ASPECTS OF INAUTHENTICITY
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THE INAUTHENTIC GESTURE

As one drives along the highway in the United States today, it is not uncommon for a van to pass with a fabricated hand on a spring waving mechanically from the rear window as the van speeds away. A mechanical hand on a spring waving a fictional farewell characterizes the inauthenticity of our present so-called post-industrial society. As mechanical as the waving hand may be, the heart jumps in anticipation of human concern, only to be quieted by the mind's response. It is only a mechanical replica of the wave of a human hand, and it communicates no human acknowledgment or concern.

Authenticity exists where human response exists. Inauthenticity exists if a relation, institution, or society appears to respond while the underlying condition alienates. Alienation exists where the world is unresponsive, but subjects the individual to forces which he cannot understand or control. (Etzioni 1968 618) Unresponsiveness is conceivable only in relation to basic human needs. The concept of autonomous human needs forces recognition of limits to human manipulability and brings to view the need to transform social structures in response to human needs. If human needs are to be satisfied, society must be restructured.

BASIC NEEDS

We can identify 6 basic human needs: 1) affection and the need for solidarity; 2) recognition and the need for esteem and approval; 3) social context including orientation, synthesis, and meaning; 4) gratification in the form of short-term rewards and long-term satisfaction; 5) stability and consistency of rewards which gives emotional security; 6) variance in social structure to meet the needs of differing personalities. (Etzioni 1968 622)

Bureaucracy is the basic structure of an industrial society. In Weber's theoretical elaboration of bureaucracy, explicit provision was made for the role incumbent as the human aspect of bureaucracy. Power was given to the bureaucracy, but responsibility was ascribed to the powerful rules for human welfare. As bureaucracy evolved from theory to reality, in the movement from the classical bureaucracy to modern industrial bureaucracy, these provisions for human welfare have tended to disappear. All that is left is a formidable impersonal power structure with no immediate or direct responsibility for social or personal welfare. Weber's bureaucracy formed the skeletal outline of an organizational technique which potentially dominates autonomous persons and traditional structure of social life. Hummel presents this classical potential as fully realized in the modern industrial society where bureaucracy is at war with society in political, cultural, psychological, social and linguistic forms of conflict (Hummel 1977 9). In all of these areas of conflict, the bureaucracy is viewed as a control instrument from the top down. It is welded into a powerful agency against which the individual is relatively powerless.

The classical sop which calls autonomous persons to abandon their private social and traditional social lives to become bureaucratic non-persons comes from the bureaucratic guarantee of a vocation, and the acceptance of specific obligations in return for a secure existence. The bureaucrat's position is guaranteed by the prescriptive rules of rank and order. This position is held for life if the incumbent has tenure. A fixed salary scale and a pension on retirement provide permanent security. These promises to meet human needs are called a profession (Gerth and Mills 1958 198).

RULES OF BUREAUCRACY

As classical bureaucracy gave way to its modern form in post-industrial society, the rules have become dominant while the promise to meet human needs has withered. Thus, a truly inauthentic society has arisen. It appears to meet human needs while actually denying these needs. This inauthenticity is evident in a wide spectrum of social relations. In chemical industries, workers become sterile from handling powerfully toxic insecticides. Cotton-mill workers develop the brown-lung disease due

to the lack of air-purity control and compensatory health care. Coal miners experience the black-lung disease under similar conditions in the dusty mines. Unsafe machinery and hazardous working conditions periodically cause loss of life. And the widows of deceased labor union members may find that the promised pension privileges are unavailable or insufficient due to maladministration or chicanery with union pension funds.

In the professions, persons are forced to reduce their profession to those techniques acceptable to bureaucratic administrative pressures. Administrators are forced to retire early. Tenured academic faculty are dismissed without serious social or legal costs. The rules to qualify a professional in a bureaucratic office are easily changed. The person who qualifies one day may be disqualified the next day by a revision of the rules or of the organizational structure. Such events demonstrate the increase in bureaucratic power over social relations based on a false promise of meeting human needs.

PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT

Industrial society and bureaucratic techniques are socially inauthentic, and persons who accept false promises in these inauthentic social structures are themselves inauthentic, because they do so at the cost of suffering self-invalidation. They give the appearance of meeting needs while sustaining severe physical, social and psychological deprivation. The term *burnout* highlights both personal and institutional inauthenticity.

A professional nurse claims that burnout runs exceptionally high amoung professional nurses. The duty nurse has great responsibility, but works with deficient staff and unsympathetic doctors. She may quit the job, or leave the nursing profession althogeher, in favor of selling real estate.

A young professor asks what happens when the mind asks questions which only the heart can answer. Why is a doctoral degree and a full professorship with tenure no longer enough to qualify one as a professional educator? Why must one be constantly validated by undergraduate student ratings, and by continual upgrading of professional requirements? The mind asks why one is not recognized or valued as a person. Why does

professional work no longer have meaning? Why does one's life have no wholeness? The heart answers that legal, rational rules cannot recognize or value a person.

"The post-modern school system has been accused of placing a public self between the person and the world which prevents the authentic expression of emotions and the development of authentic relations to others, thus eliminating the possibility of attaining a genuine arousal or release." (Etzioni 1968 645) The ensuing personal distress in teaching has been called burnout. The bureaucratic response to this inauthenticity is the call for faculty renewal, a term used to describe methods that teachers can use to avoid burning out early, because of a lack of alternatives. There is no escape to another job.because fewer teaching positions are open. Escape in new research is not possible because the research money is unavailable. "Faculty renewal includes mid-career training, internships or fellowships in private business or industry and early retirement." (Baskin 1980 22)

It is wrong to accept personal responsibility for not meeting basic personal needs when those needs are specifically denied by the imposition of structural constraints. It would be more authentic for the teacher to say: "I am not burned out. I am depersonalized and dehumanized. My social institutions have destroyed my social, physical, and mental capacities. I do not have the ideological faith and gratitude imputed to me by these inauthentic institutions. I feel resentment and resistance to these alienating structures."

THE INAUTHENTIC RESPONSE

The inauthentic person testifies to the effectiveness of institutional techniques which prolentarianize intellectual work and professional autonomy. For institutional administrators to stigmatize the young professional with the term *burnout* is inauthentic. It would be more authentic to say the young professional is captive to an unresponsive institution where the victim's power to resist is negated. Institutions maintain dramaturgic rituals of inauthentic social systems and inauthentic persons in two ways 1) They prolentarianize intellectual

work. 2) They negate resistance. By increasing its social power, the bureaucracy pushes the professional worker and the intellectual worker into lower positions of status and pay. This proletarianizes intellectual labor (Larson 1980 133). Downgrading professions and intellectual constructions promotes inauthenticity of institutions and persons. Institutions deny responsibility to individuals and individuals deny this denial by acting falsely as if admitting that their needs are met. The institutional denial of responsibility for workers takes the form of cost-efficient, but inferior productivity, and the reduction of reassignment of highly paid personnel. The downgrading is ideologically garbed by institutional administrators as burnout in the workers, and this definition is inauthentically accepted by the workers.

SUMMARY

Structural inauthenticity in modern industrial society, as demonstrated by the three dimensions of alienation, subjects persons to economic, organizational and technical forces which they neither understand nor control. And inauthenticity becomes apparent as these alienating conditions are masked by an ideology of responsiveness, leaving basic human needs unmet. The ideology of responsiveness takes the form of negating the resistance of workers to these alientative structures. "The forms of indirect control, as input-output control, management by objectives, impersonal cybernetic control, control of boundary processes, indoctrination, preselection of information, persons, and means, are successfully applied to reduce the amount of direct resistance." (Rus 1980 10)

The indirect effect of using the lie to subordinate human needs to structural needs will increase the social demand for truth. It will increasingly validate authenticity. Mechanical response to human needs will be increasingly repudiated. Professional upgrading, burnout and inauthentic institutional care will appear as proletarianization of intellectual labor and professions. They will also appear as techniques for resisting the power of workers to resist alienating inauthentic institutions where they encroach on society and where they deny human needs.

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