hardly a day goes by that we do not hire one or more men of the race mentioned and our records will show the number now in our employ. Our total factory pay-roll now runs around 57,000 men and women, divided as follows; 30,251 Americans, 6,117 Polish, 2,409 Italians, 2,312 Canadians, 1,814 Austrians, 1,675 Negroes, 1,401 Englishmen, 1,181 Russians, the remaining 10,000 or so divided amongst 57 different nationalities with no one of them running over 800 men.

There are times when we have to pick certain kinds of men for certain kinds of jobs; for instance, our harder jobs call for a different caliber of men than do our so called easier and cleaner jobs, etc., and it is possible that at such times different classes of people, if they feel so inclined, can imagine that they are being discriminated against.

Of course, what the company's letter neglected to say was that Black workers got the worst jobs. It must be noted that although citizens of the United States (all but one Black workers at Ford in 1917 were naturalized citizens), Black and Jewish workers were listed separately from the "American" group in the Sociological Department's annual reports for 1916 and 1917 (Acc. 572, Box 31).

Ethnic Relations

The Ford Motor Company was a pioneer in the Americanization project, to the extent that some immigration policies and procedures were modeled after Ford's "educational" and "welfare" policies. The company offered positive sanctions – profit-sharing, which doubled minimum salary – to those immigrant workers who enrolled in its educational program, while basically getting rid of those who did not comply.

Overall, the Ford sociological project was seen by many, and certainly by Ford managers, as empowering and freedom-giving to its immigrant workers. It is interesting that the notion of freedom put forth by Charles Horton Cooley (1922) equated it with the "*opportunity for right development*, for development in accordance with the progressive

ideal of life that we have in conscience” (p. 423). The offering of opportunity for freedom to immigrants was exactly how company discourse saw the civilizing role of the company to its alien workforce. An editorial in *Ford Times*, dated June 1915, is characteristic of how the company saw its civilizing role (“Assimilation through Education: What the Ford English School is Doing to Help the Foreign-born Ford Employee;” *Ford Times*, vol. 8, no. 9, June 1915):

When the average foreigner has learned to read and write and speak the English language, he will nearly always elect to remain in America and become a citizen. Even though he may go home, his land and its customs appear strange to him, and he soon returns to America. We have opened the great libraries to him, and taught him how to use them; we have given him a wage to provide for a LIFE – not a LIVING; greatest of all, he has been placed in the classification of a MAN (p. 411).

The above example is indicative of the way virtually all company promoted magazines, journals, and newsletters (and they were many), viewed immigrant (south and eastern European) cultures, which were described more or less as barbaric. Management views of the immigrants as barbaric are unsurprising. Italian communist Antonio Gramsci once said: “for a social elite the features of subordinate groups always display something barbaric and pathological” (Gutman, 1973; pp. 584-585). A number of “human interest” stories survive in the company archives that present the work done by the Sociological Department as facilitating the elevation of its workforce through the transformation of its workers, and their families, from an unsanitary, ignorant state, living in poor conditions, into a modern, clean, intelligent, “middle-class” existence (see Human Interest Stories one through thirty-eight; Acc. 940, Box 17). Some cases exemplifying this transformation of values, attitudes and habits found their way in Ford’s public discourse. For example, *The Case of Jim*, published in the *Ford Times* in November 1914, presented an American

worker who did not qualify for profit-sharing because, as the “Chief” of the Sociological Department told him, “You are not married. You live in a boarding house... You drink too much beer. You play too much pool. And you owe too much money. You aren’t taking care of anybody...” (Ford Times, vol. 8, no. 2, November 1914; p. 69; Available at the Benson Ford Research Center). Jim was luckily saved from his evil ways through the aid of the Sociological Department (also see: And So the Home was Saved, Ford Times, vol. 8, no. 3; December 1914, pp. 117-118).

Immigrant workers were under great pressure, via the profit-sharing plan, to leave their ethnic enclaves, which were considered dirty places where workers were being taken advantage of by ethnic "*padrones*," and settle in "good middle-class" neighborhoods in Dearborn, under the guidance of "honest" real-estate agents (Ford Motor Company affiliated of course), promoted by the Sociological Department's investigators. In all company promoted magazines, journals, and newsletters (and there were many), immigrant (south European) cultures were described more or less as barbaric, while the company presented itself as the vessel for their Americanization, westernization, modernization, and thus their transformation into "Men."

The idea that ethnic *padrones* took advantage of immigrants was not specific to, nor invented by, Ford. In the “Thirty-Third Annual Report of the Department of Labor of the State of Michigan, Lansing, 1916: Report of the Commissioner of Labor” (Acc. 940, Box 6), it is stated that:

One of the most deplorable conditions, which has come to my attention, is the manner in which some of the foreign born workers in our industrial cities are fleeced by people of their own nationality, and foremen employed in some of the plants. These people, unable to speak the English language, are usually anxious to secure work, and are told that a job can be secured, upon payment of a certain amount of money to some

foreman, and reports have come to me that, upon payment of from \$5.00 to \$25.00, work was furnished them, their fellow-countryman acting as a go-between. Later, these unfortunate persons would be notified that it would be necessary for them to continue paying a certain amount weekly, in order to hold their job. Several prosecutions have been had, but the conditions still exist and I attribute the continuance of these conditions largely to the class of employers, who do not give sufficient attention to the manner in which their help is secured (p. 12).

January 12, 1915 marked the first year anniversary of the establishment of the Ford Motor Company profit-sharing plan. The company celebrated by organizing a dinner at the Hotel Cadillac in Detroit. A company songbook was created for the event. Unsurprisingly, the songs conveyed messages that reinforced the company's sociological project. One such song included in the songbook was a take-off of the song "Tipperary," modified for relevancy to the company setting (Acc. 940, Box 16). It is indicative, if nothing else, of how ethnic stereotypes were used in company public discourse to aid in the Ford sociological project.

Out to Highland Park there came an Irishman one day.
As the streets shine with Ford gold, sure every one was gay,
Singing songs of profit-sharing, wine for failly fare,
Till Paddy got excited, then he shouted to them there:

Chorus
Highland Park beats old Tipperary,
Give me ten days or so
And I'll send back to Tipperary just about a ton of dough;
Good-bye to the praties,
Farewell all cheap fare.
It's a long, long way to Tipperary
And I'll not go there.

So they let him sweep the floors and polish up the brass.
Investigators made him feel he was an Irish ass;
But when he got his envelope and found it full of kale,
He said, "I must be working on that profit-sharing scale."

Chorus
Paddy soon had lots of dough to squander if he would.

Investigators told him how he really could be good.
“Whist! I love the game you play, I’m strong for it,” said he.
“Enroll me as a student of your sociologie.”⁴⁴

Sociological Department Head Lee was aware of the undercurrents of conflict and exploitation in urban ethnic enclaves, and from his own perspective tried to disengage the workers from ethnic ghettos thus decreasing any competing influences on his workers such as ethnic *padrones*. Commenting on Detroit's ethnic neighborhoods and their internal social relations, Lee (1916) referred to them as "petty empires," headed by ethnic *padrones*: "Of course, it is to the interest of such men that these foreigners shall know nothing of the English language, of American ways and customs, or of local values, as these are things which would liberate them from the bondage (and it is nothing more or less) under which they have unconsciously been placed" (pp. 305-6). Through its training programs, the Sociological Department offered a way out of the "bondage" for immigrant workers. The emphasis on immigrant assimilation through education was important in two main ways. Firstly, Ford training programs aimed at transforming foreigners into Americans, and secondly, they aimed at producing good workers, in the sense that they trained, not only in language, but also on obedience, and generally on both personal, and work habits.

An interesting story showing the effects of Ford's sociological project on the ethnic and religious practices of immigrant workers concerns "a young Kurd of Mohammedan birth from Harpoot, Turkey" and is dated June 21, 1915 ("Human Interest Story, Number thirty-Eight," Acc. 940, Box 17):

He was living here with his countrymen in the downtown slums in a squalid house, but plenty of running water in the back yard, where he used to wash his hands and feet three times a day, as part of their religion

before praying. (This was modified from five times a day washing and praying on account of time being too valuable.)

The Profit-Sharing Plan came into effect, almost unimaginable dream came true, most everybody in the shop was getting big money except him. He did not know his trouble, could not speak a word of English. His case was investigated and he was advised to move into a better locality. He had nothing to verify his age, but he voluntarily took out his first naturalization papers. Today Mustafa has put aside his national red fez and praying, no baggy trousers any more. He dresses like an American gentleman, attends the Ford School to study English and has banked in the past year over \$1,000.00. Now he is anxious to send for his young wife and child to bring here and live happily through the grace of Mr. Henry Ford.

Mustafa's story shows how the transformation of workers' habits was not always a simple process, but on the contrary, more often than not had real and immediate effects on many aspects of one's culture and identity. Ultimately though, "through the grace" of his employers, Mustafa had to shed his fez and baggy trousers, as well as his inconvenient religious practices, in order to ensure the continuation of his employment. Additionally, Mustafa was compelled to enroll in the Ford English School, not only to learn the language of his adopted country, but also the set of values and attitudes deemed appropriate for immigrant workers by the company.

Ford School for the English Language

Detroit in the mid-1910s witnessed a massive Americanization campaign for its foreign workforce. In line with the Americanization campaign, the Americanization efforts of the Ford Motor Company extended to the instruction of English via the Ford English school. Hill (1919) called the school, "one of the most extensive and best organized efforts yet made by an industry for the Americanization of its foreign-born labor" (p. 633). While most employers encouraged the attendance of evening schools set

up to accommodate immigrants who wanted to learn English, they did not require it, nor did they organize company-owned schools for their own workforce. This is exactly what the Ford Motor Company did. Under the auspices of the Sociological Department, the Ford School for the English Language was established to facilitate the Americanization of the immigrant workers. The Ford Americanization program served as a model for Detroit's Americanization campaign, as well as for the immigrant assimilation campaign undertaken by the National Americanization Day Committee (Hooker, 1997a). It is interesting to note that, like Samuel Marquis, Dr. Peter Roberts was an Episcopalian minister. He was also Sumner's student, and was clearly acquainted with the writings of Lester Ward, whom Roberts (1904, 1970; 1912, 1970) referenced in his works.

The school, opened in May 1914 (Levin, 1927a; Nevins, 1957), and the initiating class was comprised of "about 200 foreigners" (Lee's Talk to Third Group, p. 2). The company initially planned for one class for four days per week between 4:30 and 6:00 pm (after the end of the first daily shift). Classes were to be taught by Ford employees, and eventually grew to three daily sessions, taking place at the end of each of the three shifts. It is also interesting to note the practical and applied nature of the Ford English School.

The school gave foreigners instruction in reading, writing, and speaking simple English, the work arranged in 72 lessons completed in 36 weeks. The reading concerned itself with such matters as "care of body, bathing, clean teeth, daily helps in and about the factory, including safety first and first aid, matters of civil government of state and nation, how to obtain citizenship papers, etc." It offered a diploma to its graduates signed by officers of the company and the Educational Department, which was also accepted by the United States district officials at Detroit as entitling holders to first [naturalization] papers without further examination (Levin, 1927a; p. 85).

The school reached its zenith in 1916, with 163 volunteer instructors and 2700 student workers, and closed in 1922 after fulfilling its purpose of teaching English to the

immigrant workforce at Ford (Nevins, 1957 v.1). WWI and immigration legislation practically ended the immigration waves from Europe – labor turnover was diminished by then and existing workforce was sufficiently Americanized in the sense that they could at least understand and speak English.

In setting up the Ford English School, Roberts used his own, then famous method, in use as of 1907 at the Y.M.C.A. and other companies – most notably International Harvester (Korman, 1967) – called the Roberts Method, which was based on the Berlitz system of learning English. This method involved “acting out words and sentences” (Korman, 1967; p. 143). Roberts also advocated the strict monitoring and guidance of immigrants in order to endure that they adopt desirable American cultural traits: “shun the foreigner, leave him to himself, let him alone in dirt and disease and unseen by an appreciative eye, and he will simply drift. We would do the same” (Roberts, 1915 p. 19; also see Korman, 1967). The Ford Americanization program served as a model for Detroit’s Americanization campaign, and later on, as a model for the immigrant assimilation campaign undertaken by the National Americanization Day Committee (Hooker, 1997a). The National Americanization Day Committee was organized mainly by industrialists, and was part of the federally sponsored “Americans First Campaign”

For the foreign workers at Ford, enrollment in the Ford English School was “virtually compulsory” and functioned as an agent of socialization into the English language, and American “middle-class” habits. Sociological investigators were instructed by Lee to promote the school to the immigrant workers they investigated, as an effort “to emancipate these foreigners you run up against” (Lee’s Talk to Second Group, pp. 3-4).⁴⁵ Here is how Marquis described it:

If a man declines to go to school, the advantages of the training are carefully explained to him. If he still hesitates, he is laid off and given a chance for uninterrupted meditation and reconsideration. We seldom fail to change his mind. When it comes to promotion, naturally preference is given to the men who have cooperated with us in our educational work. This, also, has its effect.

There (are) over fifty nationalities in the factory and there may be as many nationalities represented in each class as there are men present, for we make no attempt to group them according to language or race. The fact is, we prefer that classes be mixed as to race and country, for our one great aim is to impress these men that they are, or should be, Americans, and that former racial, national and linguistic differences are to be forgotten (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, pp. 10-11).

Note that in mixing various nationalities into the same class, the Ford English School deviated from the guidelines codified by Roberts (1920) five years later. In his *The Problem of Americanization*, Roberts (1920) advised that “any attempt to form a class in English or civics by combining peoples as far removed as the Greek and the White Russian is doomed to failure. Take the Italians, – those coming from Turin differ from Sicilians, and an effort to combine both in an organization for Americanization will not succeed” (p. 32). Still, there is no indication that ethnic strife or miscommunication was evident in Ford classes.

Instruction in the Ford English School ranged from learning English to *savoir vivre*. Marquis was especially proud of the school:

In this school the men are taught first of all the English language. Later on the lessons deal with personal hygiene, the care of the home, and right relations therein. Then the men are taught something about their city, state and national government. Lessons are given in arithmetic, geography and history. Last, but not least, must be mentioned our professor of table manners who with great dramatic art teaches the use of napkin, knife and fork and spoon.

The government has recognized the worth of this school to the extent of giving to men who hold a diploma therefrom their first papers without examination (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, pp. 11-12).

In 1916, the company distributed a booklet to workers titled *SAFETY – HEALTH – BETTER LIVING: Devoted to the Interest of Ford Employees*, which expressed in a concise manner, mainly for the benefit of its foreign born workers, the importance of the English school:

COME TO THE ENGLISH SCHOOL

Now is the time to come to Ford English School.

Many Ford workmen have already learned to speak English in the school. They are better workmen. They get a fine diploma when they finish school.

Men who can speak English are not so apt to be hurt. They don't lose time from accidents.

Ask your foreman about it (Bundy, 1916; p. 69).

Socialists and Ethnic Relations at Ford

Apart from the implications O'Hare's comments had for class relations, it must be noted that her discourse also had implications for ethnic relations. Indeed, although comprising invaluable artifacts showing the socialist outlook concerning class relations of the day, O'Hare's articles also shed light on early twentieth-century ethnic stereotypes, shared among conservatives, liberals, and socialists alike. For example, in the same way that Ford and his Sociological Department were creating an assimilation factory, and judging other cultures as inferior and their preservation (by immigrants) as obstacles to immigrant assimilation, O'Hare's descriptions were also full of stereotypes. Commenting on "Tony" for example, as part of her vignettes exemplifying work at Ford's, "is just a 'dago,' slender and delicate, with dreamy eyes, a sweet tenor voice and absolutely stupid and impossible for manual labor." (Roediger, 1988; p. 248).

Race Relations

There were two racial minority groups represented at the Ford Motor Company during the first two decades of the twentieth-century: Blacks and Jews. Jews comprised 3.5% (1437 persons) of the workforce at the Home Plant, while Blacks comprised 0.3% (106 persons) in 1917 (Educational Statistics as of Jan. 12, 1917; Acc. 572, Box. 31). It is noteworthy that about one third of the Jewish employees, and virtually all African American employees, were naturalized citizens (Educational Statistics as of Jan. 12, 1917; Acc. 572, Box. 31). The size of these groups in comparison with their southern and eastern European counterparts, with whom they were competing for work, was considerably small (Polish immigrants for example in 1917 made up some 18.4% (7525 persons) of the workforce. By the mid 1920s, the River Rouge plant employed 10,000 Black workers, that comprised 10% of the workforce at Fords. These workers also comprised over 50% of Black automobile workers nationally, and around 75% of those in Detroit (Peterson, 1979).

By the beginning of World War I, employment agencies, automobile companies, and such agencies as the Detroit Urban League, began to actively recruit Southerners (both Black and White) for work in Northern factories (Peterson, 1979). Among these was the Ford Motor Company, which from the start became the largest employer of African Americans in the automobile industry.

Like their European counterparts a few years before, most Southern immigrants, particularly African Americans, had been either agricultural workers (sharecroppers) or unskilled manual workers prior to their migration (Peterson, 1979): “many had never before seen the inside of a factory, to say nothing of the work discipline of a company

that ran by the clock with a rigid set of rules governing behavior on the job” (p. 179).

Race Relations and Foundry Work

Work at the foundry was difficult. In fact, they were considered by automobile workers of the day as the most undesirable places of work in the factory, “due to the noise, heat and filth” (Peterson, 1979; p. 179). The foundry at the Ford plant was no exception. Indeed, it was the “dirtiest, meanest job” (Abell, 1915; p. 37) in the plant, which, according to Abell, “is the probable lot of the man who has been too lazy to do a day’s work at an easier task” (p. 37). In 1920, Auto Workers’ News characteristically reported that Ford managers were using the foundry as a sort of punitive transfer: “It is in this department in which the most disagreeable work is performed and it is here that the recalcitrant ones are sentenced to hard labor. The foundry occupies the same place in the Ford scheme as the ‘hole’ does in the penitentiary” (Auto Workers’ News, April 22, 1920; Acc. 940, Box. 5). The idea that foundry work was so harsh that it was used as a means of reprimand was also noted by Nevins (1957, v.1): “new hands suspected of idling might be sent to the stern toil of the foundry; and if they flinched, asking a clerical post in the front office or a light job on the magneto assembly, they might find themselves discharged” (p. 549; also see Marquis, 1923). A large portion of African American workers in Detroit, working for the automobile industry, were employed in foundries (Peterson, 1979). Indeed, some managers, believed that black workers possessed a “superior ability... to withstand extreme heat and to display superior stamina on particularly exhausting and difficult jobs” (Peterson, 1979; p. 179).

Types of Men

The idea that there were different types of men, and that each type was best suited to particular occupations comprised a justification, or at least a rationalization, for the racial stratification of work, which was dominant at that time. This was not specific to the Ford Motor Company, but was part of a more general racial stratification of work. Many employers of the time, justified job segregation and inequality (giving Blacks the worst jobs) by calling it a measure for preventing racial tension (Peterson, 1979). This was the case at the Ford Motor Company as well.

Whether relegated to the Foundry department or not, Black workers were given the worst jobs. Robert Mansfield, who researched Ford in 1926 wrote about the work Black workers at the Ford Motor Company did (“Negroes,” Robert W. Dunn Collection, Acc. 93, Box 1):

Mr. Ford owes a great deal to his negro workers for the work they are willing to do. In other words, he would have a hard time finding white workers enough who would do it and do it so well. I think in Ford's the negroes were doing 'the hardest, roughest, and dirtiest work' in many instances... Young white foremen in charge of some of these men certainly did not think kindly of the work. Only 'niggers, wops, and dagos' would do it, said one.

Although it is reported that the Ford Motor Company attempted to use racially separated groups to compete against each other in order to increase productivity, experiments of this sort were soon abandoned, and Ford soon conformed to what was the norm elsewhere, namely “relatively segregated groups working in different parts of the factory” (Peterson, 1979; p. 181). In the mid 1920s however, a Ford foreman was reported to have stated that “it was a good thing to hook up white workers with Negroes for the Negro often tries to outdo the white man who may be teamed with him. This also

reacts on the white man, with a tendency to greater effort" ("Negroes at Ford," Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 93, Box 1). The same foreman was also reported to have said that "two Negroes together may make a good team but are somewhat more apt to slow down together than when the team is mixed" ("Negroes at Ford," Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 93, Box 1).⁴⁶ Despite the divide and conquer strategies employed by foremen, the above passage also shows how there was no strict racial segregation on the job at Ford. This is also confirmed by Morris Marcus who researched the automobile industry in the mid-1920s, and who reported that although the Employers Association had secretly decided that automobile plants, except Ford, excluded Black workers from employment. Furthermore, Marcus reported that unlike other employers, who "very seldom" put "colored" workers "on line with the men," Ford ran a somewhat desegregated line production ("Colored Workers," Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 93, Box 1). Strictly segregated or not, Black workers at Ford, like elsewhere, were generally relegated to the worst possible jobs.

This was also an inseparable part of Taylor's notion of *enforced cooperation*. Scientific management according to Taylor (1911, p. 59) demanded the kind of cooperation between management and workers "in which each man performs the function for which he is best suited" (p. 59). There are various types of men mentioned in Taylor's work, from "the sluggish type," to "the type of the ox."

Now one of the very first requirements for a man who is fit to handle pig iron as a regular occupation is that he shall be so stupid and so phlegmatic that he more nearly resembles in his mental make-up the ox than any other type. The man who is mentally alert and intelligent is for this very reason entirely unsuited to what would, for him, be the grinding monotony of work of this character. Therefore the workman who is best suited to handling pig iron is unable to understand the real science of doing this class of work. He is so stupid that the word "percentage" has no meaning

to him, and he must consequently be trained by a man more intelligent than himself into the habit of working in accordance with the laws of this science before he can be successful (p. 59).

At Ford, as surely was the case elsewhere at the time, the notion of different types of men was roughly divided along, or at least correlated to racial, and to a lesser degree, ethnic lines.

Yet, despite the similarities of the foundry at the Ford Motor Company with other companies, with a large proportion of African American workers, the situation at Ford's, mainly after the 1920s, was somewhat different than elsewhere for African Americans. At Ford they had a chance for promotion, albeit slight, to positions such as tool-maker, die-maker, and even supervisors (more often of Black crews). Indeed, Willis Ward, an educated Black athlete who worked at Ford stated: "There was nowhere on this planet that a colored man could aspire to and become a tool and die-maker excepting Ford Motor Company" (Peterson, 1979; p. 180).

Although the company had policies that amounted to forcible assimilation for the southern and eastern European immigrants, they did not follow the line of thought concerning African Americans. While there was a major and multifaceted effort to make (practically force) European immigrants leave their ethnic enclaves and merge in the newly created residential areas of Dearborn (duly controlled by Henry Ford himself), there was no such effort taken to "diffuse" African Americans for example. On the contrary, company reports of the late 1910s provide lists of employee "self-reported" nationality, which differentiate between "Americans," "Negroes," and various foreign ethnic and national groups. Clearly, European immigrants, who spoke English, and

became naturalized, or perhaps their children, were considered "American," whereas "Negro" formed a separate (racial – unchanging) category.

It is interesting to note that throughout the 1910s (at least), and in virtually all company texts, European immigrants are referred to as ethnicities/nationalities, whereas people of the Jewish faith are referred to as a race (see for example, Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 14, 1916. 940.16, Labor – Policies – Promotion of Jews). Therefore, although all foreign cultures, except Anglo-Saxon ones of course, were treated as inferior, and therefore all "other" workers (than "Americans") were in need of some adjustment to become "Men," their potential was seen as different in the sense that European immigrants' "weaknesses" were treated as culturally based, whereas "Negro" and "Jewish" "faults" were seen as embedded in the "race."

Conclusions

In this chapter we have seen how the workforce of the Ford Motor Company during the 1910s consisted mainly of immigrant labor. We have also examined how the company, through its Sociological Department, attempted to Americanize its immigrant employees. The process of Americanization of its European immigrant laborers involved among other things the mandatory participation in the company's English School and the essentially forced movement out of ethnic enclaves in Detroit and into working-class neighborhoods adjacent to the Ford plants in Dearborn. By practically forcing south and east European immigrants out of their Detroit ethnic communities, and into "middle-class neighborhoods" in Dearborn, the company was in effect forcing the new immigrants not only to assimilate, but also to become integrated with their European American

inhabitants. While “Negroes,” on the other hand, were forced to assimilate to the new Northern urban industrial expectations, they were neither encouraged nor permitted to abandon their racial enclaves, thus facilitating amalgamation with European races. This chapter then, further clarifies the ideal of “Americanism,” as a racialized category, that included Europeans, but not members of racial minorities. It is reminded that although the majority of Jewish and Black employees were American citizens, they were classified apart from “Americans” in company reports.

Ford’s quest for proper housing for his workers was not equally enforced. During World War I, Detroit, which saw an influx of immigrants during the whole decade, was faced with a housing shortage, which was worsened for Black workers by a growing segregation along racial lines (Peterson, 1979). Such was the shortage, that the Ford Motor Company eased its policy against boarders, at least as far as Black workers were concerned (Peterson, 1979). Due to residential segregation, and although wages between Black and White workers may have been comparable, the standard of living for Blacks was lower than that of Whites (Peterson, 1979).

In all then, the Ford sociological project can be seen as a liberal approach to issues revolving around race and ethnicity, for it considered the individual as the final unit of analysis rather than the group to which he belonged, and for facilitating the employment of African Americans and members of other racial groups, at a time when it was difficult for these groups to find employment in the industrial sector. Indeed, “black Mississippians who signed up with Henry Ford in 1919 believed themselves fortunate to be working for such a (relatively) progressive employer” (Jones, 1992; p. 236). In that, it can be said that the company acted as an agent of change. Still, it operated within, and

ultimately reinforced many of the racial attitudes and ideologies of the day. In this respect, the company can be seen as an agent for the maintenance and reinforcement of racial attitudes, but also of the racial stratification in the economic structure.

In this chapter I have examined the demographics of the Ford workforce during the Progressive period, and have shown how the thrust of the company's sociological project was aimed at the southern and eastern European immigrants that in the 1910s and 20s comprised more than half of the workforce. Furthermore, I examined some of the implications that company practices had for race and ethnic relations, including Americanization, and racial stratification of work. In the following chapter, I examine the implications of Ford policies for class relations.

CHAPTER IX

CLASS RELATIONS AT FORD

Following the discussion on ethnic and racial relations at the Ford Motor Company, this chapter examines the implications of the Ford values and practices for class relations. I argue that Ford's sociological project essentially contributed to the development of a post-Franklinian, middle-class minded, working-class. Although officially the policies of the Sociological Department aimed at adjusting the living conditions, and habits of the workforce, Ford's sociological project attempted to create an industrial working-class, which would enjoy high wages for intensive work, and have interests and habits aligned with, and promoted by the management. In short, Ford's sociological project contributed to a working-class that would have a client relationship with capital – its patron class. There are numerous references in *Ford Times* to the “middle-class” status foreign workers at Ford's should and could achieve upon internalizing the Ford doctrine of Americanization, thrift, and the Ford work ethic, and upon leaving the ethnic ghettos to move to “middle-class” neighborhoods. The five-dollar-day “profit-sharing” plan attempted to do just that, to convince the workforce that workers' interests were or should be aligned with the interests of the company and its management. This of course kept the unions outside the equation. For example, in a telegram to the United Press dated December 31, 1919, Henry Ford declared:

My conviction is that most of the trouble which has afflicted some lines of industry in this country is due to the separation which has come between the management and the men. Both groups are human. Both live off the same business, the business is the creation of both. The business cannot

succeed in a human way unless both groups are united in the same interests (Acc. 940, Box 5; p. 1).

Making a Working Class: Engineering Men

As we have seen, the Ford Motor Company Sociological Department acted as a facilitator, or a catalyst, in the transformation of the thousands of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe into an American working-class. In fact, on the day Marquis took charge of Ford's Sociological Department, he was told by Henry Ford, "we want to make men in this factory as well as automobiles" (Marquis, 1923; pp. 153-4). These men that Henry Ford envisioned being produced by the policies of his company had particular characteristics, similar to the ones promoted by Benjamin Franklin. Indeed, the vision of a virtuous, loyal and healthy body of men, which was promoted by the company, can generally be seen under the light of the classical American values of industry, frugality, and temperance put forth by Benjamin Franklin (1909). Nevins (1957 vol. 2), for example stated:

Ford, Lee, and the other planners of the other planners of the Sociological Department emphasized the importance of a wholesome family life; the requisites of physical and mental health; and Americanization through mastery of the English language and New World ways. They encouraged a Ben Franklin type of thrift, savings being valued not in themselves but for what they could purchase (p. 332).

Still, what may be of particular interest to the study of labor relations during the Progressive period, and what many may have failed to note, is the deviation of the set of values promoted in 1914 by the Ford Motor Company from Franklin's vision. Ford's formulation was somewhat different in the way it envisioned the virtue of frugality (thrift

as Ford termed it). Ford's goal was not to invest the fruits of one's thrift (savings) on productive projects aimed at maximizing wealth and success, like Franklin suggested, but rather savings would be used to improve family conditions and living conditions in general, meaning the purchase and proper furnishing of a family house, and a car. Clearly, Ford was not cultivating a class of "entrepreneurs," but a working-class of producers and consumers, aspiring to "American middle-class" values:

Mr. Ford told me he wanted it known that his plan is for every family working for him a comfortable home; a bath-tub in it, and a yard with a little garden, and ultimately, he wanted to see every employee of his owning an automobile. I asked him, 'a Ford automobile?' and he said that would be going a little too far. (Mr. Lee's Talk to First Group of Investigators, April 15th, 1914; S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. Number 940, Box 17; p. 1).⁴⁷

Note that when Lee (and indirectly Ford himself) referred to families instead of individuals "working for him" it was not at all a slip of the tongue. Ford's five-dollar day wage was very much a family wage (see for example May, 1990; also the stipulations of the profit-sharing system, which barred women, and young men, with no dependants to share in profits), paid by the company to heads of families. As we will see in the next chapter, women, according to Ford, belonged at home, as wives and homemakers (this was clearly stated by Henry Ford himself – numerous times, as well as by some of his managers, i.e. Marquis). In all, Ford considered that the five-dollar day wage was high enough to allow for "proper family relations." A good man, was a good husband, a good father, a good worker.

Given the racist beliefs of the day regarding ethnic and racial relations, together with the Progressive idea that the individual should be considered rather than the group as a whole in determining ability, it is unsurprising that the Ford Motor Company created

the structure of the profit-sharing plan the way it did. Investigations were meant to weed out undeserving individuals from deserving ones. Indeed, for even “liberal” sociologists, such as Edward Alsworth Ross, there were, as we have seen above, “God’s poor” but also “the devil’s poor” (Ross, 1920; p. 388).

Thrift

One of the values promoted dearly by the company was that of thrift. Thrift basically required that a man organized his expenses to include a generous portion for family, home, and automobile, as well as a portion for insurance for the future, in the forms of life insurance and bank savings. Indeed, these were measurable categories examined by sociological investigators and reported to the company: “Every employee must account for his share of profits. In other words, he must show the Company how he is handling the money given him over and above his skilled rate” (“Accounting for Share of Profits,” S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293). As soon as the profit-sharing system was started in 1914, the first Head of the Sociological Department, John Lee warned his investigators: “You will find a lot of single chaps who have done a lot of things with their money, out of the ordinary. If the man has been in our employ two years, and lived in Detroit for three or four years; has no dependents, and has no money in the bank, he is considered unthrifty” (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 5). Worker spending had to balance the various categories approved by the Sociological Department. For example, banking all earnings while living in housing that did not meet the qualifications of the company was behavior that was not approved: “Better a man who settles debts and aids family than

one who piles money in the bank – better to buy than to rent, even if all money get tied up in the house and furnishings” (Lee's Talk to Second Group, p. 5).

An interesting aspect of class relations as seen by the management at the Ford Motor Company, is the extended use of the term "middle-class" to refer to the state immigrant workers should look forward to. The company had a policy of steering (read forcing) ethnic immigrants away from their ethnic enclaves, and into "proper" housing in Dearborn, through a network of affiliated real estate agents (remember that members of the Ford family had interests in land in Dearborn – let alone that the development of the area benefited Ford and his company who owned a huge chunk of land in Dearborn). Many documents deal with real estate "problems" of their workers. A document with minutes of a meeting held on May 12, 1915 for example (Acc. 940 Box 17) revolved solely around worker's problems with real estate and ways the Ford Motor Company could "guide" them.

A 1916 editorial in *Ford Times* titled Religion and Sociology described a sermon in a Michigan Episcopal church, in which rev. E.M. Bullock commented on the “educational work” of the Ford Motor Company. He was quoted stating:

The foreigners often have to be taught that the best use of money is not always to put it in the savings bank, but that their children should be clothed and that they should adopt American standards of living. The Americans, on the other hand, have to learn that they ought not to spend everything they make in trying to live a little better than their neighbors (vol. 10, no.2; p. 83).

Paternalism

Scholars agree (i.e., Levin, 1927b; Nevins, 1957; Meyer, 1981) that the policies of the Sociological Department constituted a form of paternalism of the company over the workers. In doing so, they at least implicitly acknowledge that this paternalism was one of a particular social class, the capitalist/industrialist class, over another, the working-class. This paternalism accompanied Ford's policy of open-shop, which lasted until 1941, when the Ford Motor Company signed its first collective agreement with the CIO's United Automobile Workers Union.

Paternalism at Ford, mainly toward its African American employees, as argued by Brueggemann (2000), kept the unions at bay at a time when other employers were forced to abandon their open-shop policies, and contributed to the split labor market dynamics of the day. It was only the unionization of Black workers in the late 1930s, under the United Auto Workers (UAW) that enabled the labor movement to overcome the paternalistic policies practiced by the Ford Motor Company.

Paternalism at the Ford Motor Company went hand in hand with the company's rejection of labor unions as representatives of labor, a role that the Ford Motor Company maintained for itself. Ford rejected the principles of collective bargaining. Indeed, he considered labor unions to be an unnecessary evil. According to company discourse, the company itself was to play the role of the unions, in that it was to act as a protector of worker interests. Indeed, the company tried to persuade workers and other stakeholders that the adopted model for labor relations that the company followed should be characterized as fraternal instead of paternal. This effort failed as even company officials viewed the Ford system as paternalistic, albeit benevolent.

Other aspects of the Ford sociological project that reinforced and maintained the paternalistic relations of the Ford Motor Company with its workers, included the prohibition of seeking work elsewhere once employed by the company, and the use of Ford badges by employees in their public appearances. All in all, these policies tended to produce loyal Ford subjects, even in the face of extreme opposition from labor unions.⁴⁸ It is characteristic that even as late as 1926, when Ford's high wages were no more as competitive as they were a decade before, Chen-Nan Li, a labor activist who spent the Summer of 1925 at Ford, estimated that although Ford employed "detectives" to search for on the job "labor disturbers," this was unnecessary due to the fact that foremen were loyal to the company and kept a close watch over the workers, and due to the hard work Ford workers had to endure, that left "no chance for social contact." Li concluded that Ford workers were "not disposed to unionize" (Organization-Ford-Spies, Robert W. Dunn Collection, Acc. 96, Box 1).⁴⁹

Generally, scholars agree that paternalism at Ford decreased in stages. In 1917, the company made a reorganization to increase efficiency, which also involved the Sociological (Educational) Department. Both the size and scope of responsibility decreased. After the reorganization, an employee was to be investigated twice: upon hiring, and after five months service (Nevins, 1957 vol. 2). By 1921, when Marquis left the company, the Sociological Department (Educational) witnessed an even more dramatic decrease in its size and scope of work. It changed its title back to Sociological Department, and operated until 1949, albeit under the overshadowing presence of Harry Bennett's Service Department.

Still, although the direct paternalistic enforcement of Ford's values and norms diminished in time and in the 1920s was replaced by a "more ruthless regime" (this is how the story goes according to Marquis, 1923; Ulrich, 1929; Nevins, 1957; Foster, 1987) there is no evidence to suggest a major shift in the actual constellation of values promoted by the company. So, in effect, although the methods for enforcing the types of social relations promoted by the company as appropriate had changed, the actual conceptualization of those relations did not.

It must be noted that Ford's paternalism was not out of line with the prominent ideologies of the day concerning class, but also race and ethnic relations. If anything, writers of the day considered Ford's paternalistic attitude as Progressive and liberal. For example, commenting on the Ford Sociological Department in an article published in *The Iron Age* in 1915, Abell (1915) argued the following:

The attitude of this company toward its employees reflects the spirit of a new conception in industry. The success which contents itself with the manufacture of a commercially profitable product is but partial success. The genius which directs the amassing of material wealth is but half served unless it also discharges its equal obligation to account for the welfare of the human agencies of industry which it controls. We cry 'benevolent paternalism.' There is need for paternalism. The greater must care for the less. We provide schools for the child. Instruction and discipline are compulsory, and it is well. But we forget that measured in the scale of knowledge and experience there are always children and grownups, pupils and teachers, and age is nothing. The Ford Motor Company is conducting a great school, a school in the art and science of living (p. 39).

The official position of the Ford Motor Company, as Marquis expressed it, was that its relations with workers constituted a fraternal rather than a paternal system. In an interview published in the *Metropolitan Magazine*, Marquis declared: "We find that many people do not know how to take care of their money or employ their leisure. We try

to help them, that's all... It is not wise for workmen to spend their money for things that do not belong to them in their station of life" (Acc. 940, Box 17; p. 1).

Loyalty

Employee loyalty was important to the Ford Motor Company. Loyalty to the company was ensured in various ways: from company public discourse aimed at workers and encouraging loyalty to employer, to forbidding workers from pursuing gainful employment elsewhere, to company badges to be worn by workers in public. Public discourse controlled by the company, such as Ford Times regularly featured articles and editorials exalting the company's contributions to the welfare of its workforce, and encouraged workers to have loyalty in their benefactor. Many Ford workers wore their identification badges in pride to public events (Nevins, 1957, v.1; p. 549). George Brown, who started work in 1907, reported in his reminiscences that "every man wore his Ford badge in public after the granting of the Five-Dollar Day because he was proud of it" (Lewchuk, 1993; p. 844).

Employee loyalty and avoidance of conflict of interests was also reinforced through prohibiting company workers from gainful employment outside Ford. This is how Marquis rationalized the company position:

The Company pays each of its employees a living wage, and it should not be necessary for any of them to engage in outside business, which takes up the time intended for rest and recreation, and makes them less efficient in their work.

All those engaged in other business are given the option of closing out, or resigning from the employ of the Company (Employees Engaged in Other Business, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293).

Finally, it must be noted that the existence of a large pool of unemployed people in Detroit, due to the wide circulation of newspaper ads and public discourse about “high wages in Detroit” (Ulrich, 1929; p. 3), also contributed to a sense of loyalty, or at least to the acquiescence of Ford workers. Referring to the pool of surplus labor that amassed in Detroit in the late 1920s, Walter Edward Ulrich, a labor activist, argued, “it is this great group of free men that keeps the factory workers docile at disagreeable jobs and enables employers to cut wages” (Ulrich, 1929; p. 3).

In the 1920s and 1930s, when Ford’s welfare system virtually collapsed, loyalty and obedience were secured through panoptikon-like strategies, like employing “spotters” who would report on deviations from prescribed behaviors on but also off the job (see for example 1929’s “Ford Resorts to Stool Pigeons in Enslaving Men” by Robert Dunn, Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 93, Box 1). The spotter or spy system set up by the Ford Motor Company was not unique. Chrysler and Packard were employing similar strategies to counteract “agitators.”

Be it through welfare capitalism, or overt repression and control, the management of the Ford Motor Company was successful in maintaining an open-shop by excluding labor unions, for three decades, from 1913 to 1941. The Ford Sociological Department (together with other departments like the Service Department) was the expression of the Fordist model for labor relations, for it was through its policies and actions that the company ensured the loyalty of its workforce, even in the face of radical opposition from labor unions.

Centralization of Power and Deskilling of Workers

One of the tenets of Taylor's (1911) *Scientific Management*, which became an instant hit in Detroit the very first year of its publication (Lacey, 1986), was that power got transferred from the workers (including supervisors), to the management. Although Ford and his managers made every effort to take all the credit for their own system of management, at the Ford Motor Company, this theoretical tenet of Taylor's scientific management became a perpetual reality to thousands. One of the reforms that Lee instigated was the centralization of power, at least relating to hiring and firing practices of the company (Raff and Summers, 1987). This reform took away the power of foremen to hire and fire members of their crews: "the right to discharge a man from company's employ has been taken away from the foreman" (S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; p. 7). The only power foremen had left on this issue was the power of requesting that a worker be transferred to another post.

Seasoned skilled workers who were accustomed to working in a series of workshops (comprising the factory), in which control of production (pace, order, etc) was in their hands, found themselves in a centralized managed situation, where their skills were no longer required, thus being demoted to unskilled labor (Meyer, 1981; 1989). The transfer of power from foremen to management was accomplished with the systematic study of the production process, and its breaking down into their simplest ingredients by the management, followed by the employment of machines where possible. In effect, the principle of interchangeability of parts was fully employed in the design of production, including the management of personnel.

No worker at the time, rural or urban, was accustomed to this kind of strenuous factory work. Resistance in the form of labor turnover was creating great losses to the company. That was one of the main reasons the five-dollar-day plan was adopted. The company was also instrumental in the adoption of the eight-hour day and the six-day week work, for which Ford was intensely criticized by other industrialists. Peasant immigrants therefore, were not being asked to assimilate into an already formulated U.S. working-class, but to a class ever in transition since the colonial period. This was in the making at Ford's, and elsewhere during the Progressive era. Note that once, when an investigator created a report on a worker who had what we today call social capital (knew people in powerful positions), the whole management descended on the Sociological Department to make sure this does not happen again. Therefore, class distinctions were not only being created, but existing class was also maintained and respected, thus perpetuating it. In 1922, Henry Ford stated that 43% of his workers had jobs requiring a day or less of training, 36% from one day to one week, 6% from one to two weeks, 14% from a month to a year, and 1% from one to six years (Editorial in *The Social Service Bulletin*, vol. 19, no. 13; September 1, 1929. Robert W. Dunn Collection, Acc. 96, Box 2).

Socialists and Ford

Commenting on the Ford Sociological Department and its policies, Bernstein (1997), recognized the importance of Ford's sociological project by acknowledging that "along with the new Taylorist technology that robbed work of its intellectual content, it was a clear attempt to create a new kind of industrial worker, a 'trained gorilla' who

Gramsci believed would endure repetitive and measured labor for good pay” (p. 192).

Although Ford was by no means a socialist, and while socialists recognized the alienation that Fordist methods produced, Ford’s five-dollar day plan was praised by Progressive socialists all over the world, in the hope that Ford’s innovations would transform peasant immigrants into a modern, educated, working-class that would then be ready for socialist indoctrination (Roediger, 1988). Not only Antonio Gramsci, but also Kate Richard O’Hare, a socialist leader of national importance, enthusiastically embraced Ford’s mode of production. In lengthy articles in the Socialist monthly *The National Rip-saw*, O’Hare detailed Ford’s setup, while at the same time beautifying it for socialist consumption. For example, she had precious little to say about the extreme alienation evident in Ford’s innovative line-production.⁵⁰

O’Hare spent two days visiting Ford’s plant at Highland Park – seen by the editor of *The National Rip-saw* as the “most spectacular experiment ever made in the world” – and produced an enthusiastically endorsing report, which “without exaggeration [and] if anything, toned down for fear that many readers would not believe the whole truth” (Roediger, 1988, p. 242).⁵¹

Roediger (1988) noted that O’Hare’s motivation for praising Ford’s industrial setup stemmed partly from Ford’s contribution to the anti-war movement favored by socialists at that time, but also from the expectation that the new setup would lessen the arbitrary powers of foremen. In general though, O’Hare’s ultimate hope – a hope that she shared with Gramsci and other Marxists – was that Ford’s innovations would ultimately serve socialism by transforming old world peasant immigrants into a modern capitalist working-class, through education and training, and thus in a way delivering workers to

the socialists, ready for their indoctrination. This hope, in my evaluation, was the distinguishing characteristic of progressive socialists, who were so despised by Walter Benjamin, who saw them as traitors to the revolution. The hope for O'Hare and other socialists then, was that although Ford's ideas and practices would not end social problems, they would ultimately, "advance the cause of social justice, demonstrate the soundness of the socialist theories and bring the mighty pressure of education to hasten the final and complete emancipation of the working class" (Roediger, 1988; p. 252). O'Hare and others of course neglected to take into consideration the kind of education those workers got in Ford Academy, namely an education that indoctrinated workers into the dominant managerial ideologies of the day, as well as values and norms that tended to emphasize upward mobility of individuals rather than the collective mobility of a whole class.

Ideological Hegemony

Ford was a pioneer concerning issues revolving around ideological hegemony over the workers. In the 1910s, the prevailing language among industrialists concerning labor was one of combat and struggle (Bendix, 1956). It was not until the 1920s and 1930s, that the mass of employers and industrialists adopted a rhetoric of cooperation and industrial peace (Bendix, 1956). Still, Ford adopted the language of cooperation and industrial peace as of 1914, when he introduced the five-dollar day plan, even if in practice this amounted to "enforced cooperation." The concept of enforced cooperation was central to Taylor's (1911) *Principles of Scientific Management*:

It is only through enforced standardization of methods, enforced adoption of the best implements and working conditions, and enforced cooperation that this faster work can be assured. And the duty of enforcing the adoption of standards and of enforcing this cooperation rests with the management alone. The management must supply continually one or more teachers to show each new man the new and simpler motions, and the slower men must be constantly watched and helped until they have risen to their proper speed. All of those who, after proper teaching, either will not or cannot work in accordance with the new methods and at the higher speed must be discharged by the management (p. 83).

Labor relations at the Ford Motor Company during the late Progressive era can be characterized as ones of “enforced cooperation.” Indeed, the notion of ‘enforced cooperation’ was a central aspect of Frederick Taylor’s (1911) *Principles of Scientific Management*, while securing workers’ cooperation has been a major theme in managerial discourse since the 1920s (Bendix, 1956). Still, behind the recognition of the need for cooperation with labor, and the rhetoric that accompanied it, a major aspect of managerial ideologies in the first three decades of the twentieth-century United States was the absolute control of employers over the production process. The cooperation between capital and labor was envisioned by capitalists as a tripartite relationship in economy: capital, managers, and labor (Bendix, 1956). This model left out labor unions as representatives of workers. In this model, “capital and labor should cooperate, they should understand each other better; for capital is an outgrowth of virtues such as diligence, frugality, and honesty which are within the reach of everyone. And every worker is, in fact, a potential capitalist, since everyone should be so regarded who earns a dollar but does not spend it” (p. 283). This was after all, the Franklinian vision of the thrifty entrepreneur.

Yet, the way the Ford Motor Company envisioned the concept of thrift deviated somewhat from the Franklinian image of the thrifty entrepreneur, saving every penny,

resisting that second set of silverware, and investing all in the future. Ford's ideas of thrift were more in par with the needs of modern day industrialists; namely, the creation (or maintenance) of a thrifty, but at the same time, (moderately) consuming working-class. There are many instances of Ford officials' warnings to workers that too much thrift was not acceptable as signs of proper behavior. The purpose of sharing in company profits was not to encourage capital-producing investment. Workers were encouraged instead to utilize their share of the profits to increase family comforts.

As mentioned above, the two main investments the company encouraged through the stipulations of the profit-sharing plan were the purchase of a house and a car. As Lee told his investigators on April 15, 1914, "Mr. Ford told me he wanted it known that his plan is for every family working for him a comfortable home; a bath tub in it, and a yard with a little garden, and ultimately, he wanted to see every employee of his owning an automobile" (Lee's Talk to First Group, p. 1).⁵² It was therefore more important to the company that workers improve the material conditions of their home, and the living standards of their families, rather than increase their capital (for productive investments).

Lee noted this to his investigators (Lee's Talk to Second Group):

I would a great deal rather see those men take this money and go and buy some little home and stick every darn cent into it, outside of getting the little things for cheering his family up a little, and to make the home comfortable for himself and his family, than to go and rent some place and stick the rest of his money in the bank (p. 5).

In another occasion, Marquis (The Ford Cooperative Plan, Acc. 940, Box 17) declared that "the Home Building Plan meets the desire that every right-minded man has for a home of his own" (p. 2).

The image of husband and wife both working to increase family funds was thoroughly rejected. The following example is characteristic of the company's views on the subject: The November 1914 (vol. 8, no. 2; pp. 81-82) issue of *Ford Times* hosted an editorial article titled Ford Sociological Work: The Making of Men and Homes, in which an employee's efforts to discover why he was excluded from profit-sharing were explored. The employee lived in a big house, had a substantial bank account, which was a sign of thrift, and had an additional monthly income in excess of \$300, from boarders; a family business that the worker's wife was maintaining. This was actually an anathema to the company, which saw his behavior as greedy and neglectful to his wife and children.

It has been argued that through the five-dollar day, the Ford Motor Company essentially discovered *efficiency wages* (Borjas, 1996).⁵³ Indeed, Raff and Summers (1987) noted that:

In 1913, annual turnover at the Ford Plant reached 370%. Ford had to hire 50,448 men during the course of the year in order to maintain the average labor force at 13,623. A company survey revealed that slightly more than 7,300 workers left the company in March 1913. Of these, about 18% were discharged, 11% quit formally, and 71% were so-called 5-day men who had missed 5 work days in a row without excuse and so were simply deemed to have quit (p. S63).

By 1915, about a year into the profit-sharing plan, the rate of turnover was reduced to 2.5%, and worker productivity raised by about 20% (Borjas (1996). Even more important to the workers though is that the five-dollar day practically increased their buying power to the point where they could actually afford to consume the products of their labor. The transformation of producers into consumers of their own product flew in the face of Marxist doctrine, which insisted that "To each capitalist, the total mass of all workers, with the exception of his own workers, appear not as workers

but as consumers” (in Janvry and Garramon, 2000; p. 180). This can be overlooked, for producers of automobiles are but a tiny fraction of the potential market for automobiles, but at this early time, when automobiles were not yet a mass produced commodity, adding the thousands of Detroit workers to the pool of potential buyers was significant. Furthermore, Ford’s wages and low prices for the Model T provided a strong incentive for others to provide comparable raises to their workforce, as well as to adopt Fordist methods of production. In all, the Ford Motor Company’s five-dollar day had consequences regarding class that went beyond its immediate environment.

In short, through his sociological project, Henry Ford was creating a class of producers and consumers, what is more; consumers of their own products. Indeed, this is what Susman (1974) essentially argued in commenting on Ford’s five-dollar day and the Sociological investigations when he stated that “Ford himself realized that part of what he was doing created customers for his automobiles” (p. 451). Therefore, the Ford sociological project contributed to the rise of a consumer society in the 1920s.

The Ford Motor Company also allocated resources for the monitoring and control of his workers' political affiliations. The Ford Motor Company maintained a network of spies and spotters to report on worker activities while on the job, as well as union activities, communist/socialist organizations, etc. There is a number of reports from various individuals, most prominently by operative No.15, B.J. Liccardi, concerning the activities of "radicals," which are important in showing how the Ford Motor Company tried to monitor, and control, all kinds of political activities among its workers, or within the boundaries of its host town Dearborn and Detroit, that the company considered dangerous. These reports and other related documents are mainly concentrated in

Accession 640 Box 17, under the folder "Labor – Radicals." A number of letters between Ford Motor Company officers and employees or ex-employees claiming discrimination against them for political reasons is also of importance to my research. For example, Accession 940, Box 17 – Labor – Office Workers, includes excerpts from an exchange of letters between a man accusing the company of not hiring him due to his socialist affiliations, and Liebold's reply defending the company, and stating the usual line of defense (no discrimination).

By assuming a paternalistic stance, and by adopting and promoting the particular set of values to its factory workers, the Ford Motor Company was in essence recreating class relations, simply because the set of values propagated for managers was different.

CHAPTER X

FAMILIES AND GENDER RELATIONS AT FORD

Following the preceding chapter's discussion on class relations at the Ford Motor Company, this chapter examines gender relations. It begins with a discussion of the family as perceived by company management, and its importance to labor relations. This discussion is followed by an examination of the company efforts to promote marriage and to strengthen families, an examination of the procedures established by the company to verify marital status, and to arbitrate "wrong" family relations. This chapter concludes with an examination of the position of women in company discourse and practices.

Family as the Foundation of Industry

In line with mainstream ideas relating to gender relations of the day, the Ford Motor Company through its Sociological Department employed policies that reinforced what may be called family values of the Progressive era. Indeed, Samuel Marquis saw the institution of marriage and family as the foundation of industry. Upon taking charge of his new position as Head of the Sociological Department, Marquis (1916) argued the following:

Much has been said about the home as the foundation of state and church. We have made the discovery at the Ford that the family is also the basis of right economic and industrial conditions. The welfare of the factory, no less than the welfare of the state and church, depends upon the home. We therefore keep a close watch on the home. We encourage better housing. We take families up bodily, if need be, and move them into better neighborhoods (p. 914).

In another version of essentially the same statement, Marquis added, “nothing tends to lower a man’s efficiency more than wrong family relations” (The Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293, Box 1; p. 15). In yet another occasion, Marquis stated that “a man’s inefficiency and his disinclination to remain at work was usually due to trouble in his home which made it impossible for him to keep his mind on his work. The workmen either were troubled with debts or did not live in the right kind of a house or their domestic life was adversely influenced by their intemperate habits” (Henry Ford’s Idea of Brotherhood, S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 940, Box 17; p. 2).

Both men and women had duties, according to the company, relating to the maintenance of healthy families. Men were seen as the providers of the family, while the female role was seen as that of a full-time domestic laborer, mother, and wife.

Concerning men in particular, Marquis (1916) argued that in order to qualify for profit-sharing, and to ultimately avoid losing their job, they had to be good providers for their families:

We insist that a man shall provide generously in proportion to his means for his wife and children. Should he fail to do this, we may turn his profits over to his wife, until he learns to do the square thing. We impress upon a man’s mind the fact that the one condition on which we will share profits with him is that he in turn will share them with his family (p. 914).

Concerning wives, Marquis (1916) explained that they were meant to devote their full time attention to maintaining the family home and taking care of the children. They were not meant to occupy themselves in paid work:

Mr. Ford’s idea is that a home in which there are roomers or boarders can never be a real home. We therefore insist that the wife of a profit-sharer be free to give her entire time to the home. Roomers and boarders must go or profits are withheld. Wives seldom object to this ruling.

So firmly convinced are we that the home is the first essential to right living that more than once we have gone out and rented a house, sent to distant cities for the workman's family, and put them together in the new home. The results are worth many times the investment (p. 914).

Verifying Marriage

Marquis described the appropriate procedures to be utilized by sociological investigators in order to establish that a worker was indeed married. The preferred way was to verify it through legal documents, such as a marriage certificate, insurance policies with husband and wife mentioned as beneficiaries, joint land contracts, or baptismal records of children. In case of foreign workers, passports were sometimes used. When documents could not produce a definitive picture concerning the marriage status of an employee, the decision was left at the discretion of the investigator (Verifying Marriage, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293).

Ford Motor Company's promotion of marriage was not unqualified. Around 1916, Marquis planned to exclude married men under twenty-one years of age from profit-sharing. This was necessitated by the impetus that the prospects of sharing in profits created in young men to marry. In particular, Marquis stated that:

A new ruling will shortly go into effect to the end that married men under twenty one shall not share in the profits. This ruling is made necessary in order to put an end to boys of nineteen and twenty hastily taking unto themselves a wife just to get a share of profits. Some of these marriages have not turned out as happily as could be desired (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, p. 13).

Despite Marquis's intentions, this particular policy does not seem to have been successful, for as Levin (1927a) noted, "in the course of time even single men of eighteen

years ‘known to be living wholesomely and constructively’ were numbered with the other qualified groups” (p. 79).

Still, it is clear that the company offered differential treatment to single workers, which is best exemplified by the qualifications for honor roll: While married employees had to be at least thirty years of age, single employees had to be at least thirty five, with even stricter standards of thrift. One can imagine that for single workers aged thirty to thirty-five there was real pressure to marry.

Promoting Marriage and Families

According to Henry Ford and his executives – and thus the Ford Company – married men made better workers. Indeed, married men were preferred to single ones for hiring purposes, and once hired, married men were preferred over single ones for selection for profit-sharing. Even as late as 1925, Chen-Nan Li reported that young men were preferred to old ones, married to single ones, natives to foreigners, and men who made a home in the Detroit area to those who did not (Robert W. Dunn Collection, Series I; Acc. 96, Box 1).

The profit-sharing plan, and its enforcement by the Sociological Department was so effective that, at least initially, it created some unforeseen consequences relating to family relations. Indeed, at the beginning of the profit-sharing plan, such was the pressure felt by single employees to get married that investigators found many of them devised fake marriages just to qualify for profit-sharing. Over and above the several instances of fraud, Ford’s sociological project facilitated a dynamic that strengthened family relations.

In particular, Marquis mentioned, albeit with a dash of sarcasm, that upon the introduction of the profit-sharing system,

unmarried men hired women to pose as their wives. Others adopted children for the time being. Brothers found long lost sisters and mothers. Poor relations for once in the history of the world became an asset, and not a liability. There were forged marriage certificates, forged passports, forged birth and baptismal certificates. Where fraud was proved, profits were taken back, and the company recovered \$37,000. that had been fraudulently obtained in some one of the ways above mentioned (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, p. 14).

The company greatly opposed divorce among its employees, and in such an eventuality, the company assumed an arbitrary role. If sociological investigators assessed that the failure of a worker's marriage was the worker's fault and not his wife's, then the company withheld the profit-sharing part of his salary. In Marquis's words:

It is not the policy of the company to pay profits to man who is seeking a divorce, to be expended in court costs or alimony. If divorce proceedings are started, we explain our policy to the worker and give him to understand that if he is at fault, he will not go back to the profit-sharing class, but if the fault is with his wife, then he will be entitled to his profits. The company does everything it can to discourage divorce and to aid in establishing happy domestic relations (Henry Ford's Idea of Brotherhood, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 940, Box 17; p. 4).

Promoting "Healthy Family Relations"

Promoting "healthy" family relations was one of the goals of Ford's sociological project. In 1916, Marquis declared:

We lay much stress upon family conditions. We make every effort to reunite a man and wife who are living apart. We bring together scattered families. If conditions seem to warrant it, we use everything short of physical force in bringing about the reunion of families, in some instances renting a house and furnishing it and placing the scattered members of the family in it and then by following them up help them to

settle into proper relations (The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293, p. 15).

Indeed, the involvement of the company in its workers' family life did not end with its promotion of marriage through public discourse or the stipulations of the profit-sharing system. Often, the company would step in to correct a situation that was deemed "unhealthy" by the company. For example, in cases where a worker's wife would complain that her husband did not provide enough for his family, the company sometimes would withhold the profit-sharing portion of the salary from the worker and give it directly to his wife.

Part of the active role the Ford Motor Company played in the maintenance of "healthy family relations" was ensuring that a family was clear of domestic trouble. Establishing this, for the purposes of profit-sharing, was not an easy task. As Marquis noted, "It is impossible to set specific rules for handling all cases of domestic trouble, but each individual case will suggest its own probable solution. We should not interest ourselves in small family quarrels and differences, but the complainant should be given a word of advice and left to adjust their own difficulties" (Domestic Trouble, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293). However, in case of serious domestic problems company investigators were asked to take an arbitrating role: "It should be distinctly understood that the object of the Ford Motor Company is to protect and built up happy homes and in no way assist in tearing them down" (Domestic Trouble, S.S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293).

Commenting on the problems that faced sociological investigators, Marquis noted the challenges posed by the issue of "domestic problem" for the company:

One of the first things we encountered was the domestic problem. In fact, it was one of the hardest problems we had. We found a lot of

people, especially among the foreign element, who thought that the mere procuring of a marriage license was sufficient. We also found a lot of foreigners, who having left their wives in the old country had just as easily forgotten them and married other women here.

This state of affairs was largely due to ignorance, but when we found practically the same state of affairs among our intelligent American born workmen, the situation assumed a more serious aspect and required a great deal of diplomacy on the part of our investigators to straighten out.

We found Americans who, for unexplained reasons, assumed the relations of married people without going thru the proper ceremony. In some instances children had been the result of such union. When approached, these people first assumed all sorts of hostile attitudes, threatening all sorts of things if we continued to mess with their domestic affairs; but when we explained to them that our only interest in them was a friendly one, they invariably asked that we assist them to straighten out the tangle (S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. 293; pp. 3-4).

The Position of Women

Concerning gender relations, women occupied a very special place in Ford Motor Company. Initially, women were not allowed to work in the company and only gradually began to be employed, and then only to "suitable" positions. It is interesting to note that even as late as 1937, only 361 women were employed by the Ford Motor Company, in a total of 83,285 strong workforce, representing a total of less than 0.5% (Monthly Report of Employees dated Jan 31, 1937; Acc. 572, Box 32). With the five-dollar day, women's employment at Ford's was under very limiting rules and regulations. For example, only women who were the sole support of some next of kin or blood relative were allowed to join the profit-sharing system. "Girls," as they were often referred to in public company discourse, were allocated to secretarial (and clerk) positions in the company and to line production work (when "nimble" fingers were called for). These positions had no chance of mobility except to the position of forewoman, supervising other female employees.

In an interview, Henry Ford clearly and openly argued that a woman's place is in the home, and that the company policies reflected, and encouraged that position. Indeed, in an interview in Metropolitan Magazine on October 1916, Samuel Marquis reiterated Henry Ford's position that women "belong at home." Therefore, although Ford Motor Company was in the business of creating cars and "Men" out of immigrants, it was also inevitably in the business of making "women" too.

The company's valorization of the nuclear family necessitated the adoption of full-time household maintenance work (including child rearing) by women. So far had the company's encouragement of marriage gone, via the selective offering of profit-sharing, that fake marriages were becoming a social problem in Detroit. This necessitated the intervention of the company, which promptly began to send out investigators for verification of marital relationships among company workers.

The following short excerpt from the company archives on the procedure for hiring female workers in 1914 is indicative of the "special" position they occupied in the Ford Motor Company in the 1910s. Note that the average number of workers at the home plant in 1914 was 12,880.

About 250 names of women are on the factory pay roll; their time is kept at the factory time-keeper's office. Applicants are invariably friends of employees, and make personal application to forewoman of department they wish to enter. In case the forewoman views the applicant favorably, she fills a regular application for employment form and sends it to the employment department, and the routine is then the same as for male applicants. The women workers have an exclusive entrance at the northwest corner of the factory, from Woodward Avenue (Ford Factory Women Workers, Acc. 940; Box 16).⁵⁴

For the first two years of the profit-sharing plan, from 1914 to 1916, female employees with no dependents were not allowed to share in the profits. The reasons

stated by company officials, and Henry Ford himself, point to the family values promoted by the Ford Motor Company through the use of what we now call “family wages.” On January 7, 1914, upon interviewing a number of Ford officials, the *New York Times* reported that:

The reason that women and girls in the employ of the Ford Motor Company will not share in the profit distribution announced by the company is because they are not, as a rule, the heads of families. In this respect, they are classed with the youths, the male employees of less than 22 years of age not [profit] sharing unless they happen to be married or supporting their mothers or families of brothers and sisters. It is understood that there are no women or girls in the Ford plant who come under this classification. If there should be, they undoubtedly would be taken care of (in Raff and Summers, 1987; p. 71).

As stated by Fitch (1914), workers that did not qualify for profit-sharing included “women and all employees under 22 years of age, who have no dependents. Just why women over twenty-two are not to share in the profits equally with the men is not wholly apparent. Mr. Ford has more than once recorded his belief that women over twenty-two ought to get married and stop working for him” (p. 547).

In an October 1916 interview with *Metropolitan Magazine*’s John Reed, Henry Ford reiterated his point of view as to the proper position of women. When asked to justify the practice of not allowing female employees to participate in profit-sharing, Ford “coldly” responded: “There is no injustice there... Women receive the same wages as unskilled male labor. But we believe here that a woman should be married and keep a home.” Further pressed by the interviewer, Ford declared: “The normal business of women is keeping homes and raising children” (Excerpts from Defendants’ Exhibit 555, *Industry’s Miracle Maker*, by John Reed, *Metropolitan Magazine*. October 1916; Acc. 940, Box 17; p. 6047). In response to a question concerning the forcible entry of women

in the labor market, Ford stated “with some asperity:” “We find... that women are not forced into the labor market. Most of them go because they want to. Women go to work to make a little more to put on their backs and swell around with when they are hunting for a man!” (Excerpts from Defendants' Exhibit 555, *Industry's Miracle Maker*, by John Reed, *Metropolitan Magazine*. October 1916; Acc. 940, no. 17; p. 6048).

In October 1916, likely right after the above interview, following a meeting with the then President Wilson, Henry Ford announced that female employees (with no dependents) would be henceforth put on a minimum wage of \$5.00 per day, just like their male counterparts (Acc. 940, Box 16). Various “prominent women” of the day commented on Ford’s move. Some argued that he was merely appealing to non-partisan women, to support Wilson in the approaching election (Acc. 940, Box 16). At that time, there were some 1,500 women working in the Ford plants (Acc. 940, Box 16).

Twelve years after the introduction of the profit-sharing plan and a decade after raising the minimum wage for female employees to the same level as that of male employees, the position of women at the Ford Motor Company had changed little. Indeed, in 1926, Li made the following revealing statement:

Like the substandard men, the women are employed not because they are women. Most of the Ford women are wives or daughters of the Ford men, who have been in some way temporarily or permanently disabled. A woman whose husband is an active worker in the factory cannot obtain employment in the Ford plants. I am told that Mr. Ford believes that a Ford employee gets enough wages to maintain a family in decent living and that his wife should take care of the home and not work in the factory for additional income. The Ford women receive the same wages as men. They are given work that allows them to sit down. In a factory where workmen have to be on their feet eight hours a day the freedom to sit down must be reckoned as one of the greatest privileges that a person can hope to secure (Women at Fords, Robert W. Dunn Collection; Acc. 96, Box 1).

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Assessing the Success of the Ford Sociological Project

We can offer two different modes of evaluation, pointing to two differing conceptions of success. A policy evaluation will answer questions as to whether the policy goals of the Ford sociological project have been met. In other words, has the project managed to decrease labor turnover, maintain an open-shop, and create a homogeneous, loyal, hard-working, and obedient workforce? On the other hand, a broader evaluation of the values espoused by the company can take a similar form to ones used by New Social Movement theorists in their approach to protest movements, namely the degree to which the set of values and discourse they espouse and promote becomes dispersed to the wider society. In any case, the criteria used to evaluate the success of the company's sociological project must correlate with the aims of the company itself. In other words, one must evaluate Ford's project on its own terms. If, for example, one uses twenty-first century criteria to evaluate the Ford sociological project, it is inevitable that one would find it to be hegemonic, sexist, racist, and classist. However, if we use criteria befitting the period under examination, then the Ford project emerges as a somewhat liberal application of existing values and norms. In any case, and irrespective of any perceived moral degrading of the sociological plan, I argue that both values and policies revolving around the sociological project of the company were to a large extent met with success. As we have seen, the company was the last auto manufacturer to become unionized. Indeed, the Ford Motor Company managed to maintain an open-shop until

1941. Furthermore, the daily rate of absenteeism, which stood at 10% before the five-dollar day, was decreased to less than 0.5% after the establishment of the profit-sharing system (Lee, 1916). In a statement prepared for the Industrial Relations Commission in 1916 (940: 16, Labor-Five Dollar Day; p. 2), Henry Ford noted that since the introduction of the five-dollar day, efficiency had increased by 15-20%, and daily absentees had decreased from 10% to 0.3% of the workforce. Furthermore, Henry Ford provided figures to show how labor turnover was dramatically reduced since the introduction of the profit-sharing system. I have codified the information provided by Ford in Table 10. This is also supported by Lee (1916), who claimed that while the daily rate of absentees before the introduction of the profit-sharing system was 10%, it fell to less than 0.5% immediately after.

Table 10. Labor Turnover Before and After the Five-Dollar Day

	Discharged	Quitting	Five Day Men*
March 1913	1276	870	5156
March 1914	166	115	166

*Note that "Five Day Men," or "floaters," were those who typically worked for a few days and left "without explanation or notice."

Almost overnight, the announcement of the five-dollar day and the structure of appropriate action that accompanied it practically eliminated high labor turnover as a serious threat to industrial profits. As Marquis characteristically argued, in order to maintain a labor force of 14,000 workers in 1913 (a year before the introduction of the five-dollar day), the company had to hire 52,445 people. A year into the plan, in 1915, while the company's workforce was increasing radically and the daily working hours decreased from 10 to 9 and then to 8, only 2,931 left the employ of the company: "The

company has discovered that once a man is hired it is much cheaper to 'fit' him than to 'fire' him." (S. S. Marquis, "The Ford Sharing Plan," Acc. 293, Box 1; p. 3).

Still, splitting the working day into work and leisure, and allowing enough time for relaxation is not enough to produce a suitable workforce. On the contrary, as Marquis noted, "to a man who is not living right such a gift may prove a curse" (S. S. Marquis, "The Ford Sharing Plan," Acc. 293, Box 1; p. 3). This perceived need to guide workers into the "right" habits is what necessitated the introduction of the Sociological Department and its policies.

Within a few years of the profit-sharing plan, the number of non-English speakers was decreased dramatically, and most foreign employees of the company became naturalized citizens. Thus, the Sociological Department curbed its Americanizing functions.

In a 1934 departmental communication a Ford official, W. C. Chapman, actually stated that the initial campaign of investigations that the Sociological Department carried out in order to assess employee status and guide employees in modifying their behavior "was abandoned as soon as it had served its purpose" (Acc. No. 572, Box 32; p. 1).

Typically, public officials, such as local authorities, praised the Ford sociological project for decreasing incidents of deviant and criminal behavior such as public drunkenness. Criticisms of the project more often than not originated with labor unions.⁵⁵

Concerning the evaluation of success of the Ford sociological project, it is necessary to examine how employees viewed the company's effort and what the workers relationship was with sociological investigators. In a memo dated June 21, 1915, a Ford

official, W.M. Purves, provided some interesting insights concerning this issue.

According to Purves,

At the start of the Ford Profit-sharing Plan investigators were looked upon as a nuisance, necessary to the Company possibly, 'but still a nuisance both to the Company's employees and outsiders from whom they wished to obtain information.

It has been said in the past that private affairs were needlessly pried into, confidences violated and ungentlemanly acts perpetrated in the employees' homes. It has been a source of great pleasure to those interested in the Investigation Department to note the change of opinion, that has gradually taken place since the investigators have become better known and employees begun to realize that the Company was altogether back of the investigators, and that the object of investigation is to help and not cause trouble for an employee...(The Investigators' Standing with Employees and Others, S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 940, Box 17).

The change in employee attitude towards sociological investigations was important to the enforcement of company policy:

Formerly we had to solicit all information and it came hard, while now it is pleasing to note that employees often voluntarily seek out the investigator to ask advice regarding their private affairs. Instead of avoiding the department, as they would a plague, they are beginning to use it and it surely begins to look as if the high tide of our affairs will only be reached when each employee fully realizes that the investigator is the personal representative of the Company, and consequently their best friend.

The accusation that employees' affairs are needlessly pried into has ceased to be a live issue since the object of investigation has become known generally. ... (The Investigators' Standing with Employees and Others, S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 940, Box 17).

In the same line of thought with Purves, A. E. Gruenberg (Progress Among Foreigners Since the Proclamation of Profit Sharing Plan, S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 940, Box 17) stated that although initially company investigators faced suspicion and resistance from workers, within a year the attitude changed to one of welcome and cooperation. Note of course that those who insisted in resisting the investigators had already been fired, or were pacified/acquiesced by the first year's investigations and their

consequences. It is indicative that responding to the question whether employees resented the intrusive nature of the investigations, Henry Ford declared: "Not the kind of man we want here. The normal average, saving kind of man, of which there are thousands, appreciated investigation and direction. We find that the only resentment comes from those that are doing wrong and want to conceal something" [Reed, John (1916) Industry's Miracle Worker. Metropolitan Magazine; Acc. 940, Box 17].

Therefore, Apart from placid criticisms against the Sociological Department investigations, I cannot confirm much organized worker resistance to the Ford sociological project and its investigations. This was the argument of Marxist historians, i.e. Stephen Mayer, who tended to view workers and their actions through the Marxist lens, that wants them to have a "class consciousness" and resist all employer efforts at modifying their values and behavior. On the contrary, as stated above, most workers complied willingly to the stipulations of the plan, although they did not favor the intrusive approach of the investigators.

The type of resistance that occurred most often was found among (white) American workers, and was limited to passive resistance in the form of "keep your mouth shut and let them say what they want," or of the form of "do not take investigations too seriously." For example, responding to the question of how he invested his profits, a white worker claimed to have invested in "houses and lots." Upon further examination, he admitted that he meant "whore houses and lots of whiskey" (Problems of the Sociological Department, Acc. 940, Box 17; p. 16).

The following excerpt from the reminiscences of a company worker, William Pioch, is characteristic of worker reaction, for it shows that although some workers did

not like the intrusion involved in the investigations, they had internalized company discourse regarding the purpose and aims of the investigations:

I remember when they first started the Sociological Department. They had a group of men on their staff that went out and checked all the employees. It was a door check. They went out to the home and they had a regular form that they filled out. They picked on your life history, how you lived and where you went to church and everything.

They went to my home. My wife told them everything. There was nothing to keep from them. Of course, there was a lot of criticism on that. It was kind of a funny idea, in a free state.

The idea in back of it was to help the people. The fact that the \$5 day was being established, that the people would squander their money. The idea in back of it, was an educational program. It was to educate people how to keep on living without getting money foolish.

It didn't change any when Dean Marquis took over the operations. It was the same (Reminiscences of William Pioch, Acc. 940, Box 17).

Summary of Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of Ford's Sociological Department as an instrument of the Ford sociological project, which aimed at the personal and social transformation of its workforce. An effort by the company to improve the living conditions and efficiency of its workforce, it practically amounted to a project aiming at the personal and social transformation of its workers. In short, the company's project was an attempt at engineering a new working-class, adapted to the demands that accompanied the development of the moving assembly line, and the paternalism of the Progressive ideologies of the day.

As we have seen, the Ford Motor Company was a pioneering agent in the process of Americanization that transformed hundreds of thousands of immigrant European peasants into a new American, "middle-class minded" working-class. Furthermore, the

company's sociological project can be seen as a pioneering effort at human or societal engineering, which in turn can be seen as applied sociology. As we have seen, the project, and the people who managed it, operated under popular ideologies of the day rather than any social scientific theoretical perspective. Yet, the values and policies espoused by the Ford Motor Company in its sociological project closely correlated with the mainstream social scientific and managerial discourse of the day.

Specifically for race and ethnic relations, we have seen that the Ford Motor Company operated within the dominant ideologies, and sociological theories of the day. Yet, the company emerges as an adherent of a liberal outlook that saw the individual as the final unit of measurement rather than the group. This outlook that was put into practice by the company makes it, indirectly perhaps, an ally of that pioneering group of social scientists of the day, who argued that social forces (i.e. education) were at least equally at play with biological ones, in determining people's capacities and capabilities.

Despite its liberal, for the day, policies toward minorities and immigrant Europeans, the company did discriminate against racial groups, by allocating them to the most undesirable positions within the factory, thus perpetuating the racial structure. On the other hand, through its policies promoting better housing for its immigrant workers, it in effect facilitated the integration of these immigrants into the American society, and their incorporation into the racial category of "whiteness."

Concerning class relations, the company did much to reinforce a model that viewed labor relations as a two-party relationship between company (represented by ownership, and management) and workers. This in effect maintained the absolute power of the company over labor relations, while it eliminated union participation. The mere

fact that the company managed to keep an “open-shop” until 1941, must be seen as testament to the successful imposition of this model on behalf of the company. In essence then, the paternalism that characterized the company during the Progressive era, allowed it to define labor relations to a large degree, including the status of workers, and their relationship with employers and terms of employment, without the challenges and contestations that organized labor posed for its total authority.

Concerning gender relations, the Ford Motor Company promoted family values, not only on an abstract, discursive, level, but also through concrete policies, that aimed at strengthening the institution of marriage and the family, as it was then understood. Through its sociological project, the company reinforced the sexist ideas of the day that women were destined for housework and motherhood, while men were seen as family heads, whose main pre-occupation should be to provide for that family, and work toward increasing its standards of living.

Due to the pioneering nature of its sociological project, its sheer size, its particularities and its similarities with other industries, the Ford Motor Company of the Progressive era lends itself as a case study of the institutionalization of U.S. labor relations. This is, after all, the company whose values, norms, and processes exemplified the notion of Fordism, which in turn exemplified the U.S. mode of production, for the most part of the twentieth-century.

All the above can be used as evidence to confirm institutionalist claims that organizations, in this case a private interest organization, can and do act as agents for social action, specifically for the manipulation and enforcement of values and norms. Through this examination the Ford Motor Company, I argue that the particular

constellation of values and the particular set of norms espoused by the company were not merely a reflection of wider norms and values, as some theorists support, but constituted a mosaic of ideas, values, and norms, that partly reflected the wider ideologies and practices of the day, as they were perceived by the individual actors in the company, but also partly ideas and practices that were developed locally. Both wider and local values and norms, which were enforced, were perceived to be beneficial for both labor and capital, or both workers and the company, whose interests were promoted as identical.

By using the meso-level of analysis, case studies of particular organizations such as this shed light on wider processes of nation building, and social stratification. Through this study, finally, the Ford Motor Company emerges as a true, and arguably the primary, agent for the personal transformation of its workforce, as well as an agent for social change. Indeed, the company's sociological project can easily be seen as an attempt at *planned social change*, which refers to "deliberate, conscious, and collaborative efforts by change agents to improve the operations of social systems. In the social-change literature, planned change has been referred to as social planning, social engineering, change management, or social marketing" (Vago, 1996; p. 247). Therefore, this study contributes to the institutional literature on organizations and the literature relating to social change, by showing how the Ford Motor Company was an active agent in the process of cultural transformation of its workforce.

In 1956, Bendix argued that in the tripartite relationship between capital state and working-classes, the state in the United States is more aligned with capital than European states. I believe that my study contributes to this insight. The way I articulate this is that capital in the United States is perhaps more involved in some of the functions that

European states reserve for themselves, like social welfare. Still, more empirical studies are in order to confirm or discard this assertion.

Further Directions

As we have seen, Ford's interest in creating a working-class that would be well adapted to line production under Fordist principles, and his view that a "functional" family was more or less a guarantor of worker stability, loyalty and hard work, facilitated the Sociological Department's paternalistic involvement in race, ethnic and gender politics.

Labor relations in the twenty-first century may not be as alien to the practices I have just described. Perhaps we have just moved to a higher level of control. Paternalism over the poor can be witnessed in any government welfare office. Employers use computerization to check up employees' criminal and credit records; observation in the workplace is now done by cameras instead of "spotters;" and although we don't call them family wages anymore, gender inequality in the workplace is still a powerful influence in our lives. Immigrant education as an instrument of nation building and class formation is still a preoccupation of state and other organizations.⁵⁶ Therefore, we have a lot to learn from examining the history of the Ford Motor Company as a case, for its legacies are still with us today.

Invasion of privacy for the collection of information regarding employee habits and attitudes, as well as various forms of harassment against employees to conform to employer endorsed values and habits, is not a thing of the past. Indeed, employers routinely enforce drug testing on their employees. Furthermore, Dworkin (1997) reported

that: “From refusing to hire smokers to limits on engaging in dangerous sports, employer efforts to control employees’ off-the-job activities are increasing. Particularly troubling to employees is employer interference with their associations” (p. 47).

Similarly, the promotion of marriage by the Ford Motor Company is not something that belongs to antiquarian discussions about the intrusive and paternalistic attitudes by Progressive era employers. On the contrary, the idea that married people make better workers and citizens is still in effect in many circles, from employers to state officials. For example, on January 15, 2004, it was reported in British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) news that:

Oklahoma has long taken an interest in the marital bliss – or rather discord – of its populace. Since 1998, when state economists concluded that being single and being poor were interrelated, millions of dollars have been spent on trying to bring people together, and keep them that way, through state-wide training in marriage and advertising which promotes the value of the institution. Similar programmes run elsewhere. So convinced are West Virginian officials of the benefits of marriage for both the couple and the children that female welfare claimants are entitled to \$100 more a month if they tie the knot. Marriage initiatives are aimed at poor single mothers and low-income couples undecided as to whether they should wed: lone parent families – the majority of whom are headed by a female – account for nearly 60% of all welfare cases in the US.⁵⁷

In the same article it was reported that President George W Bush declared: “Strong marriages and stable families are incredibly good for children, and stable families should be the central goal of American welfare policy.”


The historical moment of the Ford Sociological Department is of interest to social science and history in general for many reasons. It can be seen as a pioneering effort in applied sociology, but over and above any reflexive implications for social science, the importance of the Sociological Department lay partly in that it developed many processes that became central to the brand of capitalism Gramsci (1972) called *Fordismus*. It laid

the foundations for what came to be called "Fordism," and "welfare capitalism" (Foster, 1987). The Sociological Department established training programs for newly arrived immigrants, which at the time comprised the bulk of Ford's workforce, aimed at developing better citizens and better workers. Thus, the activities of the Sociological Department of the Ford Motor Company during this time provide us with a classic example of applied sociology, as it was then understood. Despite the paternal capitalistic ideology encompassing the Ford Motor Company research, it is an interesting forerunner of the research methods and techniques still common today. Samuel S. Marquis also called the Ford sociological project, "a great experiment in applied Christianity in industry" (Kellogg, 1928; p. 555). This study argues that it was also a great experiment in applied sociology in industry. These unique efforts of the Ford Motor Company deserve clearer recognition and attention in the applied sociological literature.

In this study, I have examined the Ford sociological project, which aimed at engineering a post-Franklinian working-class, befitting of the new industrial realities created by Ford's moving assembly line. I specifically focused on the constellation of social values regarding race, ethnicity, class and gender that were espoused by the Ford Motor Company, and the various company policies that extended these values in time, thus facilitating their institutionalization. For the twenty-first century reader, the values and norms promoted by the Ford Motor Company during the Progressive period seem inescapably sexist and racist, and of course they were. Yet, relative to the mainstream sexist and racist ideologies of the time, Ford policies had in fact liberal characteristics. For example, the Ford Motor Company was one of the very few companies in which

female workers were put on a minimum wage equal to that of their male counterparts,
and an African American worker could achieve the position of a foreman.

APPENDIX A
RECORD OF INVESTIGATION, 1914

Form 928  SPECIMEN No. E-9029

RECORD OF INVESTIGATION

Name Stanislaw Dansch

Date (factory) 2-1-14 Date (home) 2-10-14 Dept.

Date of last survey Same

Date Hired 1-28-14 Address 9011 John R. St. Married Yes Speak English No Nationality Lithuanian.

Religion Catholic Age 42 Date of Birth Jan. 2-1872 Naturalized No

Lived in Detroit How Long 4 years In U. S. 4 years No. of Children 5 Ages 11, 9, 8, 6 and 4 years

No. in School 3 No. Working None Earn Per week No. Persons Dependent Six

Name of Dependent	To What Extent	Total	Relationship	Age	Address
Mary			Wife	40	Same
Steve			Son	11	
Vasili			Son	9	
Antony			Son	8	
Vladislav			Daughter	6	
Miko			Son	4	

Own Home Lot No Location Value Rate or Rent Per Month \$80.00

Renting Home Lot No Cash Contract Value Amt. Paid Location

Mortgage Inspected Contract Debit None Reason

Name of Bank U.S. Postal Savings. Pass Book No. 96219 Balance \$890.00 Location Detroit P.O.

Name of Life Insurance Co. None What Kind Amount Prem. Per Year

Saving for No object. Family Dr. None Address

Recreations None Hobbies Smokes. Drinks occasionally.

Home Conditions Poor. Crowded. Sixteen rooms occupied by twentyfive people, nineteen men, one woman and five children.

Neighborhood Manufacturing section.

Remarks Man's wife is working her life out caring for boarder. Children neglected.

I DISAPPROVE.

Information Secured From Whom Mrs. Mary Dansch - Wife and Observation. Investigator's Name R. Roe. AW

Approved for State in Div. of Probate by 760 Date Feb 5 '14 Rate 38 Skill C

Remarks

Ford Times (1914, November), 8, 2, p. 81 (available at the Benson Ford Research Center, Dearborn, Michigan).

APPENDIX B
RECORD OF INVESTIGATION, 1946

F.M.C. FORM 349		26 C.	25 W.	24 Oth.	23 S.	22 M.	21 FOR.	20 VET.	19 CIT.	18 2	17 1	16 L.	15 H.S.A.	14 M.	13 F.	12 7	11 4	10 3	9 1	8 7	7 6	6 5	5 4	4 3	3 2	2 1	1 0
		COLOR	MARITAL STATUS				BORN		CIT. STATUS	INSUR.	SEX	NAME															
		SOCIOLOGICAL RECORD																									
		NAME															FORD MOTOR COMPANY DEARBORN, MICHIGAN										
		ADDRESS															LAST BADGE NUMBER										
		AGE															DEPT.										
		VET.															RATE										
		RELIGION															IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR										
		BIRTHPLACE															CITIZEN: BIRTH <input type="checkbox"/> PAPERS <input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH <input type="checkbox"/> DIED <input type="checkbox"/>										
		PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT															DATE HIRED										
		EDUCATION															RECORD VERIFIED										
		MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER <input type="checkbox"/>															INSURANCE LIFE <input type="checkbox"/> H.S.A. <input type="checkbox"/> HOME OWN <input type="checkbox"/> RENT <input type="checkbox"/> BOARD <input type="checkbox"/>										
		WIFE															AGE										
		HEALTH															EMPLOYED										
		NEAREST OF KIN															ADDRESS										
		PHONE																									
		NATURE OF CASE															CHILDREN										
																	AGE										
																	EMPLOYED										
																	1.										
																	2.										
																	3.										
																	4.										
		MEMO															SEE FILE <input type="checkbox"/>										
																	ASSETS										
																	LIABILITIES										
																	CASH										
																	MORTGAGE PAY										
																	BANK										
																	LAND CONTRACT PAY										
																	EQUITY OR REAL ESTATE										
																	ACCUMULATED RENT, LOANS,										
																	ACCTS. OR LOANS REC.										
																	OR TAXES PAYABLE										
																	OTHER PROPERTY										
																	TOTAL										
																	TOTAL										
																	INCOME										
																	EXPENSE										
																	WAGES										
																	UTILITIES										
																	WELFARE AID										
																	FUEL										
																	PENSION										
																	RENT OR PAYMENTS										
																	RENTALS										
																	FOOD										
																	COMPENSATION										
																	TRANSPORTATION										
																	MISCELLANEOUS										
																	MEDICAL CARE										
																	CLOTHING										
																	HOUSE FURNISHINGS										
																	INSURANCE										
		INVESTIGATOR:															TOTAL										
																	TOTAL										

Sociological Department Manual of Procedures, 1946 (Acc. 280, Box 1; Available at the Benson Ford Research Center).

APPENDIX C

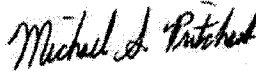
HUMAN SUBJECTS INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
EXEMPTION NOTIFICATION

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: May 7, 2001

To: Vyacheslav Karpov, Principal Investigator
Georgios Loizides, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Michael S. Pritchard, Interim Chair



Re: HSIRB Project Number 01-05-10

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Disassembling Fordism: Legacies of the Ford Sociological Department" has been received and reviewed by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB). Based on that review, the HSIRB has determined that approval is not required for you to conduct this research because there are no human subjects.

A copy of your protocol and a copy of this letter will be maintained in the HSIRB files.

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Organizations: Culture and Environment. Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Company.

NOTES

¹ Human engineering was the term used by Ford Motor Company public discourse to describe its sociological project. The concept of “making men” was also a recurrent theme in company public discourse (see for example editorial in Ford Times, titled “Assimilation through Education: What the Ford English School is Doing to Help the Foreign-born Ford Employee;” vol. 8, no. 9, June 1915; p. 411). Note that the profit-sharing plan was sometimes referred to as a “sociological experiment” by Samuel Marquis (i.e. “Henry Ford’s Idea of Brotherhood” by Marquis, published in Manufacturers’ News on May 4th, 1916. S.S. Marquis Papers, Acc. No. 940, Box 17).

² Ford Motor Company discourse sometimes referred to this project as “educational plan,” or merely as “profit-sharing system.” See for example the editorial “Religion and Sociology” in Ford Times, Sep 1916; p. 83.

³ Samuel Marquis, “The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan,” p. 11; S.S. Marquis Papers Acc. No. 293.

⁴ Generally speaking, the Progressive era refers to the first two decades of the twentieth-century period in which several movements supporting local, state, and national reforms arose partly as a response to the rapid industrialization and urbanization that took place during the last three decades of the nineteenth century (Mowry, 1972). These movements, collectively known as *the Progressive movement* culminated a hopeful period of social experimentation (and social engineering), and led to the rise of the Progressive ideology, which ultimately transgressed political lines, and became integral to the process of modernity in general.

⁵ As we see in the theory chapter, Bourdieu’s concept of “doxa,” is similar to Giddens’ concept of “practical consciousness,” which refers to what human actors know about their own, and wider, social conditions, but they cannot articulate discursively. In short, doxa refers to the realm of the undisputed.

⁶ Along these lines, but representing a Weberian outlook, Clegg’s (1994) theory of organizations focused on the “role of power and knowledge in organization.” Clegg (1994) argued that “the theory of organizations must always also be an institutional and cultural theory” (p. 75).

⁷ When values acquire situation-specificity, according to Parsons (1961), they become goals.

⁸ This view is also in agreement with Verba (1971), who noted that “cross-national comparison may be most fruitful when based upon within-nation comparison” (p. 309).

⁹ In its wider sense, Fordism refers to the large institutional structure initially developed and applied by the Ford Motor Company in the 1910s, and partially featuring

characteristics such as "scientific management, the modern regulatory environment, Keynesianism, and the 'welfare state'" (in Foster, 1987, p. 14). Concerning the demographics of Ford's workforce, in *Ford Times* (June 1915, 18, 9) it mentions that the very first Sociological Department investigation showed that on January 12, 1914, 5000 out of 13000 company employees "could not speak, read nor understand the English language" (p. 407).

¹⁰ Ford Motor Company Sociological Department by no means resembles academic sociological departments of today. For one, it didn't employ any trained sociologists; rather, it was boasted by Lee (1916) that all department's officers were recruited from within the organization. Still, the adoption of the term sociology implies some connection with sociological ideas and discourse circulating in the 1910s. In any case, the Ford Sociological Department can rather be seen as an early attempt at "applied sociology," in the sense that it was client-driven and attempted to apply a set of intellectual models to existing social relations in order to modify them. It must be noted that the term sociology was coined by Auguste Comte in mid-19th century to denote a new science (the "queen of sciences") that would explain (as well as predict and manage) social behavior. One meaning that comes out of reading the various Henry Ford's biographies (and particularly the one authored by Marquis himself) links the term sociological with a concern for human/social welfare.

¹¹ The article clearly seems to be part of Lee's effort to gain the respect and support of the academic community in his own application of Taylor's scientific management to labor management. The article, which reads like an apology, begins with laying out the aim of the paper which is to explain the practices followed by his department (little of which he actually does), and ends with an invitation to the readers to visit the Ford company to get a "different viewpoint of life for yourself and much of personal enlightenment" (Lee, 1916; p. 310).

¹² Much of this was already proposed by Frederick Winslow Taylor, in his *The Principles of Scientific Management* but it was applied, modified, and extended by the management team at the Ford Motor Company. It is interesting that in his effort to present Ford Company as the sole originator of its management techniques, Lee doesn't make any mention of Taylor in his paper. Rather, he states: "It was along in 1912 that we began to realize something of the relative value of men, mechanism, and material in the threefold phase of manufacturing, so to speak, and we confess that up to this time we had believed that mechanism and material were of the larger importance and that somehow or other the human element or our men were taken care of automatically and needed little or no consideration" (Lee, 1916; p. 299). Note that a year before Lee's inspired revelation to consider the human element in production, in 1911, Taylor published *The Principles of Scientific Management*, and by 1912 Taylorism "hit Detroit" (Lacey, 1986; p. 107). "Speedy" Taylor himself lectured at various times in Detroit before publishing his book. In 1909, he gave a four-hour speech to the Packard Motor Company management team, after which Packard became "Taylorized" (Lacey, 1986; p. 107). It is therefore very likely that Ford's reorganization was partly influenced by Taylorism.

¹³ Lewis (1976) called Marquis's description of Ford, "one of the finest and most dispassionate character studies of Ford ever written" (p. 215).

¹⁴ It is interesting to note that The Survey was so called in honor of the Pittsburg Survey. Paul Kellogg, who conducted the Pittsburgh survey was by then the editor of the journal.

¹⁵ O'Hare's first visit took place on November 28, 1915, and the second, shortly afterwards (Roediger, 1988).

¹⁶ Ford chartered a "peace ship" in 1915 to cross the Atlantic in support of the anti-war movement, which gained him the sympathies of radicals on both sides of the Atlantic (Roediger, 1988).

¹⁷ The radical thinker Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) attacked progressivism in general for legitimizing the status quo, and leftist Progressive intellectuals in particular, for betraying the "revolution" in exchange for a gate-keeping role in academia. In Benjamin's view, progressivism justifies capitalism by presenting it as either the highest ideal society (rightist Progressives), or as a necessary step towards socialism, which itself will be the outcome of progressive incremental changes (leftist Progressives). Bottom line, Benjamin accused rightist Progressives of being wolves in sheep's clothing so to speak, and Progressive socialists of turning to liberalism; from Marxist timeless, classless, stateless communism, to Cooley's capitalism, the timeless liberal society. In any case, both leftist and rightist Progressives believed that fueled by emulation and technological advances, and reflected in the rising standard of living, progress would inevitably advance society through the stages of capitalism, into a socialist, or capitalist utopia.

¹⁸ Although not dealing directly with the Ford Motor Company, Herbert Gutman (1976) offered a comprehensive description of the social, political, and economic structure during the rapidly changing times of the progressive period and their influence on popular culture. The change from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* can be seen as central to the formation of an urban proletariat:

The Clock in the workshop, - it rests not a moment;
It points on, and ticks on: eternity – time;
Once someone told me the clock had a meaning, -
In pointing and ticking had reason and rhyme....
At times, when I listen, I hear the clock plainly; -
The reason of old – the old meaning – is gone!
The maddening pendulum urges me forward
To Labor and still labor on.
The tick of the clock is the boss in his anger.
The face of the clock has the eyes of the foe.
The clock – I shudder – Dost hear how it draws me?

It calls me "Machine" and it cries [to] me "Sew!" (Gutman, 1976; pp.23-24).

Sociologists use Ferdinand Tonnies's (1957) term *Gemeinschaft* to denote traditional, intimate, face-to-face communities, and the term *Gesellschaft* to denote modern, impersonal, bureaucratic societies.

¹⁹ I accessed the online Library of Congress catalogue on Dec. 5, 2000.

²⁰ It is noteworthy that both Highland Park and later River Rouge plants were designed by the renounced Jewish architect Albert Kahn, who also designed the General Motors Building in Detroit (Rausch, 1996, also see Lacey, 1986). Regrettably, this didn't seem to have an effect on Ford's anti-Jewish racist views.

²¹ A magneto is an alternator with permanent magnets used to generate current for the ignition in an internal combustion engine.

²² The chronology of Nevins' occupations can be found at <http://encarta.msn.com> (accessed on 11/19/2000).

²³ Allan Nevins' 1959 Presidential Address to the American Historical Association can be found at http://www.theaha.org/info/AHA_History/anevins.htm (accessed on 11/19/2000).

²⁴ Spotters were employees or company agents whose responsibilities included the "spotting" and reporting of regulation infractions on work grounds, but also of public and private behaviors deemed anti-social or radical by the company.

²⁵ Ford's sociological project generated both favorable and unfavorable views by scholars. Some saw it as Ford's humanitarian moment – a benevolent, if intrusive, paternalism (for example, see Nevins, 1957; Sward, 1948). This outlook was probably originated with Marquis (1916, 1923). For an early critical comment see Levin (1927a, 1927b). For more contemporary critical examinations of Ford's sociological project see Meyer (1981), Roediger (1988), and Rupert (1995). For an examination of how the popular press of the day received the announcement of the five-dollar day, see Lewis (1976).

²⁶ According to Nevins, the department was created "to promote the welfare of company employees" (Nevins, 1957, p. 13).

²⁷ The ideas of Social Christianity that Marquis was applying were developed by Canon Barnett in England and by Dr. Rauschenbusch in the U.S. (Nevins, 1957).

²⁸ Although a mere change in title, I believe that this move partly reflects two trends. One, as Meyer (1981) noted, was the growing hostility of workers. The other, was perhaps a shift in emphasis, from personal habits (the profit-sharing structure was in any case being maintained) to education (and here lies the importance to Ethnohistory). Note that the titles of investigators would at times change as well. For example, they were called advisors. Also note that Nevins' comment on worker hostility contradicts Bryan (1993), who argued that the Sociological Department was "beneficial and generally appreciated by employees" (p. 209).

²⁹ Martin (1944) reported that by the late 1930s, there were no female African Americans employed in the auto industry in Detroit.

³⁰ In a 1924 article, Franklin Giddings (1924) argued that although societal telesis, or societal engineering have been “thought and talked about enough to have acquired a name,” it is a profession that has “hardly yet established” (p. 13). This, in retrospect, points out the pioneering significance of the early Ford Motor Company human engineering efforts.

³¹ It is also noteworthy that the term “human engineering” did not originate with Walter Reuther, as is implied in Lewis (1976) and Lacey (1986), but was in use by psychologists and other social scientists since the beginning of the twentieth-century (see for example, Fish, 1917).

³² “The policy of the company is not to sell its men anything or influence them to buy anything – with the exception of Ford cars” (Lee, 1916; p. 304)

³³ These four documents are part of the S.S. Marquis Papers collection in the company archives (Acc. Number 940, Box 17). The documents consist of the following: Mr. Lee's Talk to First Group of Investigators, April 15th, 1914 (referenced here as Lee's Talk to First Group); Mr. Lee's Talk to Second Group of Investigators, April 16th, 1914 (referenced here as Lee's Talk to Second Group); Mr. Lee's Talk to Third Group of Investigators, April 17th, 1914 (referenced here as Lee's Talk to Third Group); Mr. Lee's Talk to Investigators on July 7th, 1914 (referenced here as Lee's Talk on July 7).

³⁴ The term “he” is used here, as the vast majority of the workers were men. Note that Ford literature of the day refers to men. Actually, the ideal worker for Ford was a family man.

³⁵ Note that when Marquis said, “we keep back all his profits for that month,” he actually meant “give back” (also see Levin, 1927a; p. 79). Profits withheld from workers went in a charity fund (Marquis, Address to American Bankers Association, Acc. No. 63, Box. 1). This fund aimed at helping employees, and their families, in times of need.

³⁶ Please note that the spelling of various ethnicities and nationalities in company discourse differs from the ones we are accustomed to today (i.e. Servians instead of Serbs or Serbians). Furthermore, some ethnicities mentioned in company discourse are no longer used (i.e. Bohemians), for they refer to ethnic groups (within then-existing European empires) rather than the national groups that we are familiar with today. Note that the company claimed that workers nationalities and ethnicities were self-reported, and therefore the differences in spelling may be due to lack of literacy or differences in usage at that time.

³⁷ Decent housing according to the Sociological Department meant housing in Dearborn neighborhoods (note that Dearborn was politically controlled by Ford, and union

activities were curbed by police and other officials, sometimes following direct intervention by Henry Ford), which was approved by the management. Workers were usually urged to seek the advice of Sociological Department officers prior to purchasing land or housing, thus being channeled to one of the family-owned, or Ford-affiliated real-estate companies.

³⁸ At this time Henry Ford did not favor any system of financial credit for his employees, but instead promoted the idea of saving.

³⁹ Paradoxically, the first group to be fired after the establishment of the Sociological Department comprised 700 Eastern Orthodox workers, who missed work because they were celebrating Christmas according to the Orthodox calendar, which was some days apart from the protestant one. It seems that immigrant assimilation did not always proceed with positive reinforcement.

⁴⁰ “There are about 40 per cent of the employees who have been disapproved, and of these, probably 20 per cent are under age, and would not qualify anyhow, but we want this bunch to get just as many of these foreigners into the fold in the least possible space of time” (Lee’s Talk to Third Group, p. 4).

⁴¹ During the early twentieth-century, applied sociology was in its infancy. It was not until 1906 that Lester Ward published his *Applied Sociology*, which became perhaps the most influential work in early American applied social science. Applied sociology was seen as a synonym of the term “human engineering” (term that was favored by psychologists), or “societal engineering” (a term favored by sociologists), or merely “engineering.” “Once admit the conception of value into sociological study, and it becomes an applied science; a kind of Human Engineering, standing to Anthropology somewhat as Education stands to Psychology” (Myres, 1923; p. 165).

⁴² I refer here to the “Sociological Statistics – Home Plant: As of January 12th, 1916”; and “Educational Statistics – Home Plant: As of January 12th, 1917” (Acc. 572, Box. 31).

⁴³ At another occasion, five years later, he stated to a journalist that “the Jew is a mere huckster, a trader, who doesn’t want to produce, but to make something out of what somebody else produces” (Lacey, 1986; p. 222). Although it is ironic that these words were uttered by an industrialist, it is perhaps also not unexpected. After all, as an industrialist, Ford did not have much use for people who, in his perception, did not want to be manual workers. It must be noted however, that Ford’s views about the commercial abilities of the Jews, and his *Dearborn Independent* anti-Jewish propaganda campaign tended to perpetuate the “Jewish conspiracy” thesis. Finally, Ford’s views about the commercial abilities of Jewish people went hand in hand with Ford’s views of the inability of the same people for “shop work.”

⁴⁴ Music is an important aspect of culture, as it offers a mode of expression not easily captured by official company or labor union literature. One of the first companies to

employ large numbers of African Americans during the latter part of 1910s (during World War I), the Ford Motor Company attracted thousands to Detroit, claiming a large share of the African American migration northwards. The many opportunities offered by Ford, together with the many problems associated with working in a factory, made Ford "the subject of many a blues" (Boorstin, 1973; p. 293). In a book titled *The Americans: The Democratic Experience*, Daniel Boorstin (1973) offered a wide-ranging description of American society at the turn of the century, accompanied by an extensive thematic bibliography, including a section on folk music.

Say, I am goin' to get me a job now, workin' in Mr. Ford's place
Say, I am goin' to get me a job now, workin' in Mr. Ford's place,
Say, that woman tol' me last night, "Say, you cannot even stand
Mr. Ford's ways" (Boorstin, 1973; p. 294).

⁴⁵ "The men of the plant who do not speak English are enrolled in the classes through the investigations of the Sociological Department" (*Survey Report of the Detroit Board of Commerce*, in Hill, 1919; p. 634).

⁴⁶ The Robert W. Dunn collection can be found at Wayne State's Reuther Library.

⁴⁷ Lee reiterated Ford's wishes for his men, the next day (Lee's Talk to Second Group):
The purpose of Mr. Ford is to make every single, solitary soul in this plant qualify for the profits. All that he asks in return for the money he is giving them is a better idea of living, and the better practicing of the material things in connection with same. I was telling the boys yesterday that he hoped to see every man owning his own little house in due time, have in it the comfortable and modern conveniences to make it pleasant for his family, including a bath-tub, and a garden in the yard. That ultimately he wanted to see all owning an automobile. The last expression, I think, was just as an example of what it is possible for the men to do (p. 1).

⁴⁸ A production worker, who worked at the Ford Motor Company in the 1920s, had this to say concerning his own feelings about working for Ford: "Mr. Ford to me was like a God. He was like a God because he had the control of so many thousands of people, and he had them in such order... and everything to me was so clockwork that I was so proud to be a part of it. I loved it" (Interview with "Red" Cole, in *People's Century*; 1924: On the Line).

⁴⁹ Also see Li (1928).

⁵⁰ The *National Rip-saw* was published in St. Louis, with a circulation of about 150,000 in 1916, and had about 24 pages per issue. Its motto was "blind as a bat to everything but truth." (Roediger, 1988).

⁵¹ O'Hare's visit took place on November 28, 1915 (Roediger, 1988).

⁵² In an interview for PBS' People's Century, John DeAngelo, who started work at Highland Park in the late twenties, commented on how Ford officials used hiring practices that boosted the sales of automobiles:

Look. A man needed a job badly. They told him to go buy a car and then he will get a job. He invested in a Ford car and then three months later he was laid off. They didn't need him anymore. See, they used to call you at the desk and lay you off, but they never did say they fired you because when the union got in, they could never prove through the records they fired anybody. They never fired anybody, they just laid them off... So, they were laying off and hiring at the same time; they hired the next man who bought a car...

Even if DeAngelo's report was not typical of hiring practices at Ford, it does exemplify the dual role of Ford workers as producers and consumers.

⁵³ "... [I]t is possible for a firm to enhance worker productivity *and increase its profits* by paying workers a wage above the subsistence wage. The firm's work force could then afford a more nutritious diet, and would be better nourished, healthier, stronger, and more productive. If the firm sets its wage too high above the subsistence level, however, the firm would not be making any money. The increase in labor costs would probably exceed the value of the increased productivity of its work force. There will exist a wage, however, which has come to be known as the **efficiency wage**, where the marginal cost of increasing the wage exactly equals the marginal gain in the productivity of the firm's workers" (Borjas, 1996; p. 422).

⁵⁴ Another example of the special position female employees occupied in the Ford Motor Company is the manner in which they were treated during absentee investigations. Under the title "Confinement Cases," Marquis gave the following advice to his investigators: "Whenever a woman's condition has to be stated on the investigation report, the following 'Code' must be used: 'This woman visiting friends in the country.' However, unless this information is positively necessary to complete the investigation report, no mention shall be made of this condition (S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293).

⁵⁵ For a more detailed discussion as to how many and who objected to the sociological investigations, see Marquis's comments in The Ford Profit-Sharing Plan (S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293); Also see Criticisms of the Ford Plan (S. S. Marquis Papers; Acc. 293).

⁵⁶ Alejandro Portes noted that "the surge of immigration into the United States during the past 30 years has brought a proliferation of foreign languages, and with it fears that the English language may lose its predominance and cultural unity may be undermined" (2002, p. 10).

⁵⁷ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/3397539.stm> accessed on January 15, 2004.

⁵⁸ Note that all archival material can be located at the Benson Ford Research Center, Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, which houses the Ford Motor Company archives.