

NARRATIVE, POWER, AND SOCIAL THEORY

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DESPITE THE EVIDENT differences in topic and focus, the founding theorists of modernity such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel could all tell a good story: about religion and the rise of capitalism (Weber, 1976); about the division of labor and its consequences (Durkheim, 1964); about the rise and eventual self-destruction of capitalism (Marx, 1976); about the individuating consequences of a philosophy of money (Simmel, 1900). Not "ripping yarns," perhaps, but a good read. Each was a grand master of narrative. Indeed, the main thrust of each of their theories was a narrative structure in which a central idea of capitalism, differentiation, Protestantism, individuation, played an ambivalent heroic role.

Later, good stories were to become the cornerstone of an early and influential school in North American sociology, the Chicago School, associated with researchers such as William Foot Whyte (1943) and his *Street Corner Society*. With the development of a sociology based on the hard-hitting style of Chicago investigative journalism that characterized the early contributions, the stories that the sociologist was to tell and the stories of the street were to become inexorably and ethnographically intertwined. In one version of the enterprise, at least, a good story was the basis of excellent sociology. Such sociology was to become a form of meta-narrative about good stories. Of course, this was not only true of the interactionist tradition at Chicago, which sought to show the rationality and integrity of marginalized and other voices (even when it was a tad

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patronizing in so doing). It was also the case even during the widespread ascendancy of functionalism.

Functionalism, at its best, as it developed the analysis of "dysfunctions" from Merton (1968), had a classical narrative structure. It consisted of the narrative power of revelation: In classic functionalist studies it is revealed that things are not as they appear to be. The format is familiar: "It is said but it is revealed unto you that . . ." Some examples may serve to make the point. Revelation is evident in works as various as Stouffer et al.'s (1949) *The American Soldier* and Merton's (1940) "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality." Bureaucracy appears an ideal type for rational organization but it is revealed that it needs and produces stunted human beings and this cannot be rational; the U.S. South appears to be the heartland of racial prejudice but it is revealed that, during the Second World War, prejudice was greater in soldiers from the North. In fact, the scientific claims of sociology came to rest, above all, on techniques for confounding common sense. The techniques of factor analysis in Stouffer revealed the unanticipated truth; the techniques of functional theory revealed the irrational core of the apparently rational bureaucratic shell in Merton.

The major theoretical challenge to functionalism did not question the emergent orthodoxy of narrative. Two matters were at issue. Did *conflict* or *consensus* best characterize the stories of everyday life (Horton, 1966)? Did "over-socialized" actors feature in the narrative lines that these stories allowed (Wrong, 1961)? These were the key fault-lines of *conflict sociology*. Much of conflict sociology was an echo of European contexts in which Marx's influence was not as absent as the doyen of functionalism, Parsons (1937), would have had it be. Conflict sociology became the conduit through which many concerns, theorists, and issues, repressed or marginalized by the synthesis of Parsonian functionalism, were to become visible. The high-water mark of the European vogue for Marxist sociology in the late 1960s through the 1970s did not undercut the strong sense of narrative as the central tool of the sociological enterprise, although it did refract elements of its constitution. Instead of the format being one in which "it is said but otherwise revealed," where functionalist science can take an ironizing attitude towards the mundane attitudes of everyday life, the mechanics shifted. The irony bred of superior convictions was not absent. Now it became displayed not in what people ordinarily said and thought but in what ordinarily they did not say and did not think.

Marxist sociology became an ever more fanciful set of variations to explain why the narrative structure predicted in the classic texts of Marx had not occurred. Orchestration occurred around the themes either of

ideology or the role of the state. In the latter the working class was seduced, while their energies were diverted by the sirens of capitalism. The drama failed to reach its narrative conclusion because of the temptations that the Keynesian welfare state had to offer. At least it seemed so, once upon a time before Thatcher, before Reagan. During the 1980s and into the 1990s it became harder to maintain the Keynesian welfare state argument analytically (Clegg, Dow, & Boreham, 1983; Clegg, Boreham, & Dow, 1986) and practically: Inner-city riots from Toxteth and Brixton at the start of the 1980s to Los Angeles and Atlanta at the start of the 1990s seemed to signify that the Keynesian welfare state, after its "fiscal crisis" (O'Connor, 1973), no longer performed the function that the Marxian narrative had once allocated to it.

Was the ideological argument more robust? In this narrative the working class had learned the wrong lines, not those scheduled by the Marxist theory but those of bourgeois aspirations, world-view, and hegemony. Having learned these lines too well they had lost sight of the preferred role scripted for them to play. Significant theories of ideology and hegemony became variations on the theme of working class acquiescence secured through normative incorporation by dominant ideology (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 1980). The narrative was no longer one of revelation but of concealment: Marxist theory, in theory, should have provided revelation in practice—but it did not. Only the theorist could see the unrevealed truth of the mechanisms that, despite and even through resistance, secured and reproduced consent (Burawoy, 1979; Willis, 1977). The subjects of analysis were occluded, incorporated, hegemonized, and falsely conscious and had the nature of their real interests concealed from them. According to the classical script and stage directions what should have been a revelation had transmuted into concealment. The fate of "Western Marxism" was to be able to have the power to see what impotent subjects could not see.

Simultaneously, Western Marxists lacked any agency through which theoretical power could be rendered into practical efficacy because it lacked practical political agency, in a mass political movement or party, that could articulate the truth as they saw it. Therefore, the narrative of concealment could not transcend the theoretical moment of revelation. Western Marxism was impotent at best; at worst, irrelevant (Anderson, 1976). In the West it became increasingly utopian (Bauman, 1977); in the East, increasingly dystopian (Feher, Heller, & Markus, 1983), as the collapse of "dictatorship over needs" lead to its recent implosion.

Outside the rubric of Western Marxism a narrative structure premised on the mechanisms of concealment found a particular resonance in social theory. I will propose that the theory of power began in utter transparency yet it ended with a narrative of concealment. How was this possible? I will argue that it was in the theory of power that the narrative of concealment found its highest expression. There is a story here worthy of inclusion in a text dedicated to "narrative and social control". A supplementary story is what a theory of power might be like that was bathed neither in the pure empiricist ether of utter transparency nor in the dense theoreticist miasma of occlusion.

THEORIES OF POWER AND IDEOLOGY

In its modern form the narrative of power developed from the creative fictions of Thomas Hobbes. Although designed to reinstitute a sovereign basis for narrative order, both practically and theoretically, it has failed to do so (Clegg, 1979). A central narrative in the modern understanding of power sketches a trajectory that stretches from Hobbes to Lukes. In this way, the doyen of 17th-century political theory can be linked to a preeminent power theorist of late 20th-century social science (Clegg, 1989). The narrative that stitched together contemporary political science and a more classical political philosophy centered on concerns with models of causality. These models derived from the new science of mechanics pioneered in the 17th century. It was the "regularity" principles of David Hume that confirmed the adequacy of these conceptions of causality (1902).

The implicit link from Hobbes to contemporary concerns with power is via a common "agency" model, as Ball (1978) terms it, one in which "ontologically autarchic" individuals held sway. Such individuals, conceived on a classical liberal model as natural entities, were at the center of analysis. So, power was something people had, rather than, say, organizations. Explicitly, the formal model developed what has become known as the community power debate. The chief contributor was Dahl (1957, 1958, 1961, 1968), who in a series of publications mapped out a behavioral science-oriented response to the looser methodologies used in the contemporary elite theory of Hunter (1953) and Mills (1956).

The ascendancy of Dahl's pluralist analysis was reached with the publication in 1961 of his empirical study of New Haven, *Who Governs?* The ascendancy was soon under attack, such that it has been the fashion for some time to be highly critical of Dahl's contributions. There is no

doubt that much of this criticism is warranted, as the self-denying ordinances associated with Dahl's project definitely rob it of opportunities for insight. Yet, it should always be remembered that the formal model that Dahl produces for the analysis of power, although restricted in scope, was nonetheless deliberately so. It effectively questioned those much looser and less precise research programs associated with the elitist style of analysis that previously had held the center ground of power research. It produced a much sharper model of power than previously, even if its actual representations were not as clearly focused.

Dahl's central essays concerned methodology. The methodology constructed a particular model of formal power. At the center of the methodology was a concern with precision. A methodological focus on the measurement of power, Dahl proposed, could achieve this precision. Instead of measuring what people thought was power it should be measured through "responses." Responses indicated the power that stood as the cause of the measured reaction. Just as a billiard ball colliding with another ball could be said to cause the motion or response of the latter, so the power of an A could be measured through the response of a B. Implicit in this was a mechanical and behaviorist view of the world. Reality was immediately observable. Transparency reigned. Things were as they appeared. To appear to be they must be evident, if they were to be observed. Whatever could not be observed could not be said to be. The unobservable was not seen to be a suitable case for treatment as data.

Precision had its costs. The prohibited lines of inquiry pointed toward a less "ontologically autarchic" distribution of power than pluralism was wont to discover. In the pluralist vision, individuals existed in splendid and celebrated conceptual disorganization from each other. In part, it was the excessive individualism of the conception of power, as much as aspects of the real structure of American communities, that oriented researchers towards pluralist conclusions. "Values" were not unimportant either. One has a strong sense of the way in which pluralist models served to license and legitimate postwar American democracy, despite whatever flaws might have been evident in it. In seeing power in America as distributed plurally the democratic ideal could be preserved. The individualism and mechanism of the conception of power used tended to orient these researchers to instances of pluralistic power over more structural conceptions. For many pluralist writers power was something that a concrete individual had to be seen to be exercising. Power prevented another equally concrete individual from doing something that they would have preferred to have done. Power was exercised so that its subjects fell in with the

individual preferences of the powerful. Indeed, in these formulations power would be the subordination of others' preferences and the extension of one's own to incorporate these others.

Characteristically, pluralists regarded power as most likely to be dispersed among many rather than few people. It was more likely to be visible in instances of concrete decision making than through reputation and to be more widely dispersed than narrowly concentrated in communities. Presthus (1964) came closest to articulating what an ideal type pluralist analysis would be.

With respect to the concept of power the pluralists made the running. Yet, their rigor is in some respects spurious. Although considerable attention attaches to constructing a precise instrument for measuring power in terms of responses to its exercise, fewer precise aspects of analysis were to be found in the model's application to the empirical analysis of the community of New Haven (Dahl, 1961). In fact, this is to be expected, if for no other reason than that the model itself retains many imprecise and tacit assumptions. The point is not so much that these remained: One would find it difficult to conceive of a formal model on which complete closure could be effected that simultaneously retained much empirical utility. Instead, one might see the precision and tacit assumptions as indicating "fault lines," areas of weakness, in the formal model. As such they are damaging to the terms of closure that the formal model attempts.

Dahl espoused an intellectual position known as *behaviorism*. The central tenet of this position is to treat social explanation as no different in principle from the explanation of a phenomenon that is nonsocial. In practice this amounts to disregarding most of what it is that makes human society possible in favor of a radically constipated conception of behavior expunged of inherent meaning. Given the behaviorism of Dahl's position he is reluctant to consider issues of intentionality; from this perspective, one would obviously be suspicious of any concept seemingly so mentalist and unmeasurable as an intention. Consequently, the considerable criticism that Dahl's approach has engendered has focused on the lack of any criteria for deciding whether an exercise of power was intended. Eventually, in Lukes's (1974) work, this concern was to generate considerable discussion of the question of deciding responsibility for action.

Dahl's model deliberately refuses reference to the intentions that an agent might be said to have. Other writers more concerned with questions of intentionality include Weber (1978), Russell (1938), and Wrong (1979). Weber, in particular, illuminates aspects of the phenomenon of power whose figuration would remain obscured by strict adherence to the formal

model of power as Dahl defines it. Despite this, the notion of intention deployed by these writers is not necessarily correct. As a tool for the analysis of power, the way in which these writers conceptualize the notion of intention proves to be very limited.

The limitations of the intentionalist concept of power are evident, revealingly so, in its most sophisticated use in Wrong (1979). Of particular interest is a discussion that concludes with the conduct of sexual etiquette at cocktail parties:

I do not see how we can avoid restricting the term power to intentional and effective acts of influence by some persons on other persons. It may be readily acknowledged that intentional effects to influence others often produce unintended as well as intended effects on their behaviour—a dominating and overprotective mother does not intend to feminize the character of her son.

But all social interaction produces such unintended effects—a boss does not mean to plunge an employee into despair by greeting him somewhat distractedly in the morning, nor does a woman mean to arouse a man's sexual interest by paying polite attention to his conversation at a cocktail party. (Wrong 1979, p. 4)

Consider the last case. Wrong's discussion is very restricted in its applicability and value as a guide to practical action in the postfeminist world in which many people, including professors of sociology, are increasingly obliged to act, perhaps including even Wrong himself. The reasons for this lack of utility are the restriction of the concept of power to a notion of intentional agency rather than to a conception of rules of the game. That the game might be patriarchally and sexistly skewed does not figure in Wrong's account: All that matters is the account of the (male) protagonist of his intentions (conceived as interior and anterior mental and causal states). The response of the (female) antagonist does not enter into analysis other than as something either confirmed or confounded by the privileged (male) discourse. The discourse is privileged because of the account of intentionality as causal and as a unique private, mental condition.

The researchers who did most to overthrow the limiting assumptions of Dahl's framework were Bachrach and Baratz (1962). "Two faces of power" were identified by these writers. One face Dahl's formal model illuminated clearly, but at the cost of casting the second face of power into the shade. Lurking in the dark was the structural face of power. Enlightenment could be cast not only by focusing the investigative gaze on concrete acts of decision making by specific agencies but also by directing it towards a phenomenon that they were to call *nonddecision-making*. By

only looking at things that happened, one neglected, so the critics said, that power might be manifested not only in doing things but also in ensuring that things do not get done. Whether this "ensuring" was itself a "doing" or should be considered in more structural and less agency-oriented terms was a debate that has raged intermittently ever since.

When Bachrach and Baratz published their long-awaited empirical study of Baltimore politics, as *Power and Poverty* (1970), there were significant retreats from some of the positions initially advanced in the theoretical papers that they had produced in the early 1960s. For instance, the notions of nondecision-making and mobilization of bias were diluted. The idea of *mobilization of bias* had been a key term of debate that had come into the currency of political exchange with its adoption by Bachrach and Baratz (1962). The term was originally coined by Schattschneider (1960). Reference to a mobilization of bias indicates that behind any episode of power that occurred in an organized setting there was a structure that prefigured the concrete exchange. Structure prefigured power's exercise and was itself always saturated with power. It was not something external, residual, or incidental to power. For instance, organizations that were effectively "masculine" in their power structures would be hardly likely to mobilize a bias proactively toward feminist issues. The theory suggests that, first, one can effectively categorize issues in terms of their interests and saliency, and second, that organizations that have an effective bias toward a male-dominated agenda rather than one more alert to feminist issues will systematically and routinely work against the interests and agenda that feminists might otherwise bring to the agenda.

The concept of mobilization of bias was later to be given a novel twist by Newton (1975), who seized and turned it into a weapon aimed straight at the core of the empirical test on which Dahl (1961) rested his case. It proved to be a case of being hoisted with one's own petard. The study of New Haven came under renewed scrutiny, not so much in terms of what it included but in terms of what it did not include. Yet, the notion of inclusion was specified in such literal terms that no empiricist objections could be raised. A tacit assumption of the study of New Haven, or any other community, was that the formal area of local authority governance coincided with the boundaries of some real community. Newton made a simple but potent observation. The boundaries of administrative entities in the United States are constructed in specific and restricted ways. New Haven was no exception to this. Many of the notable members of the New Haven community were not residents of the New Haven political arena as identified by the local authority. Consequently they had little interest in

what went on with the taxpayers' money within this area of governance. Nor was it an accident that this was so, he suggested. The drawing of political boundaries in the formal sense is itself always an act of politics, representing a mobilization of bias, particularly where a desirable suburban space can be isolated from an adjacent and problematic urban space. The costs and blight of the latter can be isolated; the charm and serenity of the former maintained. Why would issues of housing or schooling in the urban arena concern notable citizens of the community who neither lived in nor were taxed by that urban area local authority? The narrative limits of accepting that assumption of a political community of interest that Hobbes implied at the beginning of the modernist project of power become evident in a strikingly empirical manner. The "Community Power Debate" was premised on questionable assumptions not only about what constituted power but also what constituted a community.

The critique that Bachrach and Baratz offered was not universally accepted. Some doubted that any hidden or obscured phenomena lurked in the dark, outside the empiricist gaze. If something such as the second face of power could not be seen, they argued, what proof could there possibly be that it existed? Writers such as Wolfinger (1971a, 1971b) accorded the idea that there was something unobservable called nondecision-making about as much credence as they might have done to the notion that there were fairies at the bottom of their garden. Nor were the mediations of diplomats such as Frey (1971) given much shrift by skeptics such as this. Either things were real and could be clearly seen or they were not real at all, except in what was taken to be the hothouse imagination of left-wing zealots. Such people's political preoccupations clearly seemed to indicate a disturbed mind, in Wolfinger's view. Although this was a representative judgment by a leading member of the United States' political science community it was not one unanimously shared in British sociological circles where Bachrach and Baratz's critiques were to be well received by writers such as Lukes (1974), Clegg (1975), and Saunders (1979, p. 29). Lukes's response was not only the earliest, it was also the most decisive.

POWER AND THREE DIMENSIONS: A RADICAL VIEW

In 1974, the debate received a major new contribution with the extension of Bachrach and Baratz's two faces of power to one of three dimensions,

as a result of the publication of Lukes's (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. Although the main focus of research and conceptualization of power had until now occurred within the context of the "Community Power Debate," the analytic center of gravity changed to a concern with power per se. Lukes (1974) introduced the nomenclature of *dimensions* into power analysis in a move that successfully usurped discussion of the "two faces" of power. From now on, debate focused on three dimensions rather than two faces as the latter perspective declined.

Lukes's analysis sought to make a full break with earlier critical accounts by writers such as Bachrach and Baratz (1962). It did this by rejecting their conception that in the analysis of power, intentions can function as causes, as merely "qualified behaviourism." Surprisingly, he did not seek to replace this with a more sociological account of intention. Such an analysis (e.g., Blum & McHugh, 1972; Mills, 1940) is absent in Lukes, despite his linking of power and responsibility using other aspects of Mills's work.

Where intention was addressed, in Bachrach and Baratz (1962), instead of an analysis of the situational logic of motive and intention statements, there is an assumption that these terms somehow describe inner, psychological causes of action. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) sought to extend causal argument by admitting that things other than merely observable events might have the status of causes. What people thought and intended to happen, usually expressed in terms of "reasons" people might give for their actions, could be causes. Such reasons, motives, intentions, conceptualized as prior and antecedent to social action, had an explanatory and causal role to play in the analysis of power.

Certain problems are associated with accessing just what the internal mental and intentional wellsprings of another's causal actions might be. These will necessarily present themselves to any analyst who wants to argue that intentions can function as causes. Other people may well have minds but how on earth can we know what is in them other than by asking them to report on their "state of mind"? The first problem is evident. People may well lie about their intentions: This phenomenon, for instance, seems to explain some, at least, of the stunning disparities between the predicted result, based on polls, and the actual result of the British General Election of 1992. Given the narrative practice of the debate about power there are some evident problems with asking people what their intentions are. Not only may they be untruthful—this much is somewhat unproblematic—but more difficult is the argument that they may be mistaken. This problem arises from a discourse whose most pervasive assumption about

the nature of subjectivity and consciousness is that it is somehow mis-taken, occluded, concealed, false, and unreal. For instance, Lukes's "three dimensional" and "hegemonic" approach to power argues that it is "the supreme exercise of power to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have . . . to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires" (Lukes, 1974, p. 23). If this argument is correct, then when people say what their consciousness of something is, these accounts can neither be taken at face value nor can they function as explanations. So, any recourse to the actors own account as an explanation will be flawed. From this perspective, it may be said that people do not know their minds. It is precisely the false belief that they think that they do that is the locus of the problem of hegemony.

This conception of power bears the traces of an older conception of *sovereignty*. In this conception, power is a locus of will, a supreme agency to which other wills would bend, as prohibitive. In short, this is the classic conception of power as zero-sum, as the negation of the power of others. At its most subtle, with the hegemonic and three-dimensional approaches, this unravels into conceptions of power that penetrate into the very thoughts and consciousness of others. A form of supremely sovereign will is constituted from which there seems no escape. Those subject to power's sovereignty are literally unable to recognize their will, captured as it is by the sovereign power of another. Models of ideology and hegemony present such conceptions of power as "false" consciousness. Thus, one can see how Lukes's (1974) "third dimensional" conception of power as something unknowably lodged in one's subjectivity and consciousness against one's "real interests" was only a further stretching of the extant terms of power's causal, sovereign domain.

The central problem with Lukes's (1974) model for the analysis of power results from his attachment to a vocabulary of *real interests*, a term that he takes directly from Marxian debate. Lukes's conception uneasily ties what he sees as the necessarily morally irreducible nature of any idea of interests with the claim that some interests are more real than others. Interests can be conceived from one or other of a liberal, a reformist, or a radical perspective in any analysis of power, Lukes suggested. Some people will be liberals, others reformists, some radicals. From the three moral positions flow three distinct dimensional approaches to the analysis of power. The radical conception of real interests, especially where it does not coincide with the claim to interests that subjects would themselves make, is the litmus test of what interests really are. The model sits uneasily between a conventionalist epistemological position and one closer to a

realist position. Conventionalism proposes that knowledge is wholly socially constructed; realism accepts this, but would also add that social constructs change as real structures become better appropriated through knowledge constructs. Lukes's model refracts some elements of a Marxist analysis, such as the concern with real interests, through a humanistic and morally relativistic (rather than theoretically absolutist) lens (Clegg, 1989).

DOMINANT IDEOLOGY AND DISCIPLINARY POWER

Lukes (1977, p. 29) defines the key problem in terms generally accepted as the definitive specification of the issues involved: "No social theory merits serious attention that fails to retain an ever present sense of the dialectics of power and structure." What links power and structure according to Lukes's model are the practices of "hegemony." Much of the recent debate about power has focused on the ways in which ideology operates through conceptions of hegemony. The concern with the concept of ideology has focused on one or other of two things. First, there has been a suggestion that much of both Marxism and sociology is flawed by the *dominant ideology thesis* (Abercrombie et al., 1980). A second emphasis proposes that instead of thinking of either ideology or hegemony as a state of mind one would better regard each as a set of practices, primarily of a discursive provenance, that seek to foreclose the indefinite possibilities of signifying elements and their relations, in determinate ways (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). The thrust of this second emphasis derives from "post-structuralist" perspectives, particularly those that have been encouraged by Foucault's work on disciplinary power. Foucault (1977) provides a sophisticated discussion of power that explicitly breaks with any conception of ideology.

Foucault is interesting in at least two ways. First, he provides us with a critique of many conventional "views" on power. The core of this critique is that the conception of power needs to be freed from its "sovereign" auspices as a prohibitive concept. Such a concern with the facilitative and productive aspects of power relates well to the kind of arguments made most clearly by Parsons (1967). Foucault's emphasis is a useful additional contribution in this regard. Second, Foucault provides us with a detailed history of some power practices and techniques that have characterized capitalist modernity, but he does so in a way that is nonreductive. Compared with some Marxist accounts of similar events the discussion is all the better for not being reductive.¹ In comparison with such accounts the

historical record that Foucault produces stands as a corrective; in addition, it complements Weber (Dandeker, 1991).

In recent years, Foucault has become one of a whole series of French intellectual fashions for many English-speaking writers. Many critics who have "taken up" Foucault have not been trained sociologically, any more than Foucault was. The absence of a sociological framework led Foucault to understate the importance of Max Weber's (1978) contribution to arguments concerning discipline. Consequently, Foucault's work is not as discontinuous with central traditions of analysis in the social sciences as it might initially appear to be. Despite Foucault's objections to both structuralist and interpretivist analysis, and his canonization as an exemplar of "poststructuralist" analysis, deep thematic roots in central concerns of a Weberian-influenced sociology are to be found in the centrality of "discipline" to "poststructuralist" analysis of "subjectless" power such as Foucault presents. Yet, it is as a "poststructuralist" that Foucault has been influential.

CIRCUITS OF POWER

Several researchers in the sociology of science have gone furthest in developing the insights that one might draw from poststructuralism into a workable approach to the sociology of power. (Interestingly, they do not themselves acknowledge that this is what they have done.) In a group that clusters around the work of Michel Callon, Bruno Latour, and their various colleagues, there has developed a highly distinctive sociology of *translation*.²

At the core of this way of viewing power is the insight that any generally applicable theory of power also must be a theory of organization. Indeed, more specifically, the theory of power in organizations orients towards the explanation of how organizational obedience is produced. Essential to an adequate conception of organization is an appropriate understanding of the concept of *agency*. Agency is achieved. It is a concept deliberately stretched to fit a number of different forms within its contours. Agency is something that is achieved by virtue of organization, whether of a human being's dispositional capacities or of a collective nature, in the sense usually reserved for the referent of "organizations." Organization is essential to the achievement of effective agency. It is the stabilizing and fixing factor in circuits of power. The point of using agency in this way is to avoid reductionism to either putative human agents or to

certain conceptions of a structure that always determine. In the terms of organization analysis, such matters of determination are always almost contingent as an effect of organization.

A theory of power must look to the field of force in which power arrangements are fixed, coupled, and constituted so that, intentionally or not, certain 'nodal points' of practice are privileged in this unstable and shifting terrain. Better to think of power not as having two faces or three dimensions but as a process that may pass through distinct circuits of power and resistance. How these channels or circuits of power are fixed and reproduced is the crucial issue. A radical view of power thus would consist not in identifying what putative "real interests" are but in the strategies and practices by which, for instance, agents are recruited to views of their interests that align with the discursive field of force that the enrolling agency can construct. Part of this may, of course, consist precisely in claims made about the nature of interests, real or imagined. By contrast with a view of power that starts from a judgment about the adequacy of interests, the circuits framework provides a sense of a far less massive, oppressive, and prohibitive apparatus of power. Certainly, such negative effects can be secured by power, but nowhere near as easily as some "dominant ideology," "hegemonic" or "third dimensional" views would suggest.

Following Lockwood (1964), the nature of system and social integration can be conceptualized as distinct circuits of facilitative and dispositional power, respectively, to be seen in the context of their relationship to the episodic agency circuit of power (see Figure 1.1). Episodic power is the normal type of theoretical power that has captured the imagination from Hobbes to Dahl. It concerns agents getting other agents to do things that they would not otherwise do, deploying whatever resources and causal powers are available to them. Still, episodic power relations between agents are not the whole of the story. Power is also expressed through other circuits. These are circuits of facilitative and dispositional power, of social and system integration. The circuit of power passing through system integration is conceptualized in terms of techniques of discipline and production, whereas the circuit of social integration is conceptualized in terms of rules fixing relations of meaning and membership. Facilitative power, following the insights of theorists such as Parsons and Foucault, as well as the everyday insight that power can sometimes make things happen, looks at the way power is positive and can open social spaces and innovate rather than being merely the zero-sum of a set of antagonisms. Frequently, following Foucault, we would expect this to occur through new

forms of disciplinary practice, often allied with new technologies, which serve to destabilize existing circuits of power, to transform existing relational fields, by empowering some and disempowering others.

To the extent that power remains purely episodic and does not enter into the other circuits of power, it can be argued that analysis does not need to be constructed in terms other than those of a modified version of the classical framework, where an A gets a B to do something that B would not otherwise have done. Contrary to Lukes (1974), it can be maintained that the unproblematic reproduction of power through a one-dimensional circuit of power does not restrict power. On the contrary, it maximizes it most effectively and economically. Power that makes only one circuit, that has no need to struggle against relations of meaning and membership or to innovate new disciplinary techniques of production or of force, is an economy of power. It is power that can efficiently deploy given capacities where resistance, if it too remains in that circuit, will be overwhelmed. Evidently, there is more at stake for resistance than for power as well as more incentive to switch out of the episodic, taken-for-granted circuit of power. Of course, incentive may provide motivation, but it will rarely be either the mother of invention or the reshaper of meaning—or reality would be far more fragile and problematic in its reproduction than it usually is.

Returning to the figure, pressures toward *institutional isomorphism* in the circuit of social integration will tend dispositionally to reproduce existing fields of force, whereas the circuit of system integration will tend to facilitate innovation in this field of force. These are only tendencies, however. Innovation and reproduction do not necessarily run only through these circuits. System integration, premised on techniques of production and discipline innovated under imperatives of competition and environmental efficiency, will tend to be a potent source of transformation and strain, opening up opportunities both for resistance under existing rules and for changes in the rules, changes that can create new agencies, new handicaps and advantages, and new pathways through existing fields of force. Before any such changes can take place, however, there has to be an effective organization on the part of any agencies that aspire to strategicity.

The notion of power being routed through distinct circuits makes one major break with the central narrative traditions of power analysis. It does not start from an assumption that what people say, say they think, or do is in some way "false" or "erroneous." Therefore, it brackets moral judgments about the adequacy of social action to live up to the moral ideas of social theory or theorists. Instead, it deals with empirical givens.

defers. Its stories are the stories of everyday life trimmed and shaped into narrative form by the skilled ethnographer/sociologist/storyteller.

For the conversation analyst, following on from Garfinkel (1967), language primarily reveals the order contained within its use. Its narrative is one not of content but of form. Whereas the ethnographers address language use as a mirror on social reality, the conversation analysts may often be said to regard it as social reality *per se*. Not always, of course: It is the case that many subsequent ethnomethodologists have used strictly conversational analytical techniques to study substantive aspects of power—such as Molotch and Boden's (1986) analysis of the Watergate tapes; McHoul's analyses of how classroom authority is maintained (1978) or sexuality achieved (1987), and Zimmerman and West's (1975, 1983) analysis of gender differences, and power, in talk.

What McHoul (1987) has termed an "anti-realist approach" can be used to complement both ethnography and formal conversation analysis. It is an approach that addresses language use as an important medium and outcome of the accomplishment of both social structure and social action. McHoul (1987, p. 366) identifies the key terms thus: "Realism is the view that language means what it means by mapping on to a real state of affairs that is available to us through non-linguistic means. Our statements receive their sense, on this theory, from the conditions under which they are true."

Realist assumptions have been apparent in both the functionalist and the Marxist traditions of analysis. Correspondence is at work in both the narratives of revelation and those of concealment. In Marxist-influenced accounts, the world corresponds to its depiction in theory only through a discourse of concealment. The mechanisms of concealment reside in and are orchestrated through lay language, through the concepts of mundane consciousness and the inability of practical reason, as normally constituted, to pierce through occlusion, opacity, and false consciousness. Simultaneously, in this position, Herculean claims are made for the clarifying power of theoretical reason. By contrast, theory can be made to correspond with (a particularly truncated view of) the observable empirical world, as in Dahl's methodology, where the theory of language and the language of theory are restricted to what can be made to correspond in terms of some more or less sophisticated licensing of empiricist method with behavioral and positivist protocols.

Narrative is treated as either concealment or revelation in, respectively, Western Marxism and functionalism. By contrast, to treat narrative in terms of neither concealment nor revelation is to assume an anti-realist relation between the language of stories and the world rather than a

relation that is realist. A realist relationship between these terms is invariably based on the assumption that some correspondence principle governs their inter-relation. Analysis constructed on the lines of an anti-realist, anti-correspondence principle begins to take a distinct approach to the stories of everyday life and the stories of theory. Both are to be interrogated for the "impersonality" of their discourses and their operation, for the specifics or "local particulars" of their operation. In terms of language that is not formally produced as social theory, as a specialist gloss on ordinary sayings and doings, one can be said to address the "material word" in the "material world" where it is put to work. Much of this work is done in and through the organization-specific production of language. And this language is a language of power, in which, according to anti-realism, language means what it means by virtue of conventions concerning its use. Our statements receive their sense from the conditions under which they can be properly uttered. Although this rules out an appeal to a determining link between language and "reality," it nevertheless, and importantly, employs a weak kind of verification, for it appeals instead to the practical and technical accomplishment by which the sense of specific relations gets to be fixed, maintained, and changed. It is not just the formal skills of the hearers and speakers that produce social sense; although it is a technical accomplishment, it is not only that. On the contrary, one must listen to what people say and the terms in which they say it.

Conceived in this way, the analysis of language use in organizations can address the major analytical problem in the study of power. After Dahl's (1968) definition of power as an A getting a B to do something that they would not otherwise have done, this became centered on the debate initiated by Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1970) on the questions of nondecision making and non-issues. At its core was the concern to distinguish a "false" consensus on, for instance, goals or values from one that was "genuine." Power is frequently, but not necessarily always, a discursive phenomenon. When it is a discursive phenomenon, it can be as neither transparency nor veil but as a materially structured reality. Language and its socially available categories of rational action pre-structure the field of power while not determining its outcomes.

LANGUAGE ANALYSIS AND POWER: AN EXEMPLAR

Irrespective of the approach, if power is to be conceived discursively, in and through language, for organization analysis, then some limitations

of its specifically organizational location, in naturally occurring conversations, must be noted.

First, there must be some story that is interesting enough to bear retelling. This is the fundamental ground rule of ethnography: That the stuff of everyday life can be made as rivetingly narrative as the plots and scripts of the dramatic arts. Second, particularly where one attends to the "naturally occurring" conversations of everyday life, there are some practical organization problems attendant on its recording. These are particularly acute on construction sites, the research setting that these data report. Construction sites are very noisy, very dangerous, very mobile settings in which people are rarely stationary. It is physically very difficult, without extremely sophisticated bugging equipment (which is not to be recommended on ethical grounds), to tape-record naturally occurring conversations in work settings such as construction sites, at least out on the site itself. In addition, in almost every significant-sized organization, it will often prove difficult to gain access to its inner sanctums and circles. As is well known, it is far easier to access, relatively, the less powerful than those who are more powerful. Constraints that developed from these factors meant that the data collection had to occur in an office rather than on site, and in the site organization rather than elsewhere—in the borough corporation or the contractor's head office. I did not notice these constraints much at the time.

When I started to do empirical research on construction sites in the early 1970s I had a small portable tape recorder that had a built-in microphone. I had permission to use the machine but I did not want to make it too conspicuous that I was doing so. I sat in the corner of a room measuring about 8 m long by 4 m wide (26 ft by 13 ft) at a desk with building materials and documents piled up on it. I looked much like any other building worker around the office. My garb and appearance was appropriate to the site conditions: blue jeans, black donkey-jacket, black Wellington boots, and modishly long hair for the times. Much of the time I appeared to be almost "part of the furniture," just another young man on site. There was one difference. I had the tape recorder going.

Why did I choose the office setting from all the possibilities on the busy site? Well, partially because the actual immobility of a room as a locale enabled taping. Once I had made the decision to tape data then I had to find a locale in which the technology would function efficiently. The room was the project manager's office, one in which there was considerable traffic. It was also the locale for site meetings. Site meetings held in this office became the major source of data—not entirely, because other kinds

of data were used as well. Site meetings were particularly important, however.

Much more important than the practical problems encountered in data collection are some analytical aspects of interpretation. To what extent is access to the reality of power and organizations possible through the analysis of language. Conversational analysis would suggest that one could make access through studying phenomena such as turn-taking, closures, and interruptions, formulating the various kinds of rules that structure the form of the content (Schegloff, 1968; Sacks, 1972, would be some key references here). Take, for instance, these data in which there is a discussion between two people, PW and Ray:

PW: I'm going to write a letter, you know, item by item, what I've got Ken [Assistant Measurement Engineer] doing at the moment, I roughed it out on there, an enlarged vertical scale, so you can see what you're talking about, a section through the site of each grid line/

Ray: Yeah/

PW: with the basements plotted in, and the ground levels as known/

Ray: Yeah/

PW: and then plot in our bases, and soon as you do that you start seeing that, we haven't gone down deep as they're saying, eh, if you look at the picture I drew yesterday, said he, said he [searching] . . . this hole here, this inspector's office base, that they looked at the clay, we took a check all around it yesterday, and in fact, just around the one hole,

Ray: Yeah

PW: that sandy clay was up and down anything/

Ray: Yeah/

PW: up to/

Ray: Yeah/

PW: six hundred mills around it, so we take the average, ninety eight one five-O.

Ray: Yeah/

PW: take the six hundred and ten that we've got to go into it, gives us an average level of ninety seven five forty/

Ray: Yeah.

So far, Ray's contribution to the conversation has been "Yeah." He does improvise further on in the conversation, he says "Aye" and toward the end of the conversation he makes one or two interjections. Who is exercising power here? Once we know that PW is the project manager and that Ray is the site foreman, do we really need to make reference to a linguistic text that tells us, in a circumlocutive way, what should be already

evident and apparent from the organization chart? Of course, if the real world of organizations looked just like the organization chart, we would never need to do fieldwork, so it is as well to have empirical data that can, in principle, disconfirm what other texts might suggest. In this instance, it is relatively unproblematic to see it as an occasion in which Ray is offering narrative prompts to the continuity of what is effectively a monologue by PW. It turned out to be a significant aspect of everyday politics on the site, however (see Clegg, 1975).

POWER AND PRACTICAL REASONING: THE INCLEMENCY RULE

On construction sites, at least in the United Kingdom, joiners have as part of their contract the statement that they shall not work in "inclement weather." Now, that sounds fine, of course, but clearly there is no operational definition that constitutes inclement—something I learned in an interesting and roundabout way when I was working as a laborer on site. Normally, it is obvious; where it is not, "managerial prerogative" ordinarily prevails. One day we were out on site and the ganger (the man nominated as the work unit's "leader") said, "Ay up lads, 'appen it's coming on a bit inclement," holding up his finger to the wind as he said so. We looked up and stopped and looked around and some said, "Aye 'appen it is." We downed tools and went back to the hut where we started a game of cards and brewed up some tea. After about 10 minutes or so the site foreman came down and said, "What you buggers doing, you should be out on site." The gangerman responded, "Joiners don't work in inclement weather hey, it's come on inclement." The foreman went away and got the project manager who came down about 10 or 15 minutes later. A verbal altercation followed, there was some degree of negotiation, and eventually sheepishly we went out on site. It was drizzling slightly on site. Now the first time this happened I did not think much of it; I did not ask anything about it; I just thought, "OK, I know joiners don't like getting wet and they don't work when it's raining." It happened again 2 or 3 days later. I began to wonder what was going on because this time it was hardly raining at all. With a wink and a sly look the gangerman said, "Hey up, seems like it's a bit inclement lads" and we trooped off. This went on several times over a period of 2 or 3 weeks.

What I believe was happening was the following: The job was organized so that the joiners were making a very poor bonus. A joiner's wage packet comprises several aspects: an attendance allowance, money for

being there that includes a cost for traveling to work and also a standard flat rate wage, but the bulk of the increment is a piece-rate group bonus that depends on the amount of shutterage (the amount of framework constructed for concrete to be poured into) that the joiners can make per meter over a period of time.

What the joiners were doing was to use the inclemency rule in an ironical but quasi-legitimate way. The pressure was on an incompetent management to organize the job more efficiently so that materials and supplies would come on site on time. If this had been the case, they could have worked harder so that they would have earned more bonus.

In power terms, the "inclemency rule" is of considerable interest. Marxist writers such as Burawoy (1979) have talked about the games that workers play in organizations as a way of making out and creating space outside managerial surveillance. The joiners, although playing similar kinds of games, were doing so not to make out and create space outside managerial control but to put pressure on the management to increase control and thus more efficiently exploit them. That is a very strong kind of power. It is one in which subjects happily collude in intensifying their subjection. What it points to is that this power is not simply discursive although approached through a discursive analysis. Consequently, the text of the everyday-life world does not stand in some necessary relationship to truth and falsehood, to revelation and concealment. Instead, questions of power in that situation are tied up with systems of wage relations, of social relations of production (cf. Abercrombie et al., 1980). The discipline of power there is not purely a discursive phenomenon but resides in the normalization of those circuits of power through which power ordinarily proceeds. Wage-payment systems thus have a key role to play in this.

One can point to discursive instances of power on the site such as a foreman issuing orders (in a more developed version of Wittgenstein's, 1968, example of the laborer and builder at the beginning of *The Blue and Brown Books*). Although these are a form of power, they are not the most significant. It is not how power is normally done. It gets to be done rather more through the structuration of things such as wage payment systems, which are nondiscursive phenomena, and through traditional occupational practices.

POWER AND ISSUES

Site meetings represent an excellent opportunity for one interested in power and organizations, because their point is to discuss issues raised in

terms of the ongoing nature of the project. In particular, they are oriented to negotiating and resolving the frequently conflicting interpretations of contractual documents associated with the site. The contract, the bill of works, concerned the design statement and its accomplishment. What interested me in these meetings were the opportunities for studying power as it is "normally" constituted in the routine processes of the site organization. That was an example of the Dahlian "A getting B to do something that they wouldn't otherwise do" model. It became apparent not only from theory but also from simple observation in the construction site setting that one really did not get much purchase on the reality of power and organization by just going and watching people doing things. Theoretically, the most important kinds of power were already constituted in those occasions when A's didn't have to get B's to do things because B's would do those sorts of things anyway. Simple empiricism would not be sufficient.

With respect to the empirical setting, what became clear over a period of some weeks was the way in which the issues that were occurring for contestation and conflict, the issues over which the A-B type power plays occurred, were not wholly random, unrelated, independent, or contingent phenomena. They had a narrative rationality that inhered within the basic framework of the construction site.

A construction site is not a single organization but a complex play of interorganizational relations. There is the contractor's organization; the client organization that in this case was the borough corporation of a northern town; the suppliers; the subcontractors; the tradesmen; the local police (who would be there to handle disruptions to traffic flow, for example); demolition firms; and very many more. It was important in understanding this very complex pattern of interorganizational relationships to appreciate how a single discourse, a single set of texts, constituted it. The constitutive texts of the construction site were the contractual documents, the bill of works, the documents that were the legal bidding basis for the competitive tender.

The formal literature of architectural practice contains many injunctions. For instance, in the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) *Handbook* can be found the injunction: "The system requires that before bills of quantities are prepared full working drawings shall be completed." According to the RIBA *Handbook*, these drawings "will embody final decisions upon every matter related to design specification, construction and cost and full design of every part and component of the building." After this instruction, in heavy type comes the warning "that any future change in location, size, shape or cost after this time will result in abortive work."

In practice, the principles of the RIBA account seemed inapplicable in the letter of the text. Such a formal representation did not account for the documents' inherent indexicality. Documents must be read and interpreted to be used as documents. To say that they are indexical simply means that their sense is not evident, there is no notional meaning, no one correct sense that inheres in them. The sense of the contractual documents can only be read in terms of the constitution of the meaning of those documents in particular situated actions in particular contexts.

From the limited degree of observation of construction sites that organization researchers have made, an important finding is the high degrees of conflict and high degrees of ambiguity, often concerning the contract itself, that characterize them. In the organization theory literature this is often expressed in terms of notions of uncertainty, where the uncertainty is treated as a contingency, sometimes even one that is climatically based. For instance, rain or snow may be seen as a climatic variation that introduces uncertainty. This is a comparatively insular view of the world given the range of climatic variations within which construction sites routinely occur. A more sophisticated view of contingency is required.

Where the contractual documents specify every variable in the building process, then the normal mode of rationality, particularly for the contracting company, is to try to negotiate or renegotiate the contract. The contract is the only variable not specified by the contract. The kinds of issues that were emerging for the exercise of power in particular pieces of power play had an underlying mode of rationality.

Very often construction companies will tender for a contract in order to keep plant, machinery, and employees who were a stable part of the core labor force employed. Often they would do so where the contribution to profit might be very low, or where it might even be negative, on a job that was losing money. One reason for doing this is because there is always the possibility of exploiting the indexicality of the contractual documents to renegotiate them on any occasion that occurred. The construction site materials display an exquisite temporality on site; one constituted in terms of events "before" and "after" normal clay. Normal clay became a benchmark issue around which all the other issues were collected.

I had better explain what normal clay was. The documents contained instructions to excavate 3 m (almost 10 ft) into clay; they also contained, elsewhere, instructions to excavate into sandy stony clay. The possibility, of course, is that 3 m into clay and into sandy stony clay do not coincide. The construction company's argument was that they did not. Regrettably, when the clerk of works was not present, they had to excavate extra soil

for which they expected a substantial payment for the extra work involved. That became the issue around which all the subsequent issues began to emerge. The issues were, on the one side, the construction company attempting to exploit systematically any forms of equivocality that they could indexically constitute out of the documents. On the other side the architect, representing the corporation, was attempting to preserve the integrity of the design and of the contractual relationships at all costs. The participants in this were the project manager of the construction company, the client organization, and various subcontractors.

NARRATIVES: TOWARD A STORY

One thing that became apparent from this empirical work was that if power involves concrete decision making, then one problem with the social world is that it is rather like Jean-Luc Godard's view of cinema, a subversion of the classical Aristotelian form of narrative. Films may have beginnings, middles, and ends but they are not necessarily nor recognizably found in that order. Most of the time one only sees middles, one rarely sees beginnings, and ends are not always what they seem. It is quite difficult to constitute actual beginnings and very difficult to achieve closure, because episodes often move out of one arena and into another. Rather than located in decision making, power was found in the play of the discourse, in the way in which the available categories for talk in particular contexts lodged within a mode of rationality.

Analytically, one needs to move in a full circle in analyzing power and language to focus on not only the language of power but also the power of the language of power. Part of the problem with power resides in the "problem of power" itself, elaborated from a certain view of power as foundational, as a premise from which subsequent debate developed. One might want to suggest that it is not really possible to take the simple A-B notion of power as a foundation on which to build a second and a third dimension (in which the latter usually ended up being an analysis in terms of ideological illusion, implicit or explicit to notions of hegemony in a more or less Gramscian mode). Such an argument, in Lukes (1974) for instance, seeks analytically to build "structure" out of the foundations of "action."

The initial and problematic narrative framing the theory of power constrained the way in which its subsequent debate could develop. Only a certain kind of space, only a certain kind of play for innovation, became

available in that debate. What Bachrach and Baratz (1962), Lukes (1974), and others did was to run up against the limits of the language that formulated that conceptualization of power. The injunction of Wittgenstein (1968) to study the meaning in use has been understood cross-sectionally, because of the influence of ordinary language philosophy. Another way might be to think of it as a historical injunction. Consequently, one can look at the development of an intellectual discourse about power as something that has developed, perhaps rather like a Foucauldian genealogy, from a causal, mechanistic, and individualistic conceptualization in its genesis from Hobbes to the present day. The problem of "the problem of power" could then be related to that initial conceptualization of power as if it were something that was wholly causal, mechanistic, and individualistic. The language game extending this discourse of power, one could argue, has thus become condemned to tracing the limits and frame of an originating discourse of sovereign assumptions (Clegg, 1989).

The root of this modern analysis of power began with Hobbes. Hobbes attempted to justify a narrative in which order articulated around the architectonic powers of the sovereign. At first, this was literally in and through the body of the monarch as the sovereign subject ensuring the maintenance of a discursive community of subjects. The original frontispiece of *Leviathan* (Hobbes, 1962) even represented this emblematically: the huge figure of the monarch constituted by the tiny figures of his subjects was ordered into an overwhelming representation of corporeal awesomeness. Such a representation was a striking example of a pure symbolic logic given to a largely illiterate population.

In the 20th century Hobbes's metaphorical complexity was reduced to the wholly unironical impulses of a behaviorally rationalized concept of causality. Transparent empiricism, allied to the protocols of behavioral science, had triumphed. It was only with the critique of Bachrach and Baratz, founded in "intentionality," that the modern narrative of concealment began to unravel toward its hegemonic end in a conception of "real interests." Had one wanted to address the narrative of everyday life on the building site in terms of this narrative trajectory, one would have been practicing a way of not listening to what people said. Behind the expression of the inclemency rule lay an interest in work. Was this interest in some way false, untrue, unreal? Only if one approached the articulation of language from preestablished positions designed neither to listen to those stories that people themselves have to say nor to be reflexively aware of the narratives through which one makes one's address.

In social research, a suspicion toward narrative is necessary. However, the narratives that one should suspect are not so much those of everyday life, which, although clearly not irremediable, do work in context. It is this work in context to which one should attend in analysis. Moreover, ideally, one should seek to engage this work in context, to engage with the accounts of everyday life. Mundane social practices warrant less suspicion of their narrative practices whereas more circumspection is required of those theories that would demean, ironize, or mock the stories by which people ordinarily live their lives. To repeat the central message: These do work in context. If one is to be suspicious, perhaps it should be of those social theories that seek to subsume everyday accounts to their overwhelming narrative. In contemporary power analysis this has been a narrative of concealment, as a refraction of orthodox functionalism with its narrative of revelation. Neither revelation nor concealment is a necessary narrative practice. Neither recommend themselves for social analysis that seeks to engage with the empirical world.

If one is to make a practice of suspicion, I would recommend a wariness with respect to the grand narrative themes that have organized the modern experience. This suspicion, born of the postmodern condition, might usefully be coupled with a respect for the stories that one finds in the mundane sites of the social world. Yet, respect does not mean surrendering to their narrative any more than to those of grand theory. These mundane sites should no more be taken at face value than should the meta-narratives of modernity. Instead, in both instances, one should look to an analysis of the way in which the language game and its moves serve to secure and stabilize circuits of power: circuits both of power in theory "proper" and of power in the practice of everyday life "outside theory." Of course, for some, theory is the mundane practice of everyday life. Here, then, it is even more important that the dialogue between theory *per se* and other practices of life occur. Otherwise, one claims a position of privilege from which only ex cathedra judgments of revelation or concealment could be anticipated. By contrast, this chapter recommends that one might seek to address how such judgments are possible in theory and how, in practice, one can attend seriously to what it is people say they are doing in the business of everyday life.

NOTES

1. Lentricchia (1988, p. 60) has suggested that, in some respects, the Foucauldian account of "discipline" is not incompatible with a theory of "practical capitalism," particularly in its

implications for an understanding of Taylorism and its practices of "drill." Under "scientific management," surveillance comes to be based less on a knowledge of preexisting rationalities and more on the imposition of new rationalities based on a knowledge abstracted from the contexts in which its effects are held accountable, in the separation of "conception" and "execution." However, it might be more appropriate to regard this less as a theory of "practical capitalism," as Lentricchia suggests, than as a theory of practical managerial control, control that can be relatively indifferent to the economic system within which it occurs. It is doubtful if Marxist bridges would remain useful conduits if the specifically "capitalist" nature of the terrain were challenged and found wanting.

2. For a good example of the genre see Callon (1986).

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