TWO VIEWS OF DISSOLUTION: AN EXAMINATION

OF COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR THEORY AND CRITICAL

THEORY ON THE SUBJECT OF MASS SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

by

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B.A. Loma Linda University, 1969

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

Sociology and Anthropology

APPROVAL

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Degree: Master of Arts

Title of Thesis: Two Views of Dissolution: An Examination
of Collective Behavior Theory and Critical
Theory on the Subject of Mass Social Behavior

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Two Views of Dissolution: An Examination of Collective Behavior Theory and Critical Theory on the Subject of Mass Social Behavior

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January 11, 1977

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores two relatively unique sociological conceptions of modern (mass industrial) social life and behavior. The first of these theoretical formulations is the Collective Behavior theory initially developed by Robert E. Park at the University of Chicago and subsequently refined by Herbert Blumer and more recently elaborated by Ralph Turner and Lewis M. Killian as well as by the Parsonian social theorist, Neil Smelser. The second is that of the Frankfurt Institute For Social Research, commonly known as Critical theory and primarily associated with the names of its leading figures, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno.

The primary objective of this inquiry is to examine the perspectives of Collective Behavior Theory and Critical theory on the subject of the process of social change in mass society. In pursuit of this goal, this study attempts a fresh description of the scientific-philosophical origins of these two theories and is designed to clarify their essential hypotheses pertaining to the milieu and characteristics of mass social life.

This is not the first effort to interrelate these two theories. For example, Leon Bramson (1961), also emphasizing their concepts of mass society, has explored the possibility of such an association between these

two sociological schools and in fact concludes that there is a significant measure of agreement between them. However, he bases his argument for their relationship primarily upon what he takes to be the compatibility of their world-views. The present study seeks to relate the two theories on narrower but more substantive grounds than those proposed by Bramson. It will be contended that their compatibility is demonstrable despite the differences between their respective methodologies and philosophical perspectives rather than because of any real compatibility on these grounds.

It will be argued that in virtually every respect Collective Behavior theory and Critical theory should properly be recognized as idiosyncratic and mutually distinct theories, each in part designed in order to observe and variously account for different aspects of the general problem of the organization of the contemporary social structure and the process of mass social behavior. It is contended that their complementarity derives from the fact that although their conceptualizations of mass social behavior differ, they are not mutually exclusive insofar as they explain different aspects of a congeries of phenomena which may be commonly identified. The point of demonstrating this complementarity of perspectives is to provide a fuller conceptualization of the problem of explaining the process of social change as it relates to mass social behavior than that which might be derived from either perspective, taken by itself, or that which is offered by presently more influential explanations of these phenomena, taken by themselves.

For Linda

Acknowledgments

Foremost among those to whom I owe serious intellectual debts is
the late Professor Ernest Becker. He suggested the topic of this thesis
and directed my initial explorations of the theories which it addresses.
Of far greater and enduring importance is the indelible impress of his
teaching and writing over the general course of my intellectual
development. I came to Simon Fraser in order to study under him –
a decision I shall ever be glad that I made.

I also am indebted to Professor Michael Kenny for his unflagging
support and perceptive guidance as the supervisor of my work on this
thesis; to Professor Karl Peter for his extensive advice on all matters
but particularly on the portion of the thesis devoted to Collective
Behavior theory; and to Professor Heribert Adam, especially for his
invaluable direction of my inquiry into Critical theory. I also owe
a particular word of appreciation to Professor John Whitworth for his
advice regarding the structure and style of this thesis as well as for
his critical evaluation of its content.

Needless to say, responsibility for the finished product lies
entirely in my own hands.

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INTRODUCTION

There are a number of reasons for selecting Critical theory and Collective Behavior theory for review and synthesis. In the first place, each theory is generally recognized as being based on an idiosyncratic conception of the determinants of individual behavior and of the process of institutional change in the modern world. While neither of their perspectives on the existence and character of mass society have won general acceptance and, in any case, were never developed into comprehensive theories of mass social life, most discussions of the subject refer to theorists from one or both schools as having contributed essential ideas to the concept of mass society and to the understanding of the mechanisms which characterize its operation. Both schools were certainly instrumental in establishing the probable destructive effect of advanced industrial society upon the traditional standards and patterns of social belief and ritual typical of historically previous social behavior and self-understanding. We have also touched upon another reason for reexamining the interrelationship of these two theories. That reason is the inference, and in the case of Bramson's (1961) interpretation, his explicit argument, that whatever convergence may be observed between these

two theories of the mass social process may be attributed largely to certain mutually held biases regarding the character of contemporary life-styles. It must be emphasized that although Bramson specifically elaborates upon their supposed philosophical compatibility, this interpretation of their views and respective biases is not uncommon (cf. Couch, 1968; Currie and Skolnick, 1970; Popper, 1970; Shils, 1957). Finally, they commend themselves to renewed joint consideration because each, despite its relatively large measure of continuing influence appears to have entered a distinct period of institutional dissolution. Quarantelli and Weller (1974) report that presently, teaching and research in the field of collective behavior is so scattered and its few identifiable specialists display such a lack of consensus regarding the definition of the field that it is rather questionable whether or not Collective Behavior will remain a vital or viable sociological specialty. It is widely appreciated that with the deaths of Adorno (in 1969) and of Horkheimer (in 1972) the future of Critical theory as a unique and self-contained school of research and thought is at best problematical, and some sociologists feel that the School has already become an artifact in the museum of the sociological tradition. While the reasons for the relative eclipse of the organizational cohesion of these two theories are beyond the scope of this inquiry, a review of their contributions to the subject of mass cultural life does seem to be appropriate at this particular juncture.

Besides the fact that they are historically interesting these two theoretical perspectives have been selected for analysis by virtue of their intrinsic worth as unique schools of sociological thought. Both theories represent a counterpoint to their respective intellectual sources. For example, while Collective Behavior theory is a product of one of the

major schools of North American sociology it also represents a fundamental

departure from certain characteristic assumptions of that tradition,

specifically regarding its conception of social stability and order.

Likewise, Critical theory can be shown to represent both the continuation

of and a unique departure from the type of orthodox Marxist theory char-

acteristically elaborated in Europe.

Elaboration of their respective viewpoints will throw light not only

on the factors responsible for the development of each theoretical school

but will also demonstrate their actual and potential contributions to

social theory in general. It is one objective of the present

inquiry to demonstrate that these two theories challenge certain prevalent

assumptions regarding the characteristics of the advanced industrial

social complex.

It is a truism to say that at least since Durkheim sociology has

been largely committed to viewing society and culture as fundamentally

stable phenomena. The traditional object of attention has been the

social institutional network which is seen as an evolving but orderly and

predictable structure of consensus-maintaining devices. The consistency

and repetitiveness of most behavior in any given society is as incontrov-

ertible as it is obvious to any systematic observer. Despite the basic

factuality of culturally consistent behavior and the longstanding socio-

logical preoccupation with social order it is an important fact that, in

the main, the various schools of analysis are unable, according to their

own criteria, to provide a satisfactory explanation of the historical

emergence of social order or to explain its genesis even in well-defined,

contemporary societies (cf. Cohen, 1968: 31-32).

Both theories under consideration hypothesize that the establishment

and maintenance of persistent, regular patterns of social behavior (social order) must be explained in terms of interactive processes which confront but are not determined by the natural and social-environmental conditions in which they occur. Predispositions and interpretations unique to each social participant are hypothesized as deriving from a continuous process of confrontation between the social individual and the culturally constituted forces which determine the given ground of interaction. This contrasts with the broad position taken for example by Talcott Parsons that the organizational form of a given social system constitutes the determining pattern of social behavior within the system (cf. Parsons, 1951).

While it cannot be claimed that either Critical theory or Collective Behavior theory are unique in their regard for the problem of social disruption, or pose peculiar arguments regarding the role of social crises in the establishment and maintenance of social order, they are nevertheless notable for their contributions regarding these issues. It will be argued that Collective Behavior theory has been particularly notable for its struggle with this problem of the characteristics of social chaos which may be manifested throughout the institutional fabric of contemporary Western society. Critical theory, while less idiosyncratic in this regard, when its European setting and specifically its Marxian heritage are considered, ultimately presents an even more radical theory of the disjunctive state of institutional and personal relationships in the modern world. Although these theoretical positions are not alone in their valuation of the role and characteristics of social disorder, it will be argued that individually and together they do offer a particularly thoroughgoing critique of the aforementioned sociological perspective on order and conversely, present a strong case for alternative conceptual schemes.

The themes of social authority, the character of the modern family and of revolution (and counterrevolution) which directly inform Critical theory and indirectly arise from Collective Behavior theory, are in fact characteristically regarded as significant factors in sociological accounts of the dynamics of contemporary, Western society. Moreover, the assertion that sociological theory generally preserves a fundamental regard for social order should not be taken to mean that there does not also exist a profound and pervasive recognition that the contemporary social order is threatened by forces of dissolution. The pessimism concerning the condition of culture in the advanced industrial world and the sense of despair regarding the propsects of preserving traditional modes of human sociability which pervades the surrounding intellectual world also permeates sociological thought. As Franz Neumann averred, it is a basic sociological insight that modern industrial capitalism and mass democracies transform "men into mass-men" (1963: 367). The sociological literature is in fact replete with images of mass-man who also goes by the names, 'alienated', 'anomic', 'transitional', 'organizational', 'schizophrenic', 'commercial', and a host of others, usually connoting some sort of lost social identity. The unifying theme of this literature is that of the separation and the sense of estrangement of the individual from important aspects of identification with the life of the community. To say that a person is alienated or anomic does not imply that he is totally isolated from or within the community but rather that he is rendered either or both objectively and psychologically powerless to control the direction and meaning of his or her life.[1]

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1 Richard Schacht has pointed out that logically it is not real or sensed powerlessness in itself which produces alienation. Rather, he argues that "it seems to be only as men cease to believe that the

In the course of this thesis it will be argued that the prevailing viewpoint, particularly in American sociology, is that alienation or at least its social effect is pathological in the sense that it breeds socially disruptive behavior. Of course, by definition the sociological literature on the problem of alienation addresses the issue in terms of the disjunction between institutional norms and social mores on the one hand and the individual's efforts to achieve social success, on the other. In Robert K. Merton's words,

> No society lacks norms governing conduct. But societies do differ in the degree to which the folkways, mores and institutional controls are effectively integrated with the goals which stand high in the hierarchy of cultural values. The culture may be such as to lead individuals to center their emotional convictions upon the complex of culturally acclaimed ends, with far less emotional support for prescribed methods of reaching out for these ends. With such differential emphases upon goals and institutional procedures, the latter may be so vitiated by the stress on goals as to have the behavior of many individuals limited only by considerations of technical expediency... As this process of attenuation continues, the society becomes unstable and there develops what Durkheim called "anomie" (or normlessness) (1957: 134-135).

The difference between this perspective and that which will be described in this thesis is neatly summarized by Blumer (1969) in this brief statement: "It is the social process in group life that creates and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold group life (19). The two theories under discussion, Critical and Collective Behavior theory, do not dispute the commonly ascribed characteristics of social alienation. They do reject any proposal that a clear distinction may be made between

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impersonal forces and developments affecting their lives are benign, and come to regard them as hostile or at least indifferent, that they begin to view them as 'alien'" (1971: 181). This qualification is probably important but seems to fit with the various sociological discussions of alienation, more closely than Schacht suggests.(e.g., cf. Mills, 1956: Chap. 13).

a particular form of individual behavior and the social structure from which it emanates.[2] their contention is that social change and more broadly the social process as such is characterized less by its occurrence within and against established institutional arrangements and ideologies than it is by the attempts of the various social actors to claim a personally meaningful and secure lifestyle in the conditions largely imposed by their social institutions.

While it will be argued that Collective Behavior theory, at least in the form it takes in Blumer's model, tends to reduce mass social formations to a group of behavioral sets, this radical reinterpretation of the social process will be viewed as consistent with the type of phenomena the theory addresses and will be shown to quite accurately reflect the nature of those social patterns.

Finally, neither Collective Behavior theory nor Critical theory is viewed or presented in this thesis as an all-encompassing theory of society or of any general complex of socio-cultural life. To this writer's knowledge, no Collective Behavior theorist has made such an unlikely claim for the specialty. As will be indicated, the Frankfurt Institute did view its efforts in such terms. The perspective of this analysis is that in combination as well as separately, these two theories may be conceptually useful in the narrower sense that they may contribute to the interpretation of mass social behavior — particularly, to preempt a point which will be touched upon in the concluding chapter, by throwing light on certain crucial dilemmas of modern society and thus suggesting grounds for empirically based research on mass interaction.

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2   For other discussions of alienation and anomie see Becker (1964); Durkheim (1951); Keniston (1965); McClocky and Schaar (1965); Nisbet (1962); Riesman (1950); Scott (1964); Seeman (1959).

The Procedure of This Thesis

Although the object of this thesis is to demonstrate the compatibility of the two selected theories on the subject of mass society and culture, their dissimilarities will necessarily demand considerable attention. The large measure and significance of these differences will require that a rather lengthy summary and interpretation of each theory be presented in order to establish that they are even concerned and engaged with the identification and analysis of the same basic set of issues with reference to mass culture. Limitation of this study to the theory of the Frankfurt School and of Collective Behavior is designed to facilitate this effort. The subject is thereby rendered more manageable in terms of scope but more importantly the selection of this singular aspect of their wide-ranging analyses provides a unitary frame of reference for their comparison as well as with a topic of general concern.

That the two schools approach theory construction from radically different perspectives both in terms of their domain assumptions and their subsequent methods of analysis will become clear from the outset of this study. In the first place, the study of collective behavior initiated by Park and carried forward by subsequent generations of Chicago sociologists clearly fits into the category of empirical social science. It is generally responsive to and productive of testable hypotheses and tends to proceed from empirical observation to general, explanatory and predictive statements. On the other hand, the sociological theory of the Frankfurt School is grounded in an essentially untestable philosophical theory which, while not closed to empirically informed reformulation, consistently and intentionally takes precedence over empirical techniques and retains its speculative integrity against conclusions

which may be solely determined by them.   This distinction is not, how-
ever, absolute.   As will be indicated in the course of this study, both
Critical and Collective Behavior theory share the quality of beginning
from certain preestablished positions regarding the nature of human
interaction and of the social process and these preestablished positions
cover their work and perception of what is relevant.   In the case of
Critical theory, these preconceptions largely derive from particular
philosophical values.   Collective Behavior theory follows, in certain
essentials, from earlier speculative conceptions of crowd behavior and its
relationship to the social process and from certain philosophically formed
social-psychological theories which will be identified in the ensuing
analysis.   The major difference in this regard is that the two theories
display altogether different valuations of the role to be played by the
operationalization of their various ideas and toward the subjection of
their concepts to empirical validation.

The documents which this thesis draws upon have been further selected
for both accuracy and succinctness in defining the relevant, essential
sociological concepts of the two theories under examination.   Method-
ological and value-derived differences exist within as well as between
them.   Insofar as Critical and Collective Behavior theory both encompass
a variety of alternative conceptual schemes, justification of this select-
ivity might appear to be arbitrary.   In both cases, however, it is
possible to classify certain writings as being generally regarded by all
parties as fairly comprehensive of the data and as constituting the
essential arguments upon which the theory as such is based.

In the case of Collective Behavior theory, it is of course the
sociological study of collective behavior to which we refer.   Although
there is by all appearances an equally well developed literature devoted

to the psychological and social-psychological processes involved in collective behavior, it must be recognized as distinctly different from the sociological interpretation although, as will be demonstrated, psychological concepts are frequently employed in the sociological theory with which we are dealing.

The sociological literature on collective behavior may itself be divided into two primary divisions, each with competing interpretative schema. The primary division is that between the theoretical paradigms for the study of collective behavior (of which Blumer's (1955), Turner's and Killian's (1972) and Smelser's (1963) are currently the most important) and the more strictly empirical literature devoted to the description of specific incidents or congeries·of acts of collective behavior. The latter literature is exemplified by studies of such phenomena as riots and disaster situations.

This thesis confines itself to the theoretical literature. There are two reasons for this limitation. First, despite some interest, particlarly in the late sixties, in the subject of collective behavior as it relates to such issues as campus unrest, civil rights movements and possibly even to such phenomena as aspiring nationalistic movements, the empirical literature remains both insubstantial in quantity and generally inadequate in its responsiveness to the descriptive categories formulated in the theoretical literature (cf. Couch, 1968; Currie and Skolnick, 1970; Quarantelli and Hundley, 1969). Second, although the theoretical literature is also quantitatively moderate, it focusses directly upon the issues with which this thesis is concerned. Although many of its propositions remain unverified and therefore tentative even with regard to the internal dynamics of collective behavior, it is Collective Behavior theory, as such, which explores the interrelationship between seemingly spontaneous

and unregulated group behavior (i.e. collective behavior) and processes of apparently institutionally regulated change. It focusses on the relationship between established and emerging patterns of ritual behavior under conditions of social uncertainty.

The central document of Collective Behavior theory is Blumer's (1955) essay, originally published in 1939. This relatively brief statement outlines the general class of activity included in the field and sets out the basic distinctions between the forms of activity encompassed within the general classification. In it, Blumer also proposes an explanation of the mechanisms which distinguish collective behavior from other forms of social activity. Brief and exploratory as it is, Blumer's essay nevertheless has provided the frame of reference for every subsequent effort at establishing a comprehensive theory of collective behavior, including Smelser's (1963) social action theory of collective behavior.[3] Because of its conciseness and clarity and its unquestioned position at the center of the literature, heavy reliance will be placed upon it to delineate the aspects of the theory with which this thesis is concerned. Wherever necessary, however, reference will be made to subsequent discussions (primarily to the work of Turner and Killian and, to a lesser extent, to Smelser) in order to more fully elaborate upon Blumer's model.

A similar approach will be taken with regard to Critical theory. As is made evident in Martin Jay's (1973) intellectual biography of the Frankfurt Institute, the designation, 'Critical theory' broadly covers a

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3   Smelser is in fact the only major contributor to the sociological theory of collective behavior who never studied with or came under Blumer's direct influence as a student (cf. Evans, 1969: 6).

great range of philosophical, sociological, political and psychoanalytic writing, sometimes only tenuously associated with the projects of the Institute itself and frequently only associated with specific periods in a particular scholar's career. From this welter of material certain distinctions may, however, be drawn between those writers and time-periods which are or were clearly devoted to the creation of the analytical theory and social philosophy which came to be known as Critical theory and the usually more self-contained studies upon which the theory often depended and those writings which constitute theoretical departures on the part of certain of the Institute's sometime associates. Pursuant to this distinction, the present discussion of Critical theory is based primarily upon selections of the writings of T.W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse, during the period of time roughly covering the thirties and forties.

It must be emphasized that this project is not primarily an attempt to describe or reinterpret either Critical theory or Collective Behavior theory. Another object of this thesis is to reexamine their particular contributions to the interpretation of the mechanisms by which stability and change develop and occur in the mass social milieu. Selection of the pertinent and essential documents of each theory has been made for the most direct accomplishment of this purpose. In the case of Critical theory selectivity toward this end has commended a fairly radical departure from some of the best known works, especially of Adorno, Marcuse and Fromm.[4] For example, Fromm's Escape From Freedom, Marcuse's One-

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4   Adorno formally joined the Institute in 1938, following a long period of personal association with its members and some involvement in its projects. He remained with the Institute until his death in 1969. Fromm's association with the Institute and his contribution to its projects occurred from about 1932 to 1940. Marcuse's relationship covered roughly

Dimensional Man and Adorno's contribution to The Authoritarian Personality

will be accorded only passing reference. The position of these writings

in the corpus of Critical theory is not questioned. It will however be

demonstrated that the fundamental concepts and arguments contained in

these works were expressed, albeit less elaborately, in earlier Institute

writings. Coverage of these ideas in their earlier renditions will be

considered as necessary for the accomplishment of the purpose of this

thesis insofar as it will thereby be established that the ideas dealt with

in this account are fundamental to Critical theory, not departures from it

or independent expressions of particular Institute members.

Finally, in the course of this study it will be necessary to devote

attention to the criticism which has been accorded Critical and Collective

Behavior theory as well as to the general concept of mass culture. These

criticisms will be examined fairly briefly except in the case of Critical

theory where a somewhat lengthier discussion of the issues is required by

the unusual depth and severity of the charges against it. As previously

stated, it is not an objective of this thesis to substantiate the object-

ive bases of the arguments of the theories under discussion. It is, how-

ever, important that the basic credibility of the concepts of society

expressed in these two theories be established in order to indicate the

potential significance of the entire discussion.

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the same period as Fromm's, terminating at about the time of the publica-
tion of his, Reason and Revolution in 1941.

Chapter 1

COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR THEORY

Introduction: The Field of Inquiry

The essential, distinguishing feature of any act of collective
behavior, or collective episode, is that it comprises activity by a group
of persons which falls outside of the general social prescriptions regard-
ing normative conduct.   Although it may, in certain instances, be rout-
inized and may even become, in certain forms, an established social
activity, collective behavior always contraposes formal, 'legitimate'
social convention.

Smelser defines collective behavior as "mobilaztion on the basis of
a belief which redefines social action" (1963: 8, italics in the original).
Turner and Killian simply state, "The crowd, fads, crazes, the public, and
social movements are the subject matter of collective behavior" (1972: 5).
Smelser locates the source of collective behavior in any kind of strain
which may emerge from the perception by any group that it is threatened
by the injustice or impairment of existing social arrangements (1963:

47-49). We may say that essentially Collective Behavior theory

addresses the institutionally unprescribed behavior of groups in distress;

generally that social formation popularly known as the 'crowd'. Blumer

defines the basic subject matter of the field as follows:

> While most of the collective behavior of human beings
> exists in the form of regulated group activity, there is a
> great deal which is not under the influence of rules or under-
> standings. A highly excited mob, a business panic, a state of
> war hysteria, a condition of social unrest represent instances
> of collective behavior which are of this character. In these
> instances, the collective behavior arises spontaneously and is
> not due to preestablished understandings or traditions. It is
> the study of just such elementary and spontaneous forms that
> constitutes one of the major interests in the field of collective
> behavior (1955: 168).

Collective Behavior theory takes as its primary subject matter

such concepts as "social contagion" and addresses itself to such phenomena

as crowd and mass activity and movements which are normally considered to

be peripheral to the study of social systems.

A given act of collective behavior may appear as a spontaneous

outburst of shared emotion. For example, the widespread expression of

agonized bereavement following the death of a popular hero or political

leader or the unpremeditated celebration of a sporting event would

constitute acts of collective behavior, at least insofar as they burst

the bounds of normally prescribed emotional behavior. Alternatively,

collective behavior may be contrived and highly organized. A political

rally or a religious revival meeting and their associated movements

might combine elements of spontaneity and purposiveness and be class-

ifiable as collective episodes.

A given type or a particular instance of collective behavior may appear

and reappear infrequently and irregularly or may emerge at regular inter-

vals. It may appear only once, never to be seen again, as in the case

of a panic flight.   Again, a collective episode may disrupt the usual

routines of its participants' lives and may even affect the character

of the surrounding social order.   It may precipitate or facilitate a

radical and permanent reordering and/or re-securing of an entire social

structure or cultural complex.   The Chinese Cultural Revolution may

well have been such an event.   In other situations, a collective episode

may frustrate and inhibit, or be used to redirect and dissipate efforts

to bring about such changes.   An outburst of terroristic activity may

well yield such a result.   Finally, acts of collective behavior or

congeries of collective episodes may yield essentially no visible effects

on the societies in which they occur (cf. Turner and Killian, 1972: ch.

20).

In a sense, collective behavior is the stuff of sociology.   However,

as it is understood in its application to a particular form of inter-

action the term "collective behavior" designates a primary concern with

those episodes of social life which are extra-normative in the sense that

they reject, devalue or stand separate from the presumed, existing pattern

of normative expectations.

> Institutional behavior characterizes groups that are
> envisaged in and guided by the culture of the larger society.
> Accordingly, institutional behavior refers to activities that
> are necessary to the conduct of society's business, which
> support the norms of the larger society.   Collective behavior,
> on the other hand, seems to be governed by norms that are not
> envisaged in the larger society and that may even modify or
> oppose these broader norms (Turner and Killiam, 1972: 5).

Historical Background

Gustave LeBon's, The Crowd, first published in Paris in 1896 holds

claims to being the first thoroughgoing attempt at a social scientific

analysis of the origins, role and adequate definition of collective

behavior. Though inadequate and in certain essential respects incorrect

by contemporary standards, his prognostications have nevertheless proved

to be amazingly perspicacious with regard to this century's experience

with large, collective movements; most notably with regard to the

phenomenon of totalitarianism.

According to LeBon the collectivities he labelled "crowds" come

into existence when the individual members of the collectivity shed their

unique predispositions and behavior patterns and assume values and roles

unique to the collectivity as such. He hypothesized a mass psychology

in terms of what he called the "mental unity of crowds". In his words,

> ... Whoever be the individuals that compose it, however
> like or unlike be their mode of life, their occupations, their
> character, or their intelligence, the fact that they have been
> transformed into a crowd puts them in possession of a sort of
> collective mind which makes them feel, think, and act in a manner
> quite different from that in which each individual of them would
> feel, think, and act were he in a state of isolation (LeBon: 5-6).

As a matter of fact, Durkheim recognized some of these same features of

the social transformation of behavior in the collective state.

I have suggested that LeBon's description of the mood and imagery

and his identification of the crowd with mass political movements was

perceptive but not entirely correct. This applies both to his descrip-

tion and his explanation of crowd behavior. LeBon defined the crowd as

being always characterized by negative features of blind intolerance,

brutality and a supposed immunity to rational persuasion. In his view,

the crowd is the vehicle of social chaos, as such, and expresses itself

only in such terms. As will be shown, the propensity toward violence,

the tendency to respond to concrete or at least conceptually simple symbols

and the frequent state of anxiety and fearfulness among the members of a

crowd appear to be matters verified by repeated, empirical observation.
These characteristics are not, however, necessarily generic features of
the crowd as a social formation or of its members, potential or actual.
They are, at best, behavioral tendencies which, because of their salience,
serve as useful and probably realistic indicators of instances of crowd
behavior.   Contrary to LeBon's judgment, however, they are not definitive
characteristics of crowds or of the psychological propensities of crowd
members.[1]

Of greater importance than his oversimplified definition of the
social nature of the crowd (insofar as his error seems to have been that
he unduly generalized from basically valid observations of instances of
crowd action) is the problem of LeBon's explanation of the motivational
sources of crowd behavior.   Whereas Durkheim recognized the basic social
ineractive factors at work in the process of social contagion, as Blumer
clearly recognized more than forty years later, LeBon failed to recognize
the social character of crowd behavior.   According to LeBon, as a member
of a crowd the otherwise rational individual becomes susceptible to un-
conscious, collective impulses located in his psyche, which he shares
with the other members of the crowd.   His behavior is consequently deter-
mined by his submission to the power of suggestion, aimed at and mediated
through those atavistic and largely anti-social, psychological impulses.
The behavior of the crowd is, therefore, in LeBon's judgment a manifest-
ation of personal, psychological impulses and not, as Durkheim understood,
a consequence of particular social interaction patterns.

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1   Although LeBon is generally regarded as having been the first to
attempt a scientific examination of the basic social phenomen addressed
by Collective Behavior sociology, it should be noted that Scipio Sighele's,
Psychologie des sectes was published in 1895, preceding The Crowd by a
year but following LeBon's first papers on the subject which were published
in 1894.

Despite the accumulation of literature on collective phenomena during the eighty years since the publication of The Crowd, LeBon's formulations continue to be reckoned with. While, for reasons already specified, no contemporary sociologist would assert without equivocation or qualification the satisfactory capacity of LeBon's thesis to account for crowd sociology, the literature continues to reflect his impress.

The Development of the Contemporary Perspective

Insofar as North American sociology is concerned, the most important name in classic Collective Behavior sociology is that of Robert E. Park. It was Park who introduced the field to American sociology and who described the state of the theory in 1921 with a chapter in his and Ernest W. Burgess', Introduction to the Science of Sociology. As outlined in that enormously influential textbook, collective behavior included such phenomena as: religious movements, fashion, social reform movements, crowds, mass or herd movements, terror, propaganda and social epidemics. Broadly, these categories of social behavior still fall within the rubric of Collective Behavior theory and research, although contemporary writers definitely concentrated their attention more specifically on the 'outwardly spontaneous' forms such as the behavior of crowds and persons in situations of stress.

Leon Bramson has pointed out that Park's perspective on collective behavior, though an outgrowth of LeBon's and other earlier formulations, critically differed from them. Whereas their's were studies of what they saw as a rather pure and simple problem of social pathology (i.e., social 'sickness'), Park transformed his analysis into the study of institutional change (cf. Bramson, 1961: 62). That is, for Park the crowd or the social

collectivity is a socially constituted mechanism for overriding tradition. The crowd functions as the agency of demand for the establishment of new institutions capable of handling the social conditions which have overwhelmed the existing social machinery and precipitated the crowd's formation (cf. Turner, Intro. to Park, 1967: xli-xlvi).

Despite this critical difference, the essential perspective of LeBon on the subject of the processes at work within the crowd and other unconventional group behavior was, however, preserved by Park and his followers. For example, the feature of suggestibility remains to this day as a primary definitive characteristic of collective behavior.

> The mood, imagery, and conception of appropriate action are not only communicated in the crowd; they take on a definitely normative character. As more and more people come to think and feel in the same way, or appear to do so, there is a growing sense that everyone should share these feelings and definitions...
> Thus, on the group level, there is the emergence of a norm. On the individual level there is a heightened suggestability... It amounts to a tendency to respond uncritically to suggestions ... (Turner and Killian, 1972: 80).

Park's principal contributions to the development of Collective Behavior theory were, however, to specify those forms of behavior which he believed the term comprehended and his attempt to relate these phenomena to the larger and/or more enduring social systems in which they appear. In other words, he transformed LeBon's unspecific descriptions and psychological explanations of crowd behavior into a simply-defined study of the patterns and effects of social contagion. His continuing influence upon Collective Behavior theory is made clear in this statement by Ralph Turner:

> Park named the field of study and identified the major forms and processes of collective behavior in much the fashion that prevails today. Although he accepted the substance of

LeBon's description of crowd behavior, he appraised its
relation to social order differently. The crowd, to Park,
was merely the most intense example of social control, upon
which social order depends, and a special form of the re-
current collaborative efforts to bring about change in society.
Dramatic forms of collective behavior develop because custom and
the mores (that is, society) impede continuous adjustments in
social structure, and the natural end product of collective
behavior is a new or modified institution (Turner, Intro. to
Park, 1967: xli).

Essentially, according to this reformulated and persisting pers-

pective, social stability and social disorder are the two sides of a

common and continuing process by which societies adapt to changing cir-

cumstances through a process of recombination of social patterns which

through time thus acquire new characteristics, relevant to new circum-

stances. What is thought to be occurring in a collective episode is the

emergence, through a sort of trial-by-practice, of a new or institution-

ally suppressed behavioral norm. For example, a group demonstrating

for civil rights and a lynch mob would, according to this perspective,

both be acting outside the sphere of social convention and be commonly

classified as instances of collective behavior; the former seeking the

instauration of a new norm, the latter expressing one which is suppressed.

It is agreed, in other words, that the apparently asocial crowd is symp-

tomatic of the breakdown of the mechanisms for the social enforcement of

normative behavior patterns. Perhaps more importantly, however, the new

pattern of behavior is seen to be subjected by the engaged collectivity

to certain self-imposed standards of conduct, behavioral appearances

notwithstanding. The mass movement represents progression toward the

reintegration of traditional norms of conduct with alterations also

arrived at through a series of experimental adjustments to fit the new

behavioral requirements. Social institutions represent the final estab-

lishment of an ideally consistent articulation of behavior and convention.

This perspective emphasizes the concept of the essential unity of the social process. Alternatively, insofar as it does emphasize continuity, the possibility of outright social collapse or complete social disruption tends to be discounted. This is indicated by Lewis Killian when he says,

> A social movement develops within the framework of an on-going social order whose institutions and associations persist even as they are changing. The movement exists simultaneously with crowds, publics and, most important, other social movements (1964: 432).

Thus, while Collective Behavior theory has offered an alternative to essentially static theories of social order, it is rather more a shift of emphasis from perennial social fixity to continuous social change, which nevertheless emphasizes the continuity of fundamental social order within a process of adjustment. Neil Smelser's theory of collective behavior, which is an extension and application of Parson's theory of social action "to a system of action composed of the _interaction_ of two or more actors" (Smelser, 1963: 24, italics in the original) represents the single most comprehensive attempt to establish the case for this perspective. He says, "Present in all collective behavior is some kind of belief that prepares the participants for action" (1963: 79). He calls these, "generalized beliefs" which "All are generalized attempts to reconstitute the components of social action" (1963: 129). Turner also reflects this position regarding the processual continuity of collective behavior with the institutional behavioral milieu from which it emerges:

> Careful examination of a wide range of collective behavior reveals few instances that are not specifically justified by their participants on the basis of some extant social norm and which cannot be shown to have some continuity with tradition. If there is a reasonable distinction to be made on this score, it must rest on the complex character of the relationship of

collective behavior to established norms and social
structure and not on a total discontinuity (1964: 383).

Turner is not implying that the hypothesization of discontinuity —
even total discontinuity — demands a complete degeneration or rejection
of every consequence of the prior socialization of the members of a
collectivity.   He is saying that the collective act should be viewed
in terms of the continuing culture-process.   Though this point is made
more subtly by Killian, Turner and Blumer than by Smelser, they all
appear to be slighting the distinction between the justification of an
act and the quality of the act itself, as it relates to socio-cultural
standards of behavior.   In Turner's case, however, he appears to come
very close to Smelser's position when he suggests that "Past developments
/in Collective Behavior theory/ suggest that investigators should stress
continuity rather than discontinuity with conventional behavior" (1964:
384).   His point is that collective behavior does not necessarily
represent either a permanent or a consistent rejection of traditional
patterns of behavior on the part of the participants in any given collec-
tive episode.   Moreover, the collective activity itself, according to
Turner, is subject to tendencies toward conventionalization or integra-
tion into traditional patterns of expression.   Nevertheless, if it is
proper to specifically define certain forms of interaction as 'collective
behavior', continuities with 'conventional' patterns of interaction
should be seen as peripheral to the processes so described.   While the
crowd, for example, may act to precipitate a process which finally
culminates in institutional restabilzation, its activity is in itself
disruptive and antagonistic toward the social system from which it emerges.

The tendency toward increasingly distinguishing the aspects of
collective behavior (crowds versus publics, etc.) has, therefore, been

complemented by a tendency to devalue the differences between collective
and institutionalized behavior.   This devaluation has, however, been
more theoretical than empirical and Collective Behavior theorists have
not constructed an institutional analysis.

Analysis of collective phenomena and of their role in the greater
social interactional pattern by its nature makes unavoidable certain
necessary distinctions and correlates within the entire process.   For
example, as is the case in any other social activity, certain distinctions
may be made among the various roles of the members of a collectivity.
The most obvious example is the distinction between the roles and motiv-
ations of the leaders and their followers.   The various leadership roles
present another example of such distinctions.   Within the rank and file
of the collectivity certain operative distinctions may also be observed.
Certain followers, for example, may possess a closer and more permanent
attachment to the leadership core than others who may relate more peri-
pherally to the final fringe of sympathetic observers who rarely if ever
play a noticeably active part in the activity of the group.

Herbert Blumer, in a review of George Rude's, The Crowd in History,
makes a point with regard to Rude's analysis that may accurately be applied
to much of collective behavior analysis, or lack thereof.   He says:

> What is chiefly missing is an analysis of the crowd as a
> generic human group.   Little has been done to isolate the crowd
> as a distinct form of human association, to identify the mech-
> anisms of its formation, to trace out the lines of its major
> career patterns, and to identify how it organizes people for
> action.   The author indicates familiarity with the social
> psychological literature on these matters but, in my judgment,
> he has not grasped their importance (Blumer, 1965: 44).

Blumer goes on to say that Rude, along with "the bulk of sociologists
and psychologists" concerned with crowds and other collective phenomena,
is satisfied to rest his inquiry with the identification of the conditions

of emergence, the forms and the consequences of crowd behavior. The fundamental, unresolved questions thus remain unexplored. Why, given the same set of circumstances, crowds form in one instance and not in another, remains unanswered. Also unanswered is the problem of the relative persistence and impact of certain crowds against others in similar environments. Finally and most particularly, Blumer notes the absence of explanation of the spirit of a crowd and of its relationship to the surrounding social environs and of its effect on further collective formations. "One finds no analytic consideration of collective excitement (the basic condition of crowd behavior) even though the historical happenings which he treats reek with such excitement". Blumer concludes these remarks by specifically applying them to the traditional preoccupation of sociology and psychology in general, and Collective Behavior theory in particular, with established social structure.

The unavoidable conclusion to be derived from this observation is that while the explanations offered by, for example, LeBon are unsatisfactory the basic questions raised by the study of collective behavior have been generally avoided by subsequent theory and therefore remain largely if not entirely, unanswered.

The seemingly antisocial or sociopathological nature of much of collective behavior has been a recurrent theme in the literature. In an article focussing primarily on Neil Smelser's, Theory of Collective Behavior, Elliott Currie and Jerome K. Skolnick (1970) return to the issue of collective behavior and social pathology, questioning whether the employment of pathological psychological categories should be limited to the crowd or might as appropriately be used "to expose what may be the deeper pathologies of 'normal' social life".[2] This seems to come

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2   Elliott Currie and Jerome K. Skolnick, "A Critical Note on Conceptions

quite close to our criticism of Park, that while rescuing collective
phenomena from a purely pathological definition, he failed to explore
the possibility of turning to the social order for an explanation of
the theoretical problem raised by collective behavior: the problem of
disorder within a supposedly stable environment.   This has resulted in
a presentation of the collectivity as a part of a social process wherein
all contact is lost with sources of explanation for the highly charged
atmosphere that Blumer noted as being peculiarly associated with the
crowd.

My contention at this juncture is therefore, first, that LeBon was
guilty of psychological reductionism in that he tended to remove the
irrational behavior of the crowd from its social context and placed its
sources in the personalities of the crowd's individual members.   Crowd
behavior was explained by the supposed presence of a reservoir of common
subconscious collective impulses and to a common state of suggestibility
among the participants.   On the other hand, Collective Behavior theory
is more squarely sociological in that it largely leaves aside moral
judgments regarding the destructive or irrational qualities of the crowd
and pays little attention to the personality structures of the individual
subjects.

Blumer's Model

Although his name today is more specifically associated with symbolic
interactionism than with collective behavior as such, Blumer exercised a

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of Collective Behavior", <u>Annals American Academy of Political and Social
Sciences</u> 391: 34-45, 1970.

powerful influence over the development of the field. He has, for example, particularly affected critical examination of the social-psychological dimensions of the problems of crowd behavior, participants' personalities and of the social environment conducive to collective behavior.

It is Blumer's position that the collective act must be understood as fundamentally an attempt on the part of the individual participants, to define certain unclear social situations and to establish their consequential social personalities and relationships. A student of George Herbert Mead as well as of Park, Blumer considers the collective act to be a social symbolization or a manner of communicating and reconditioning the social experience of the collectivity. Most importantly, in Blumer's analysis collective behavior encompasses every aspect and type of group activity.

Blumer's theory places collective behavior in a social context which is constituted by the interaction of a number of persons engaged in a mutually affective process of extemporaneous social interpretation and interaction. Proceeding from a basically Meadian behavioristic social psychology, Blumer asserts that,

> In dealing with collectivities and with joint action one can easily be trapped in an erroneous position by failing to recognize that the joint action of the collectivity is an interlinkage of the separate acts of the participants. This failure leads one to overlook the fact that a joint action always has to undergo a process of formation; even though it may be a well-established and repetitive form of social action, each instance of it has to be formed anew (1969: 17).

In other words, collective behavior proceeds from the process of individual efforts to identify, define and interpret, through group interaction, their individual and collective environment and their relationships and interests therein.

Through the normal course of events it may be expected, according to Blumer, that collective as well as individual behavior will form a routine pattern. He recognizes that "The preponderant portion of social action in a human society, particularly in a settled society, exists in the form of recurrent patterns of joint action" (1969: 17). However, this apparently habitual, uniform pattern may never be considered inevitable, much less be used as empirical evidence from which to deduce any sort of social or other system or set of rules which presupposes the perpetuation of the behavior. "It is the social process in group life that creates and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold group life" (1969: 19).

Blumer contends that the sociology of collective behavior must be founded in a historically informed social psychology which presupposes all social interaction. Furthermore, he rejects as empirically unjustifiable the hypothesization of psychological drives and/or organismic predispositions to adequately account for motivation. Neither collective nor individual behavior may be adequately explained by resort to supposed motivators unique to either category of activity. Individual action does not proceed directly from biological or psychological imperatives but rather reflects their interpreted requirements in combination with the interpretation given to the environment beyond the organism. Similarly, collective action is not a conditioned precipitate of organizational requirements but instead flows from common interpretations and reactions by a number of individuals.

According to Blumer the deciding factor in determining any particular act may frequently be past experience. The historical experience of the actor, however, should not be mistaken as a determinant but rather simply as a positive or negative reinforcer in establishing or rejecting any

proposed course of action. This point, clearly reflecting the prag-
matist social psychology of Dewey and Mead, is that habits of action are
not absolute determinants of behavior. Behavior in the human being and
in human society where that behavior necessarily occurs is not a rigid
affair but is subject to a continuing process of reflection and reinter-
pretation. Even the seemingly most rigid personal habit — similarly to
institutional patterns, as discussed above — fixed in apparently permanent
engagement, is ultimately modifiable. Buffeted by the potential caprice
of rational intelligence and of imagination as well as by the forces of
changing circumstances, even the most cherished habits may be rendered
meaningless and unsupportable. As Dewey pointed out in his classic
treatise, Human Nature and Conduct, even a habit seemingly possessed of
the qualities of an instinct would by its very instinctual nature be
necessarily unfixed and adaptive (cf. Dewey, 1922: 107). So Blumer
regards the historical experience of a person and of a collectivity as
quite simply a portion of the environment from which new behavior emerges.

While collective behavior may not be distinguished by special
mechanisms of impulse and action, Blumer recognizes that it is frequently
characterized by unique or unusual processes. Earlier in this chapter
I quoted his observation that in fact much of Collective Behavior analysis
has ignored certain of those peculiar qualities of collective activity.

As has been stated, Blumer takes as one of his points of departure
the idea — again, fundamental to the social psychology of Mead — that all
behavior or action originates and develops in an interpretative process
by which it is meant that the actor constructs a picture of his social
role. What frequently occurs, thereby providing reinforcement to each
individual's interpretation, is that identical or complementary social
interpretations and behavior patterns emerge and form a definable social

process.   This is the fundamental observation basic to all sociological analysis; that society is formed in common understandings and expectations.   Blumer refers to this process as simply, "interpretative interaction" (1955: 170).   What may further occur, however, in certain situations is that this rather rational process may develop into a more emotional and unruly state of "circular reaction" (1955: 170-171).   He suggests that as two or more persons react to each other or to other objects in the social field or environment, emotional elements may encourage an intensity of feeling which is immediately less subject to intelligent evaluation than to mutually reinforced reactions of increased anxiety. In certain instances this emotional state can develop into extreme behavior patterns such as panic reactions in which the involved actors are impelled by blind terror.   He compares this behavior to the process which may occur "amidst cattle in a state of alarm" (1955: 170).   In Turner's and Killian's words, which closely follow Blumer's original formulation:

> The interpretative interaction, the response of one actor
> to the behavior of another is mediated through the meaning
> attached to the behavior.   The response ... is a delayed,
> critical response.   It is typically different from the stimulus
> behavior ... This, according to the theory of symbolic inter-
> action is characteristic of behavior in normal, structured
> groups.   In circular reaction, which is characteristic of the
> crowd, the response follows directly upon the stimulus behavior
> and reproduces it.   The response becomes, in turn, the stimulus
> to call forth a repitition of the same behavior in the first
> actor (1972: 15).

Blumer therefore continues the tradition initiated by Park in the establishment of Collective Behavior theory as a problem for sociological analysis outside of the realm of personality disorder.   It may in fact deal with certain pathological problems of normal social behavior but the mechanisms are, for Blumer, clearly not in themselves pathological.

If it is nevertheless true that LeBon and the other early
precursors of Collective Behavior theory were correct in their idea
that certain epochs, most notably our own, are characterized by high
levels of collective irrationality, the problem must be considered in
terms of the state of the social environment during such an era.

Such a definition must of course be based upon certain specifiable
and more-or-less measurable indices. In Blumer's theory, collective
behavior phenomena become or are explained as just such measures of alien-
ation and its correlates as they are described in the work of the Critical
theorists. As has been indicated, for Blumer the upheaval of collective
behavior is an attempt by the participants to reform or recreate stable
patterns of interaction which have been lost in confrontation with envir-
onmental changes and/or adjustments in the actor's social interpretations.
This is what Blumer means in speaking of "elementary" forms of collective
behavior. In his words, "They are elementary because they appear spon-
taneously and naturally, they are the simplest and earliest ways in which
people interact in order to act together, and they usually lead to more
advanced and completed forms" (1955: 174).

Blumer proceeds to identify three mehcanisms in the operation and
evolutionary development of elementary collective behavior. Each mechan-
ism or stage, through the first two levels, may be contained at that point.
Given direction and nurturance however the final, climax stage will be
reached, which in turn represents the potential basis for the transform-
ation of elementary collective behavior into more permanent, secure patt-
erns of reestablished social order.

This substantially reflects Park's view that the various aspects of
collective behavior are integrally related. It is, however, a refined
perspective which both relates and distinguishes, for example, crowd

panics and mass social movements.   The mechanisms, in other words,
which operate in a panic movement must precede but may not develop
through Blumer's sequential stages into the more complex and widespread
patterns of a mass social movement.

The first mechanism or initial stage of collective behavior is a
pattern which Blumer calls "milling".   He likens it to the herd behavior
of cattle — the example he uses to depict the process of circular reaction —
in the face of some perceived danger.   If the threat is clear, as in the
case of an immediate visible catastrophe such as a fire, panic flight may
be expected to occur.   In the possibly more usual situation of an ill-
defined sense of threat such as for example may precede or follow the
herd's or crowd's escape from a clear danger, the process and mechanisms
of milling behavior may be more readily definable.   Blumer describes
the process in terms of a pure instance and extreme intensity of cir-
cular reaction.   While an individual may sense and identify some envir-
onmental threat to his well-being and seek to counter it in a rather
rational or intelligent fashion, in a group each individual may be
expected to react both to the threat and to the reactions of the other
members of the group.   Subsequent behavior becomes subject as much or
more to the interactions of the participants as to the original rational
observation of danger.   The group's behavior is essentially carried
along by the event of its interaction rather than by the rational con-
tingencies of the precipitating event.

The second mechanism and stage of elementary collective behavior
which may follow from the first, given continued stimulation — usually
from the original source — is called by Blumer, "collective excitement".
While the milling process is characterized by increasing intensities of
suggestibility within an original, core group, collective excitement

represents a development of the intensity and rapidity of internal group
interaction and virtual group self-hypnosis to the extent that it catches
the attention of a body of outside observers.   If this stage of collect-
ive excitement precipitates what Blumer describes as a loss of control
on the part of outsiders so that they join in the activity of the group,
the stage is set for the engagement of the third mechanism of, "social
contagion".

Social contagion occurs when collective excitement becomes intense
and widespread insofar as the interacting group's membership becomes
swollen to the level approaching what Blumer calls a "social epidemic".
At this level, the originally relatively bounded and personally-affected
group behavior becomes widespread with relatively isolated groups form-
ing and creating further mood-excitation possibly far beyond the locale
of the original group.

It is at this point that elementary collective behavior has ramif-
ications extending into the larger and more enduring patterns or trad-
itions of the social order.   For the milling process and collective
excitement to reach the level of social contagion and finally to precip-
itate a social epidemic, Blumer asserts that the behavior must be fed by
a prior fund of predisposition.   The new behavior must reflect a wide-
spread sense of social unrest which precipitates a positive response or
a felt need for the new pattern of behavior.   It is the existence and
scale of this unrest which determines the extent to which the original
milling process will be picked up by the community outside of the
original group.   Of course, the milling crowd can effect the establishment
of widespread new patterns of interaction only in a conducive climate which
predisposes the larger population to feel its influence.

From this perspective, therefore, it would follow that the

occurrence of collective behavior is largely predictable as, to a lesser
extent, is its form and direction.   Insofar as patterns of unrest, fore-
shadowed by unresolved disturbances in usual routines of social activity,
may be identified as blockages of behavioral urges, it may be expected
that new responses and subsequent routines will emerge to release the
tension induced by the blockage.   Prediction is a matter of identifying
available alternatives of action sufficient to satisfy the identified
urges and finally of determining which of the theoretical alternatives
are most readily available in a given complex of circumstances or social
environment.

Blumer further refines his theory of the structure of collective
behavior by identifying four types or categories of crowds.   Theoret-
ically, identification of a given crowd within this framework should
indicate the potential capacity for a given episode of elementary
collective behavior to develop, given an adequate climate of social un-
rest, into a social movement with consequences throughout a wide social
sphere.

Unlike the mechanisms of elementary collective behavior, these four
categories of crowds are largely mutually exclusive.   One type of crowd
will normally not reform into another or encourage the emergence of
another type.   An unstable or restive environment may, however, spawn
two or more types of crowd formations.

The first two crowd categories identified by Blumer are largely
without consequence insofar as the generation of new patterns of social
behavior is concerned.   They are the "casual" and the "conventionalized"
crowds (Blumer, 1955: 178-179).   The first, as implied by its designation
is a relatively ephemeral and unorganized grouping which may form in
response to a brief and localized event.   The life of the group coincides

with the event.   It probably never possesses any firmly established leader and possesses no identifiable goal beyond an immediate response to the ephemeral situation around which it forms.   The second, "conventionalized" crowd is in many respects similar to the casual crowd but forms at identifiable intervals around some persistent category or sequence of events such as a spectator sport.   Certain established patterns of otherwise unusual but situationally ritualized behavior may emerge, usually without overt social consequence.   Other than playing a possible role in the maintenance of the larger social system, through periodic release of tension not otherwise channelled, these first two crowd categories are relatively inconsequential insofar as their importance to more widespread forms of collective behavior is concerned.

Blumer's third type of crowd is the "acting" crowd (1955: 178-179). It is this category of crowd formation which possesses the greatest if not sole potential for effecting largescale transformations in the structure of a given society.   The difference between the "acting" crowd and the final, fourth type, the "expressive" or "dancing" crowd, which is closely associated in terms of reacting to similar or identical situations of social unrest, is that the acting crowd is object-oriented while the expressive crowd achieves release in physical movement.   The acting crowd is possessed of a defined purpose and goal in the social environment;   the expressive or "dancing" crowd lacks such external direction and achieves catharsis through ritualized, group-centered activity.   It often literally dances its way to social equilibrium.

Collective behavior is engendered by some event in the social environment.   When reaction toward the original event occurs, a milling process of circularly reinforced interaction may ensue.   Collective activity may dissipate at this point or may, given reinforcement from

other elements in the environment, grow to include new participants. If

a goal emerges and if a condition of nurturant social unrest exists, the

collectivity may finally assume the proportions and character of a social

movement.

The transformation of crowd behavior into the form of a social move-

ment is therefore not only a matter of growth and direction. Crowd

activity as such exists or proceeds largely without reference to objects,

attitudes or problems outside of the immediate moment. Although it may

affect future patterns of thought and behavior and certainly has prior

determinants, crowd behavior occurs largely without conscious reference

to those determinants and consequences. It is precisely in the adoption

and influence of external direction that a qualitative change occurs which

is signified by the fact that while none of the varieties of crowds are

societal or cultural entities, a social movement "...takes on the charac-

ter of a society" (Blumer, 1955: 199). The acting crowd is in this sense

the most complex form of what nonetheless is for Blumer 'elementary'

collective behavior and the social movement is the first stage of its

institutionalization. In Blumer's words, "As a social movement

develops ... It acquires organization and form, a body of customs and

traditions, established leadership, an enduring division of labor, social

rules and social values — in short, a culture, a social organization, and

a new shceme of life". (1955: 199).

Park (1924) summarized his early formulation of collective behavior,

saying,

> The materials in this chapter have been arranged under the
> headings: (a) social contagion, (b) the crowd, and (c) types of
> mass movements. The order of the materials follows, in a
> general way, the order of institutional evolution. Social
> unrest is first communicated, then takes form in crowd and mass
> movements, and finally crystallizes in institutions. The

history of almost any single social movement — women's suffrage, prohibition, Protestantism — exhibits in a general way, if not in detail, this progressive change in character. There is at first a vague general discontent and distress. Then a violent, confused, and disorderly but enthusiastic and popular movement arises. Finally, the movement takes form; develops leadership, organization; formulates doctrine; and dogmas. Eventually it is accepted, established, legalized. The movement dies, but the institution remains (874).

Blumer's refinements of collective behavior theory thus support

the perspective inaugurated by Park. In addition however Blumer's

theory contributes a clearer picture of the genesis and the organization

of crowd behavior. Most importantly, his model relates crowd to

individual behavior and finally explains their relationship to the form-

ation of institutionalized patterns of socio-cultural order.

Chapter II

THE CRITICAL THEORY OF SOCIETY

Introduction: Sources and Orientation of the Theory

Critical theory is the designation of the particular Hegelian Marxist

social analysis centered about the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research,

popularly known as the Frankfurt School. Max Horkheimer, a founder of

the Institute and its director from 1930 to 1959, and his longtime

associate and collaborator, Theodor W. Adorno, are the most prominent

formulators and representatives of Critical theory. Other important

names, less exclusively or only temporarily attached to the School include

those of Herbert Marcuse, Franz Neumann, Leo Lowenthal, Erich Fromm and

Jurgen Habermas.[1]

Writing retrospectively of the early (German) and middle (American)

eras of the Institute's existence, Marcuse says of its goals and

philosophy:

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[1] For a complete treatment of the development of Critical theory and of
the theorists associated with it, through 1950, see Martin Jay (1973).

The Institute had set itself the task of elaborating a
theoretical conception which was capable of comprehending the
economic, political, and cultural institutions of modern society
as a specific historical structure from which the prospective
trends of development could be derived.   This undertaking was
based on certain notions common to all members of the staff,
notably that a theory of history was the prerequisite for an
adequate understanding of social phenomena, and that such a
theory would provide the standards for an objective critique
of given social institutions which would measure their
function and their aims against the historical potentialities
of human freedom (in Neumann, 1957: viii).

The starting-point for Critical theory was the fact that by the

time shortly following the First World War it had become clear that

capitalism was far more resilient than the classical or mechanical

Marxist theorists had been willing to imagine.   The Critical theorists

questioned a socio-historical theory which would not or could not

account for the evident historical fact that in no case did the estab-

lished power structure of any advanced industrial society show signs of

being seriously threatened by opposition from the working classes.   In

fact, the industrial labor force appeared to have become committed to

active ideological and practical support of the existing socio-economic

structures of advanced capitalism.   In Russell Jacoby's words, "Quest-

ioned was a Marxism that neglected the impact of bourgeois thought and

culture on the consciousness of the proletariat; the   category of _Geist_

... moved to the fore" (1971: 123).   The underlying observation which,

according to Jacoby, was first articulated by the Dutch theorist, Herman

Gorter, was that the economic crisis which the Marxists had predicted would

precipitate revolution in industrialized Europe had materialized without

the expected results.   In Gorter's words,

There must be still another cause which brings about
a revolution; and when it is not operative, the revolution
fails to appear or misfires.   This cause is the _Geist_ of the
masses (quoted, Jacoby, 1971: 123).

Finding the classic Marxian category of false consciousness to
be unfruitful in terms of its explanatory and predictive potential,
the Critical theorists developed George Lukacs' idea of reification as
the fundamental experience in mass industrial society to which their
theory might turn.   This permitted them to redevelop their dialectical
materialism to conform to the ascendant experience of ideological manip-
ulation as a material category in advanced industrial society.   Horkheimer
and Adorno for example, wrote:

> Through the mediation of the total society which embraces
> all relations and emotions, men are once again made to be that
> against which the evolutionary law of society, the principle of
> self, had turned; mere species beings, exactly like one another
> through isolation in the forcibly united collectivity.   The
> carsmen, who cannot speak to one another, are each of them yoked
> in the same rhythm as the modern worker in the factory, movie
> theater, and collective.   The actual working conditions in
> society compel conformism — not the conscious influencers which
> also made the suppresed men dumb and separated them from truth.
> The impotence of the worker is not merely a strategem of the
> rulers, but the logical consequence of the industrial society
> into which the ancient Fate — in the very course of the effort
> to escape it — has finally changed (1972: 36-37).

In the one-dimensional life of advanced capitalism and of state
socialism, as pictured by Marcuse for example, commodity relationships
consume the primary energies and condition the immediate experiences
of the masses in their daily lives as well as determine the masses' hopes
for the transvaluation of their life-experiences into categories of
existential meaningfulness.   According to this perspective, class,
culture and religious-symbolic distinctions have become subsumed into
an encompassing commodity form, mediated through political institutions
and providing protective cover for economic exploitation which itself
is both mystified and reified in its commodity-products.   Exploitation
enthralls its victims with the promise of perfecting itself in the
limitless production of pleasure.   The result is a general belief that

repression will be broken by servility to the ethos of the pursuit of

pleasure, not by revolutionary struggle to depose the friendly despots.

Underlying the attempt to construct a theory adequate to this

description and interpretation of the prevailing ethos of mass society

is the spirit of radical opposition to these posited prevailing condi-

tions and rationalizations and an equally profound commitment to develop-

ing a theory capable of guiding and invigorating an opposing value system.

Insofar as the history of civilization has been the history of social

domination, the ideal can only be expressed in terms of impulsive tenden-

cies limited by their historical condition of suppression.   Nevertheless,

borrowing on the sort of phraseology employed by the Institute figures,

those tendencies expressed by the voices silenced by repression must be

preserved as the words which posit the negation of dominating force:

"only the effort to drive civilization further until it transcends itself

offers a way out" (The Frankfurt Institute, 1973: 95).

The problem is that in the new era of managerially directed monop-

oly capitalism, according to the Critical theorists, not only class

distinctions have become obscured in terms of the material conditions

experienced by the various competitors;   the issues themselves, on which

theory must focus, have become confounded by the 'destruction of culture'

and the threat its demise poses to the process of critical reason, itself.

Martin Jay interprets this ambivalence about liberation and domination

in terms of the Institute's theory of the ambivalence of social

authority and of the consequential quality of ambivalence adhering to

revolutionary movements.   In this regard, he says,

> In rational, democratic societies, the leaders who did emerge
> enjoyed an authority based on capability, experience, disinter-
> estedness rather than metaphysical, innate superiority.   There-
> fore, not all antiauthoritarian impulses were justified.

"Rebellions" were pseudo-liberations in which the individual was really seeking a new irrational authority. The resentful anarchist and the rigid authoritarian were thus not as far apart as they might appear at first glance. This accounted for the sudden embrace of authority that often characterized the seemingly libertarian anarchist (1973: 128-189).

The hope for the actual realization of emancipation from tyranny nevertheless remains consistently strong while equally consistently vague in the writings of the Critical theorists:

> In the work of Theodor Adorno the element of tragedy remains constant. It is not to be overcome; all statements about the nature of man and the possibility for his happiness must be seen in their negative as well as their positive aspect (Lipshires, 1974: 102).

Even Marcuse, who persistently reveals a strain of optimism much less subtle than that which might be ascribed to Adorno or even Horkheimer, finally recognizes the limits beyond which utopian hopes cannot go without turning the social scientist into a speculative philosopher. Among such must be the limitations imposed by exposing objective contradictions as projective potentialities for liberation. This ambivalent perspective on the positing of the conditions and characteristics of liberation also translates or reciprocates back into a certain ambivalence toward the contemporary structure of domination. Again in Jay's words,

> In the interim, however /before the creation of a rationally organized society/, /Horkheimer/ and the other Institute members were careful to warn against the premature dissolution of political authority ... Until true social transformation occurred, they stressed the necessity of rational authority ... This, however, had been more a possibility during the liberal era than in the present. In the current age of monopoly capitalism, both the free entrepreneur and the autonomous political subject were threatened with liquidation. Thus, the vaunted pluralism of the liberal democracies of the West had degenerated into little more than an ideology. "True pluralism", Horkheimer wrote, "belongs to the concept of a future society". Increasingly, the political authority that dominated modern man was becoming irrational (1973: 119-120).

This is where the merger of Freudianism with the Institute's Marxism enters the picture. The theory required not only a psychological adjunct to its class and institutional sociology but particularly required a dynamic complement as opposed to a static, derivative correlate to its essentially philosophical quality.

Many personal biases, including preference for the exciting and even intellectually fashionable nature of Freudianism may well have influenced the School in its choice. More importantly, however, psychoanalysis offered an anthropological image of man that bore a striking resemblance to the emerging viewpoint of the Institute. In a sense, it offered validation for certain of its departures from the strict canons of traditional Marxist thought. Most importantly, as will be indicated with reference to Fromm's social psychology, Freudian theory provided Critical theory with a model for its analysis of the socialization process, particularly as it pertained to the Institute's theory of reification and social consciousness. Behaviorist psychology — popular to most Marxists at least in the twenties and thirties — and even the transactional social psychology of American pragmatism did not compare to the Freudian model with its capacity to explain both the persistent functions and dysfunctions of individual socialization in relation to changing social institutional milieus. Specifically referring to the early perspective and work of Fromm, Jay says,

> Psychoanalysis could provide the missing link between ideological superstructure and socio-economic base. In short, it could flesh out materialism's motion of man's essential nature.
> ... The task of an analytical social psychology was to understand unconsciously motivated behavior in terms of the effect of the socio-economic substructure on basic psychic drives. Childhood experiences, Fromm argued, were especially important because the family was the agent of society ...
> Each society, he continued, has its own libidinal structure,

a combination of basic human drives and social factors. A
social psychology must examine how this libidinal structure
acts as the cement of a society and how it affects political
authority (1973: 92-93).

As jay points out, this perspective was integral to the work which

the Institute conducted during the twenties and early thirties, on

German worker's attitudes toward authority. This research was partially

summed up and theoretically examined in Fromm's classic work, Escape From

Freedom. This orientation of course has further guided and characterized

both the empirical enquiries and theoretical treatises of the Institute

members and their associates, including such recent expressions as

Jurgen Habermas', Theory and Practice.

It must be assumed that the Institute's social psychology was

strongly reinforced by the fact that its initial study of working class

attitudes actually led to the Institute's conclusion by 1931 "that the

German working class would be far less resistant to a right-wing seizure

of power than its militant ideology would suggest" (Jay, 1973: 117).

What that research hit upon was the evidentiary nature of psychological

processes as arbiters of social determinants. Especially as political

events unfolded in Germany, the Institute pursued the study of character

structure as a critical component in the determination of response to any

given social situation. This preoccupation followed the Institute to

America and informed its study of prejudice in the American labor move-

ment. The Authoritarian Personality represents, in part, the final

elaboration of the Institute's description and interpretation of this

subject.

Freudian theory in essence provided Critical theory with the fullest

possible evidence of the great problematic involved in relying upon the

class which has to bear the full brunt of social violence, to change the

existing social order.   Moreover, Freudian theory also provided rich
evidence for believing that economic exploitation is not necessarily
the primary expression of social oppression in the contemporary experience
of the decline of bourgeois values and institutions.   While oppression
remains characterized, in the view of the Critical theorists, by material
exploitation and deprivation in depressed regions outside of the advanced
industrial economy and even in pockets within it, the contemporary
economy is in fact increasingly characterized by a more pervasive, class-
less domination, equally destructive of human aspirations and even pot-
entially of life itself.

Convinced that the explanation of this problem must begin with a re-
examination of the structural relationship between social authority and
its economic base, the Institute members directed their attention to the
social psychological effects of the new system upon class consciousness.
With this in mind, they first set about determining the actual state of
German workers' socio-political attitudes and economic life conditions
in the period of the late twenties.

According to Jay (1973: 116-117) about three thousand questionnaires
were distributed by interviewers who recorded the subjects' responses,
verbatim and codified the data according to recurrent patterns of
expression with the intention of determining general attitudes towards
issues such as education, industrialism and state power.

Unfortunately, because of the loss of at least portions of the data
in the process of forced emigration from Germany and undoubtedly because
of methodological disputes about the interpretation of the extent
material, the study was never prepared for publication.   Nevertheless,
its collection and extensive, if not complete, analysis did buttress and
shape the attitude of the Institute towards the problem of political
authority and the socio-psychological set of the proletariat in the

modern industrial era.   Fromm's classic, <u>Escape From Freedom</u> was strongly
influenced and, in the Institute's view, supported by the data generated
by the study;   in other words, by empirical data acquired in Germany
before the emergence of the fascist totalitarianism confronted in that
book.   The failure to complete and publish this study, however, left
the Institute with the task of clarifying its position in another
context.

Authority and Socialization

With the publication of the theses comprising the <u>Studien über
Autorität und Familie</u> in 1936, the theoretical position of the Institute
finally began to assume the public shape which was ultimately consolidated
by Adorno and Horkheimer in the mid-forties.   The publication of this
investigation into the historical nature of authority and the family also
established the basis for the Institute's later influence in the larger
world of academic sociology.

Of primary importance, from the standpoint of the Institute's sub-
sequent theoretical development, were the essays by Horkheimer, Fromm
and Marcuse comprising the first of the three-volume study.[2]

In the first essay, Horkheimer addressed three subjects;   the first
being the role of culture, both generally and also in its specific
historical patterns, in the maintenance and in the dissolution of socio-
economic systems of political and economic power.   His intention in this
regard was twofold: firstly, to demonstrate the compatibility of his

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2   For a general overview of the study in its entirety, see Jay (1973:
124-131).

analysis with a narrower view of economic determinism and secondly, to substantiate his claim that the interaction of culture and individual character affect the developments in the historical economic process (Horkheimer: 1972: 53-54).

It is of course a matter of record that the central figures in the Institute's history, with the notable exception of Friedrich Pollock, were not economists and were in fact rather uninterested in pursuing the task of refining their early economic insights. The work of Horkheimer and his colleagues by the time of the publication of the Studien must however be understood as following from the basic premise that the modern socio-political structure is founded upon the historical emergence of state-monopoly capitalism, which they saw as a logical consequence of previous social patterns of state organization. Although the Critical Theorists as a group were not unanimously agreed particularly on economic issues, a consensus did prevail that the economic shifts which occurred in Europe and North America during and immediately after the period of the First World War represented a radical restructuring of the advanced industrial economies from private to state direction and control. Secondly and equally importantly it was agreed that this shift reorganized the system of class relationships in the industrialized world into a more direct but covert political organization. Their analysis heavily emphasized the emerging role of the state as the centralizing device of social organizational and productive efficiency and growth. Speaking of National Socialism, Franz Neumann argued that the state assumed a supportive-adversary posture toward the large corporate-financial interests, using its legislative power to encourage "the erection of a system of combines not surpassed in any country" (1963: 288) while coincidentally exercising uncompromising authority over them in the pursuit of its own goals.

> The German economy today has two broad and striking
> characteristics.   It is a monopolistic economy — and a
> command economy.   It is a private capitalistic economy, regi-
> mented by the totalitarian state (Neumann, 1963: 261).

In this situation, as Neumann pointed out, both the masses and the mono-

polist-capitalists confront the mediator, the political state, in terms

of a common hostility directed from mutually hostile interests;   each

side attempting to achieve its own ends through the necessary arbi-

tration of the state (cf. Neumann, 1963: 260).   Friedrich Pollock and

Horkheimer were the first Institute figures to so define the new political-

economic milieu, during the twenties.   Increasingly, from the early

thirties through to the mid-forties most of the Institute members, with

the prominent exception of Henryk Grossman, concurred with this assess-

ment.

In his Studien essay, translated as "Authority and the Family",

Horkheimer (1972) argued that the contradictions posed by any given

historical condition of labor are subject to the historical condition

of the individual character in its relationship to authority not only

within the productive process but also in terms of its broader relation-

ship to the other elements of society comprising the cultural super-

structure, including the family, art, religion, philosophy, custom and

morality (1972: 54, 57-58).   This was a theme which would recur essen-

tially unchanged throughout his own, Adorno's and Marcuse's later works.

Horkheimer's objective was to demonstrate that coercion must be recognized

in its manifestations outside of the cultural substructure of production,

although he persisted in his belief that "knowledge of material conditions

is the basis of understanding" the dynamics of culture (1972: 58).

Horkheimer further proceeded to dispel unequivocably any possible

presumption that he might be hypothesizing the existence of a discernible

essential human nature which might either be thwarted by the intervention of economic conditions or which might be immune to their influence. Rather, he insisted that social change occurs in the confrontation between socio-economic power in a given historical order and its consequential pattern of human reaction which conditions the specific possibilities of support or effective confrontation against itself (1972: 66-67). Human nature, as such, he insisted, must be understood by the materialist as a construct typical of any given historical moment and not as an unchanging complex of response and motivation. In this regard his own viewpoint quite closely approximates that of Dewey's (1922), referred to in the previous chapter. Horkheimer wrote: "In so far as the continuance of all social forms goes, the dominant force is not insight but human patterns of reaction which have become stabilized in interaction with a system of cultural formations on the basis of the social life-process (1972: 67). However, unlike the American pragmatists, Horkheimer embedded this process in "the existence of authority as an essential factor throughout the whole of human existence" (1972: 67). At this point in fact he turned to the second of his three subjects: authority, which remained as the underlying and predominating theme throughout the remainder of his, Fromm's and Marcuse's Studien essays.

For Horkheimer as well as for Fromm and Marcuse, the central question with regard to authority in any historical moment is the extent to which social submission and dependence "correspond to the state of development of human powers at the time in question"? (Horkheimer, 1972: 71).[3] The fundamental consequence of this position is that authority itself must be assessed in terms of its relationship to the process of

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3 For their perspectives on this matter see Fromm (1965: 297-298) and Marcuse (1972: 131).

furthering human power; the power and independence of the individual,

in the full context of human association.   Marcuse (1972) clarified

this attitude toward authority, citing Engels' essay, On the Principle

of Authority, to the effect that, "functional authority is necessary in

every social organization as a condition of production; it will also

play an important role in a future society" (1972: 135).   Authority as

such is a tool of all social organization in humankind's progressive

search for mastery of nature.   It fails its social function when it is

transformed "into an instrument of economic and psychological domination"

in the service of private interest (Marcuse, 1972: 138).

Authority relationships of dependence and power have in fact,

according to Horkheimer, historically served as the cement in the social

fabric which secures the community both in its productive bond and in the

time and structure of its transformation.   He asserts that "the strength-

ening or weakening of authorities is one of those characteristics which

make culture a dynamic factor in the historical process" (1972: 72).   In

this regard, Marcuse refers back to Marx, writing that he (Marx)

> lays down the distinction between the distribution of
> authority in capitalist and in precapitalist societies as a
> 'general rule': 'the less authority presides over the division
> of labour inside society, the more the division of labour
> develops inside the workshop, and the more it is subjected to the
> authority of a single person.   Thus authority in the workshop
> and authority in society, in relation to the division of labour,
> are in inverse ratio to each other' (1972: 134-135).

Horkheimer refers to "the blind interaction of unintegrated forces"

(1972: 86) by which he means that the irrationality of the socio-economic

process and the processes of its transformation are, like human nature,

conditioned not by insight and conscious intention but rather by the

tensions which develop between economic interests and further, between

those tensions and the structure of cultural authority (cf. Horkheimer, 1972: 82, 86).

It is therefore not authority but its expropriation for private interest which stands in the way of constructing a rational social order. Horkheimer finally identifies the concrete evidence of this irrational (i.e., antisocial) expropriation in "the discrepancy between merit and power" (1972: 92) wherein success and the power it engenders are realized not through meaningful, intelligent effort in behalf of social progress but rather by chance. According to his analysis this distortion of social authority has finally even distorted "real merit, surpassing know-ledge, and practical ability" in so far as these traits have themselves become "a legal title for power and exploitation" (1972: 94). He cites Nietzsche as the clearest savant of this process which has, according to Horkheimer, given to (private) property the power to dispose, directly and through its coercion of social and cultural authority in general, of the social and individual freedom which is presently available in the form of freedom from necessity. (cf. Horkheimer, 1972: 95-97).

Horkheimer's conclusion with regard to the problem of authority in this essay is that it is not an intrinsic function of the authority-obed-ience relationship in society to require unconditional subordination but rather it is an ideological obfuscation of that relationship in our cul-tural epoch which separates reason and authority and which "asks us to confess to the one and to despise the other" when in fact both have been distorted to the service of a specific accumulation of (capital) power (1972:97).

In the final pages of his essay Horkheimer elaborated the Institute's formulation of the family as a central agency within the comprehensive social "structure of authority... outside the family" (1972: 100).   The

thesis underlying his account was that coincidentally with the strength-
ening of the authority of the state in the post-liberal epoch, the
Western bourgeois family structure has progressively weakened and
become characterized by its functional inadequacy as a source of the
instillation of the behavioral attitudes toward authority required of
the contemporary (bourgeois) personality. Concomitantly, however, the
decline of the family's authority structure with its consequential in-
creasing atrophy as a source of individually-centered authority has served
the process of absorbing the individual into the authority structure
previously outlined; the structure of state power.

Contrary to appearances, however, Horkheimer maintained that this
process "carries no especially great threat of dissolution of the family"
(1972: 113). Pointing to the disintegration of family life which may be
observed in the Western world long before the onset of the present era
and to the consequences this process has dealt to individual relation-
ships, he argued that the evidence suggests that rather than a neglect-
fulness or hostility toward the family by modern authority there has in
fact developed a socio-political commitment to its enforced maintenance.
It is now the family which has assumed a benevolent neutrality; no longer
the source of authority that it once was, it has become a necessary
refuge from the discipline and alienation of the modern workplace (1972:
112-114).

In this respect Horkheimer found a positive source of inspiration
for the possible response of the individual against the subtle domination
of nonetheless brutal authority (that authority which deprives society
of its potential for release from exploitative organization). Drawing
on his interpretation of Hegel, he argued that he (Hegel) recognized the
fundamental character of opposition between the family and the larger

social structure without thinking of "the possibility of a truly united and rational society in which 'the individual as such', as understood and cherished within the family, could come into his own" (1972: 115-116).

In the final analysis, however, this potential role of the family as an agency or force in the project of social emancipation has, for Horkheimer, dimmed with the eclipse of the economic independence of the traditional bourgeois family. The potentially negative thrust of the family has finally diminished, in his analysis, to the point where "the family is one of those social forms which, as elements of the present cultural structure, are exercising necessary functions in an ever more inadequate way due to increasing contradictions and crises, yet cannot be changed without change in the total social framework" (1972: 102). Because it stands somewhat against the greater social domain and because that larger world presses the individual — the family's offspring — against the perimeter of necessity rather than away from it, the family, safely weakened as an independent force, is maintained as a central institution in the structure of domination precisely because of its negative but now safely contained social traits. Horkheimer concludes the matter in these words:

> In the bourgeois golden age there was a fruitful interaction between family and society, because the authority of the father was based on his role in society, while society was renewed by the education for authority which went on in the patriarchal family ... The family was the "germ cell" of bourgeois culture and it was, like the authority in it, a living reality. This dialectical totality of universality, particularity, and individuality proves now to be a unity of antagonistic forces, and the disruptive element in the culture is making itself more strongly felt than the unitive (1972: 128).

As Martin Jay points out, Horkheimer's picture of the family reflects a strong debt to Marx's analysis (1973: 126). Jay also identifies this

early summation of the Institute's perspective on authority and the

family with the large body of wellknown work by various Institute figures

on the problem of the "authoritarian personality" (cf. Jay, 1973: 127).

This fact must be stressed in order to clearly recognize the essential

continuity of the Institute's work in this area, collectively and

individually.

The next important dimension of the Institute's interpretation of

authority and the family in the contemporary Western world was its inte-

gration of Freudian social psychology into its perspective.   Fromm, who

broke from its ranks in 1939 but whose work through the publication of

Escape From Freedom was influential upon and influenced by the theoretical

orientation and research of the Institute was, until Marcuse produced his

Eros and Civilization, the primary figure in Critical theory's attempt

to combine psychoanalytic insights with dialectical materialism.   Fromm's

essay, comprising the second portion of the first volume of the Studien,

developed the claim that psychoanalysis offers the possibility of uncover-

ing the mediating mechanisms between the individual and society and

specifically between the economic substructure and cultural superstructure

of bourgeois society.   ⃟

Fromm endeavoured to explain the cultural relativity of any form of

authority as it is affected by socio-economic factors.   The critical

consequence of this approach, as Horkheimer has been observed to have

recognized, was that the authority- dependency relationships observable

in the advanced industrial state and its antecedent structures are

peculiarly related to the sense and reality of lost authority and power

in the realm of individual association and in the individual's position

in such a social order.   Less concerned with the alienation which may be

abstracted from this loss of position than with the specific problem of

socialization, in this project Fromm presented his thesis of the sado-

masochistic character type which he believed to be essential to the

definition of the authority syndrome of the modern state-organized

society.[4] Drawing from Freud's mass psychology but criticizing his

(Freud's) ambivalence regarding the locus of the reality principle and

again, faulting Freud's tendency to locate the source of the superego

solely in identification processes, Fromm argued that "the progress of

society itself was a major influence in the relative strength of the ego

and superego in repressing the socially dangerous impulses of the id"

(Jay, 1973: 127). Like Horkheimer, Fromm held that the increasing social

power of production offered the potential for the expansion of a rational,

socially formed ego but given "social conditions which were out of phase

with the productive powers, the development of a strong ego would be

hindered, leading to a regression to irrational authority rooted in the

superego" (Jay, 1973: 128). He concluded, however, that while this was

an essential prerequisite to any satisfactory theory, it was nevertheless

inadequate; hence, according to Jay, his postulation of the sado-masoch-

istic character. In Jay's words, "Fromm agreed with Freud that both

masochism and sadism were part of a unified character syndrome, adding

that authoritarian societies based on hierarchy and dependency increased

the likelihood of its appearance" (1973: 128).

Underlying Fromm's thesis, as already mentioned, was the firm under-

standing that his typologies and even more fundamentally, Freud's own

hypotheses and categories reflected the relationship patterns specifically

characteristic of the late bourgeois epoch. Marcuse's subsequent essay,

compromising the final portion of the theoretical section of the Studien,

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4   This is a theme which Fromm has continued to elaborate through his
latest major inquiry, The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness. For a
comprehensive picture of the structure and his treatment of the sado-
masochistic character type see Fromm (1965: ch. 5 and 1975: chs. 11-12).

clarified this point.   It comprised a historical excursus of the auth-
ority relationship as a relevant conceptual problem in the study of
contemporary Western social authority and power, beginning precisely with
Lutheranism and Calvinism.

In his introduction to this essay, Marcuse began by repeating, in
more insistent and concise language, Horkheimer's argument that rational
Authority cannot be equated with exploitative (i.e., alienated, irrational)
authoritarian power.   Marcuse exphasized that the subordination of
individual autonomy (which for Marcuse appears to be an historically
abstract concept postulated upon the unrealized if not unattainable recon-
ciliation of social contradictions) to authority is a rational social
obligation (1972: 51).   As has been shown, for Marcuse as well as for
Horkheimer and Fromm, the object of this submission is rational to the
extent that its purpose and effect is the freeing of individual impulsive-
ness within a given historical level of productive power.   Following
from Horkheimer's location of the irrational warping of authority in the
process of exploitation, Marcuse depicted the history of the ideological
justification of this process.

The body of Marcuse's essay consisted of a series of explorations
into the relationship between freedom and authority in the dogmas and
philosophical systems of Luther, Calvin, Kant, Hegel, Burke, Bonald,
deMaistre, Stahl, Marx, Sorel and Pareto.   His argument was that bourgeois
philosophy has from its inception not only maintained a duality between
mind and body, society and nature but has also postulated precisely the
idea of essential antagonism between authority and freedom.

Freedom — excepting the negative freedom to submit to power — and
authority — i.e., the necessity to obey, conditioned by the perception of
weakness — are experienced, according to Marcuse, in a history which accords

a place to positive freedom only during momentary lapses in the might

of social power or in the interstices between its interests.   This

underlying perspective becomes, in Marcuse's estimation, obscurred in

Kant's valuation of the individual who gives up personal interest so

that the community may flourish and again is somewhat more obscurred

by Hegel's recognition that freedom is obtained by the individual acting

in behalf of himself.   Marcuse argued that, "By the ultimate reference

of freedom to the moral law as its only 'reality', freedom becomes

compatible with every type of unfreedom; owing to its transcendental

nature it cannot be affected by any kind of restriction imposed on actual

freedom" (1972: 92) and he recalled Hegel's assertion that, "Unless he is

a member of an authorized corporation ... an individual is without rank

or dignity" (Hegel, quoted in Marcuse, 1972: 105).   Marcuse held that

finally, whether it is Calvin's divine will or Kant's moral law or Hegel's

freely acting individual, as he (Marcuse) interpreted them, it is force

which always justifies the bourgeois idea of the relationship between

authority and freedom".   In this epoch, according to Marcuse, that force

is the exploitative power of private property (1972: 96-98, 136-143).

According to Marcuse, Hegel was aware of this falsification of

freedom's form, recognizing "that the realization of true freedom nece-

ssarily leads beyond bourgeois society as such" (1972: 96).   Hegel

therefore retains Kant's basic perspective on civil society "as a

universal coercive order for the safeguarding (of the property of) free

private property owners..." but moves beyond it if only by the fact that

"his picture of bourgeois society is coloured by its negativity" (Marcuse,

1972: 96-97)

Technology and the Domination of Nature:

The Institute's Theory of the Relationship

of Nature and Culture

Beginning with Horkheimer's critique of the spurious claim of

empirical science to value-freedom, which he most thoroughly articu-

lated in his Eclipse of Reason (1974), Critical theory developed one

of its most important, consistent and possibly most lastingly useful

(as William Leiss (1975) recently argued) contributions to the science

of humanity and society.   The Critical theorists contended that the

supposedly objective principle of observation is itself neither objective

nor a principle,but that it is rather a technique which, like all others,

may well become obsolete (cf. Horkheimer, 1974: 79).   Horkheimer and

Adorno carried forward the argument, originally expounded by Bacon at

the first glimmerings of the Enlightenment and revived in our own era

by Scheler and in Russell's famous rejoinder to Haldane, that the scien-

tific enterprise is inspired by blind motivations for control of nature,

coupled with its correlative, blind faith in science's own capacity to

reconcile its effects on nature and society.[5]

The problem of scientific-technological power, according to Adorno

and Horkheimer, is that it transforms the historical struggle for human

survival in nature into its opposite, the struggle for nature's survival

in a technological   environment.   In the ensuing presentation of

the concept of mass culture it will be shown that others have raised this

same issue with respect to the transition from survival within the natural

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5   For a comprehensive description and analysis of the concept of the
domination of nature, in Critical theory, see William Leiss (1972).

environment to affluent survival against it in the modern era. As Leiss
(1972) observes, the domination of nature is presumed in the historical
project of human survival (106). This all-too-natural motivation may in
fact be transformed into a healthy defense mechanism against the deter-
mination of the technico-industrial force it has produced. Leiss refers
back to Nietzsche's dictum: "The forms of reason enable us 'to misunder-
stand reality in a shrewd manner', that is, to create a stable basis for
experience and action in order to assure the preservation and enhancement
of life" (1972: 107). The same processes are implicated in the symbiotic
acts of creation and destruction. However, just as a fundamental
qualitative distinction may nevertheless be made between creation and
destruction, domination and its resistance may be counterposed within this
perspective as well as they are when viewed as dissimilarly inspired.
Citing Scheler, Leiss says that "In order to understand the meaning of
the attempted domination of nature, we have to decipher very carefully
its relationship to those desired ends in the service of which it suppos-
edly functions" (1972: 116).

Horkheimer identified the basis of this qualitative change in the
historical struggle for the mastery of nature in the development of the
disjunction between subjective and objective reason which he argued formed
the basis for modern scientific logic. It was, of course, the Enlight-
ment dream that the laws of nature could be uncovered and that this know-
ledge could be used to liberate man and society. The knowing subject was
to become master of society and nature. It is exactly the ground of this
estimation of the role and use of knowledge and scientific technique that
is countered by Critical theory. Horkheimer asserted that rather than
penetrating the laws of natural and social processes, the mode of
positivistic rationality denies to its adherents the self-reflexivity

which traditional philosophy understood to be a necessary component of a comprehensive rationality. Thus, it is incapable of comprehending "its own philosophical implications in ethics as well as in epistemology" (Horkheimer, 1974: 84). "By its identification of cognition with science, positivism restricts intelligence to functions necessary to the organization of material already patterned according to that very commerical culture which intelligence is called upon to criticize" (Horkheimer, 1974: 92). What passes as objective knowledge is based upon subjective action-analysis (cf. Horkheimer, 1974: 3-13). While he conceded that historically "The subjective faculty of thinking was the critical agent that dissolved superstition" (1974: 7) his contention was that its record has been less than admirable. By its own standards and logic it cannot create but rather can only serve a value-system whose qualities, in turn, are not subject to penetration or criticism by sub-jective reason. In Horkheimer's words: "Ultimately subjective reason proves to be the ability to calculate probabilities and thereby to co-ordinate the right means with a given end" (1974: 5). This is so because subjective gain or advantage — the intrinsic worth-in-itself of a thing, idea or activity — "is utterly alien to subjective reason" (1974: 4).

This argument stands at the center of Adorno's and Horkheimer's Dialectic of Enlightenment, their most thorough single exploration of the relationship between knowledge and domination. In their view, the problem of the relationship of nature and cultural enterprise is not simply a product of advancing technical scientific knowledge and power but is fundamentally a problem deriving from man's ambivalent position between nature and knowledge. In the final analysis, man qua man cannot exist apart from nature of because of the historical need to

conquer nature, without his socially-constituted capacity to cause nature

to conform to his requirements.   However, each side ultimately threatens

the other, thus leaving man in the   unenviable   dilemma of deter-

mining the extent to which each side of his contradictory constitution

may prevail in any given historical situation.

Culture, in the Institute's analysis, is not something beyond or

separate from economics and politics but neither is it simply the

concatenation of the techniques and artifices of material production and

consumption and their rationalization.   Culture is also qualitative and

estimable in terms of its potential for making a particular socio-economic

system better or worse in terms of definable standards of general, mater-

ial social welfare.   In Critical theory's judgment, it is only by abdic-

ating social responsibility that social science can refuse to address

such issues as the objective quality of culture within such terms of

reference.   Jay says, "Not only was art /in the School's estimation/

the expression and reflection of existing social tendencies, but also...

genuine art acted as the last preserve of human yearnings for the 'other'

society beyond the present one" (1973: 178-179).   It has been shown that

the predication of such an alternative is based upon Critical Theory's

principle of measuring social circumstances against productive power in

specific socio-historical situations.   The social consequences, in terms

of such socio-economic disjunctions or rational belances as may be

observed within any given society are conditioned by these precisely

measurable conditions.

The Critics of Critical Theory

Although it is not an objective of this thesis to either validate

or invalidate the theories with which it is concerned, some attention

must nevertheless be paid to the criticisms that have been levelled against them. In fact, these criticisms frequently concentrate on the problems of validation encountered by researchers interested in confronting the theories with empirical data. This is especially so in the case of Critical theory and somewhat more ambiguously true as regards Collective Behavior theory.

Given the fact that both Collective Behavior and Critical theory are commonly recognized for their contributions to the theory of mass society and culture (the former largely for its explanation of mass social interaction and the latter for its interpretation of social institutional massification as an historical phenomenon), it may be said that the cred-ibility of each depends in some measure upon the credibility of the fundamental concepts of the theory of the mass society. Although it must be recognized that neither the Collective Behavior nor the Frankfurt theorists were responsible for developing or formulating a discrete or comprehensive theory of the mass social process as such, the theory of mass society which they indirectly and partially influenced depends upon a num-ber of concepts for which they are largely responsible. Examination of the concept of mass society with regard to those particular ideas which were drawn from Collective Behavior and Critical theory, particularly with regard to those concepts which have been criticized as being ill-conceived and empirically unverifiable, must be undertaken in order to establish the basic scientific integrity of the concepts with which we are dealing.

Two of the most influential sociological critics of the theory of cultural massification and mass social interaction are Daniel Bell (1956) and Edward Shils (1957). The scale and effective impact of their critical rejoinders to the concept of the mass society cannot be precisely

determined but it is certainly a matter of fact that a great deal of

attention has been paid to their largely complementary essays.   Both

writers have gained wide influence over the field of sociological theory

and are certainly important contributors to the analysis of the advanced

industrial social order.   The combination of their separate critiques

of the theory of mass society may, at the least, be taken as an accurate

barometer of the uneasiness of numerous other sociologists with respect

to this problem.   Finally, these two authors' opinions on this matter

are especially relevant to the subject as it is addressed in this thesis

because of their specific applicability, particilarly in the case of

Shils' arguments, to Critical theory and, to a lesser degree, Collective

Behavior theory.[6]

It is Shils' contention that the theory of society contained in

Critical theory in particular and of the exponents of the idea of mass

culture in general, rests upon arbitrary anthropological images of

historical man and of modern society, neither of which have any basis in

fact.   "These arbitrary constructions" according to Shils, "emerge from

the minds of speculative sociologists, existentialist philosophers, publi-

cists and literary critics" (1957: 601-602).   His thesis is that in the

final analysis the concept of mass culture is a political perspective,

not a scientific (i.e., empirically verifiable) theory.   Bell's (1956)

well known opinion in this regard may be recalled: "The theory of mass

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6   In something of the same fashion as the development of the theory they
both castigate Shils' and Bell's critiques of mass cultural theory have
undergone subtle metamorphoses.   Each author has written two distinct
essays on the subject.   However, the differences between their earlier
and later essays are predominantly stylistic, the basic arguments remain-
ing constant.   Since neither author suggests any other motivations for
his revision, it is assumed that no distinction between their earlier and
later essays are required.   Reference to their critiques will be to
their earlier publications.

society no longer serves as a description of Western society, but as an iedology of romantic protest against contemporary society" (83). Bell regards the mass cultural theorists as being largely uniformed about the actual differences between past and present societies and certainly considers them to be naive about the actual relationship between productive technologies and their coincidental social structures. Most importantly, however, like Shils, Bell regards the theory of mass society as an elitest defense of aristocratic privilege and taste against the supposed vulgarity of popularly assimilable attitudes and social practices. "It is at heart a defense of an aristocratic cultural tradition — a tradition that does carry with it an important but neglected conception of liberty — and a doubt that the large mass of mankind can ever become truly educated or acquire an appreciation of culture" (Bell, 1956: 78).[7]

Shils finds it to be crucial to the understanding of their work that, "most of the recent critics of mass culture are, or were, Marxian socialists, some even rather extreme, at least in their past commitment to the socialist ideal" (1957: 588). In other words, these are the bitter ex-devotees of a failed god: the socialism of the Enlightenment, specifically the socialism of German idealism. Spurned by the proletariat of advanced industrial society, Shils sees the culture-critique of mass sociology as turning from a materialist critique of capitalism to "a moral and cultural criticism of the large scale industrial society" (1957: 590). More precisely, they have, according to Shils, turned upon the character of the average person, condemning him for having become absorbed in a needlessly trivialized existence. From advocates of the oppressed masses

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7   Bell appears to have reconsidered his position in recent years. For example, he has recently asserted that "The social structure today is ruled by an economic principle of rationality ... the culture, in contrast, is prodigal, promiscuous, dominated by an antirational, anti-intellectual temper" (1971: 18-19).

they have turned into elitest, snobbish enemies of the life adopted by the

average citizen.   Leaving aside the condemnation of the theorists, it

should be pointed out that condemnation of the theorists' supposed

intellectual attitudes does not necessarily invalidate their theoretical

ideas.   Moreover, it should immediately become clear that Shils' asser-

tions regarding these theorists' assessment of the average person's

character are quite inaccurate.

According to Shils (1957), the problem raised by Critical Theory is

not whether popular or mass culture is a good or bad thing, per se.

While Shils feels that Adorno is unjustifiably remote from and critical

of popular culture, the critical methodological problem raised is rather

that there is no objective basis, in his opinion, for inferring from

popular culture the nature of the person absorbed by it.   Here is where

he makes his most telling point, from the standpoint of determining the

validity of the Critical theorists' assertions about the nature of life

in contemporary industrial society.   Leaving aside their political-

philosophical orientation, he says,

> The enquirers often, and the interpreters of the enquiries
> not less frequently, go far beyond the limits set by their
> observations and assume that reading or seeing is evidence of
> a close correspondence between the content of what is seen as
> interpreted by the sociologist, and the mind of the person who
> comes into contact with it...
> "Content analyses" are regarded by many students of popular
> culture as providing a direct and unquestionable path of entry
> into contact with the depths of the mind.   The nature of the
> person who reads or sees or hears some work of popular culture is
> inferred from the content of the work, on the assumption that every
> image, every event corresponds to some deep and central need in
> the personality of the reader, viewer or listener.   There is no
> reason whatever to think that this is so and yet this assumption
> lies near the hearf of much of the treatment of mass culture
> (602-603).

Leo Lowenthal must be taken as a specific target of this general

charge insofar as his work, as much or more than any other mass culture

theorist's, is characterized by its handling of content analysis of popular literary products.

Shils stated that, "'Content analyses' are regarded ... as providing a direct and unquestionable path of entry into contact with the depths of the mind." In fact, in the beginning of his, Literature, Popular Culture, and Society Lowenthal (1968) carefully defines his uses of and inferences from the content analysis of representative samplings of the popular media. Nowhere does he postulate distinct, much less direct, correspondences between popular commodities and consumer personalities. Rather, his analysis is focussed upon indications of such potentialities. This is markedly different from Shils' assertion. We find reference to popular literary products as constituting "a powerful force in the life of modern man, their symbols cannot be overestimated as diagnostic tools for studying man in contemporary society" (xii). This assertion of indirect analytical potential is a far cry from any assumption of direct correspondence between commodity and consumer, other than in their material relationship.

Lowenthal's (1968) interpretation of his data is one which he consistently maintained throughout the course of his investigations into the mass communications media. Equally certain is the fact that this position reflects the general attitude of his Institute colleagues.

Besides the matter of their data analysis, the substance of the mass culture theorists' (at least as represented in the case of Critical theory) supposed prejudice against the lifestyle and character of the average person in contemporary society is clearly a matter of major concern to their critics. It would of course have been difficult to ascertain the presence of such prejudicial bias in the personal attitudes of these people, even had such an attempt been made and their cooperation

been obtained.   In terms of the available evidence, it appears to be a
simple but gross distortion of their position to impute bias against the
character of the ordinary person from these writers' distinctly negative
evaluation of the contemporary sociocultural process.

Conclusion

The opinion of contemporary culture and personality displayed by
the Critical theorists is that a peculiar rift has occurred in the modern
relationship between the character of the family and the larger social
system.   Rather than a bias against the ordinary person and his lifestyle,
what is set forth by these writers is the simple proposition that the
social relationships which have emerged as the logical correlates of the
modern system of production are of a different order from those values
and expectations instilled in the individual by the family.

The social role of the family has certainly changed in fundamental
and consequential ways over the course of the past two hundred years and
perhaps particularly during the past six or fewer decades.   During this
same period, however, the internal structure of family life seems to
have undergone much fewer changes.   While the structure and internal
roles of the family have most certainly not remained constant, their
contemporary forms appear to remain identifiable with their antecedents.
This is not a denial of such important structural changes as, for example,
the possibly most enormous one of the apparent decline of the extended
family household.   What is suggested is that while modifications of the
form of the family have occurred, presumably as a consequence of the
demands of industrialization, nevertheless the primary role of the family
as society's primary instrument of socialization persists and persists in

accordance with traditional models. If this is in fact true, it may be inferred that a fracture has developed between the ordinary personality and the social system in which he operates.

It is on the basis of this observation of the separation of internalized values and expectations and primary experiences held by the individual from his experience as a participant in the general life of the social system, that these theorists formed their critique of the modern social order. Thus, they generalized from a specific analysis of German working class attitudes in the twenties and from their interpretation of the social structure of National Socialist Germany to a comprehensive critique of the contemporary historical epoch.

It was undoubtedly a matter of personal regard for their own German culture as well as their specifically theoretical position which prompted the Critical theorists to search for the causes of National Socialism in the wider context of contemporary western society and culture. That National Socialism (and its real and potential counterparts in other nations) was not only a peculiar consequence of the German political experience but also representative of similar tendencies endemic to the experience of the Western world was an argument they repeatedly put forward.

The terror-induced atomization of the social fabric and personalities of the victims ('Aryan' as well as Jew, Gypsy, Pole and intellectual; of the powerful as well as the overpowered) of the Nazi state rather than being simply the product of a unique national history, in the Institute's view became the extreme example of tendencies at large throughout the modern world. This viewpoint was hardly unusual in itself but was carried to the highest level of generalization insofar as Horkheimer would write:

In the Western democracies the leaders of the big working class organizations find themselves in the same relationship to their membership as the executives of integral statism have to the society as a whole: they keep the masses, whom they take care of, under strict discipline, maintain them in hermetic seclusion from uncontrolled elements, and tolerate spontaneity only as a result of their own power. Far more than the pre-fascist statesmen who mediated between the monopolists of labor and industry and who could never extricate themselves from the utopia of a humanitarian version of the authoritarian state, these labor leaders strive for their own kind of national community (Volksgemeinschaft) (1973: 5).

In this single statement we find the fate of the masses, of the average person, conceived as being little different in any particular permutation of modern industrial organization.

In many respects, this interpretation of state power and of the condition of social interaction in advanced industrial society is of course neither unique nor, as already indicated, is it universally accepted. In terms of the essential propositions covered in this chapter it would, however, appear that they are in every case susceptible to critical and empirical examination and that in fact they are concepts with wide currency in contemporary social science.

Chapter III

MASS CULTURE

Introduction: The Concept of Mass Culture

The theory of socio-cultural massification is a complex of

descriptive and interpretative accounts of the effects of advanced

industrial organization on the social structure and lifestyle of modern

society.   Its basic postulates are that: 1) the modern industrial

social order is characterized by a degree of social uniformity which,

given the heterogeneity of social experience and beliefs in the modern

world, is interpreted as being a direct consequence of the requirements

and power or influence of industrial technology; 2) this industrially

rationalized social organization conflicts with and overwhelms the

historical integrity of primary-group associations (familial, religious,

educational and communal), consequently undermining the individual

person's sense of community, purpose and power; and 3) the combination

of the imperatives of industrial techniques and their consequential

effects upon traditional institutions of socialization establishes an

imbalance in favour of productive technologies against what are held to
be their natural, socio-biological, cultural counterparts of personal
nurturance, moral constraint and artistic imagination.

Mass culture may be characterized as the world of the lonely crowd
whose members are the alienated urban proletariat and industrial technic-
ians — the mass of the population of an industrialized society — whose
lives follow the emerging demands and opportunities of mass production and
consumption.   According to the conception of mass culture which character-
izes the two approaches (Collective Behavior and Critical theory) dealt
with in this study, their relationships and cognitions are mediated by and
evaluated in terms of industrial technologies of communication and
production.   Technologically rationalized value and belief systems are
supposed to have replaced traditionally established patterns of primary
group associations which are themselves presumed to have historically
served to fix communities into fairly stable and enduring patterns and
institutions of cultural life.   The overriding characteristic of this
historical situation is that it is an unstable admixture of contradictory
social relationships which are held together and reshaped by amorphous
and strictly utilitarian, ·industrial economic interests.

The terms, 'mass society' and 'mass culture' have become so firmly
entrenched in the lexicon of everyday talk and of the social scientific
literature on largescale industrial organizations that the concept of the
society and culture of the masses seems almost self-evident.   In point
of fact, however, the utility and even the validity of the idea that
there is such a thing as a mass culture or even a mass social unit is a
matter of serious scholarly doubt.   Although a common sensibility
presumably holds that some sort of effective majority of likeminded
persons must exist as the final consolidating force in any given society

and that in a typical industrialized society such a majority must be composed of persons of varied interests, whether or not their circumstances are relatively homogeneous, it is even doubtful that the idea of social massification is popularly accepted outside of the social scientific community. In terms of serious, analytic criticism, these doubts have been developed into substantial arguments against the very concept that there is such a thing as an industrially organized mass culture which shapes the sensibilities and behavior of the members of modern industrial society.

These arguments may be shown to revolve around the question of the actual power of mass productive interests and techniques of mass communication to directly affect changes in the social system. It is however hardly a matter of doubt that mass production and communications have either directly or indirectly effected substantial changes in the mode and character of social relationships; changes which there is no reason to believe would have occurred without their influence or power, as the case may be.

The socially encompassing political, military and/or ideological organization of large populations in the service of some collective or vested interest is, of course, nothing new in history. Neither is it a matter of dispute that the organizational pattern of a given social structure generally reflects the pattern of its economic and political structures. According to the conception of mass culture which characterizes the two approaches dealt with in this study, the overriding and distinguishing characteristic of the modern (mass) social order is that it is an unstable admixture of contradictory social relationships which are held together and reshaped by amorphous and strictly utilitarian, industrial economic interests. Technologically rationalized value and belief systems are supposed to have replaced traditionally established

patterns of primary-group associations which are themselves presumed to
have historically fixed communities into fairly stable and enduring
patterns and institutions of cultural life.

In its broad outline, few if any social scientists reject the idea
that the problem of alienation may be crucial to the interpretation of
individual life and of the emerging social structures characteristic of
industrialization in general. This specific agreement has in fact
precipitated a number of important, common conclusions regarding the
nature of industrialized societies, from a wide group of thinkers who
otherwise, for theoretical, methodological and political reasons, would
be expected to have disputed the meaning of the evidence. This range of
agreement, however, varies according to the particular aspect of mass
culture that is being considered. In the sense, for example, that the
term 'culture' — mass, or otherwise — represents the aesthetic and
artistic intellectual and material products of a society and may be empl-
oyed to conceptualize or represent popular forms of entertainment and more
generalized leisure-time lifestyle, a broad spectrum of sociologists
concur in the opinion that mass culture represents a 'low' or essentially
non-ideal, commodified pattern of popular expression. On the other hand,
if a more anthropological definition of culture is employed, 'mass culture'
would be conceptually broadened to account for the productive and
symbolic artifacts and customs which constitute or rationalize industrial
society, sui generis. Accordingly, mass culture would be the social
organization and rationalization of the lives and relationships of the
members of advanced industrial societies, as such. It would then be
taken to refer to the particular cultural construct which equips and
organizes the mass productive labor and leisure force of the machinery and
institutions of mass production and consumption. For obvious reasons,

consensus does not prevail for such an identification of mass culture with the totality of industrialism.

In attending to the reality and character of mass culture and to its conceptualization, several philosophical as well as sociological trad-itions have come together and produced again separate but mutually affected theories that are particularly consequential with regard to the understanding of the social construction of the modern, industrial state. Before turning specifically to Critical Theory's analysis of the problem, or to collective behavior theory's contribution to the theory of mass society, it should be valuable to cover certain other important and distinctive but supportive lines of inquiry into the phenomenon.

As has been suggested, alienation, whatever its perceived extent and however the conditions of its generation may be explained, is the central problem posed by mass culture (e.g., cf. Kornhauser, 1959: 237). In addressing the subject of alienation, Marx has traditionally been interpreted as primarily referring to the fact of the expropriation of labor and its products; not to an inherent isolating mechanism in the process of industrial production. His contribution has largely assumed the limited formulation that the power derived from capital accumulation, rather than the relationship between the worker and his produce, forces the separation or alienation of the two (e.g., cf. Marx, 1972: 65-73).

Since Marx, the theory of alienation has inevitably assumed a variety of new dimensions. One of the most fundamental of these elab-orations is based on the attention given — largely without reference to Marx — to social-psychological dimensions of industrial structures and processes. The relationship between a particular worker or the working class and the industrial state is therefore seen not only in terms of external forces of coercion but also in terms of psychological attitudes

(of submission as well as alienation) generated by industrial organization. Put simply, this further dimension focusses on the sense of powerlessness against the social, economic and political structures of the industrial state that is instilled not only by the separation of the producers from their produce but also by the industrial process, per se. To state the problem even more simply and directly, this social-psychological perspective on alienation is an amplification of the problem recognized by Marx and of course by many others, that the rewards and demands of industrial society are disjunctive with the traditional patterns of socialization. The personality of the actor in the industrial state is formed according to traditional orientations of expectation and norms of behavior which are not congruent with the actual conditions of life in advanced industrialism.

Alienation is therefore the product of the disjunction between two of the key aspects of the individual's life experience: socialization and sustenance. Therefore, besides the critical fact that work and its products are alienated, the wealth particular to industrial production and the lifestyle demanded for its production do not conform to the per-sonalities of the actors.

This, then, is the fundamental problem posed by the post-Marxian image of alienation: How is the industrial state to be changed into a society which reflects the interests of its members without violating those inter-ests by forcing them into a tautological conformity with the demands and rewards that are simply determined by the emerging rationalization of industrial production? Historically, this problem remained a moot issue so long as the effect of productive techniques in determining the limit-ations of the habits and ideas of a culture were themselves subject to their rather limited capacity to effect changes in the environment. This

process may be further understood in terms of the narrowing spectrum of

behavior permissible to culture-systems as a direct result of the technol-

ogically magnified consequences of human behavior in the modern world

(cf. Becker, 1971: 128-129 and 1975: 96).

The problem of alienation and of mass culture is therefore not simply

that modern life has lost its traditional underpinnings of experience,

ideas and associations.   In fact, those traditions which have constituted

humankind's past cultural achievements and even its historical sense of

self, have not been replaced but rather tenaciously hold their position

against the demands of the industrial ecosystem.   The problem of alien-

ation, if it is representative of the condition of industrial life, as

opposed to indicating the destruction of traditional culture patterns and

the institutions of their perpetuation, rather restifies to their endur-

ance.   The very fact that alienation is defined as a problem demonstrates

that traditional culture patterns and the institutions that perpetuate

them have not been destroyed, but rather endure, even if in an attenuated

form and are widely recognized as legitimate.

Ernest Becker (1964) has argued that Marx's own theory of alienation

in fact presupposes many of the essential contributions of modern social

psychology.   He says,

> Marx, quite correctly, and from the start put the burden
> of coming into being upon the active development of one's own
> powers.   For him, alienation meant, first and foremost, the
> overshadowing of the organism by the object .   Marx leaves
> no doubt about his meaning when he singles out for criticism
> the traditional philosopher, who is "himself an abstract form of
> alienated man ... The whole history of alienation ... is
> therefore only the history of the production of abstract thought,
> i.e., of absolute, logical, speculative thought" ... What exactly
> is Marx driving at here?   Simply, that any thought that
> divorces one from action, and separates itself from involvement
> of the total individual, is alienated (1964: 123-124).

Becker compares this diagnosis with the contemporary, phenomenologically

constructed picture of the schizophrenic personality failure that "takes
refuge in the world of symbol-objects, and forfeits trial-and-error
experience in the external world" (1964: 121).   Continuing in this
vein, Becker says,

> Marx described this process in terms of alienation of the
> producer from his product. When the producer renounces active
> control in the shaping of his object, his work becomes unrelated
> to his own powers.   The objects he produces, therefore, do
> not confront him as his own.   This means that the world of his
> creation is not his own world.   So, says Marx, if man is
> estranged from his own products, from his own life activity,
> he is also estranged from others.   Anything that confronts him
> is then alien to him.   He has no responsibility for the creation
> of it, or involvement in it.   To lose self-powers is to lose
> community, for schizophrenics as well as for modern industrial
> man (1964: 124-125).

For Marx, as has been stated, this picture was closely if not
entirely tied to the actual expropriation of the product of labor from
its producer.   It takes only a little loosening of his model to recog-
nize the somewhat larger problem of alienation as a product of the dis-
sociation between traditional objects of material well-being and their
artificial, industrially based surrogates.

Marvin Scott (1964) has identified the sociologically based sources
of alienation "in the lack of a) commitment to values, b) conformity to
norms, c) responsibility in roles, and d) control of facilities" (241).
All of these factors are endemic to industrial societies if, indeed,
there is an actual disjunction between the socializing agencies and the
functioning processes of productive life in industrial economies.   In
other words, the sense of powerlessness, in this context, is simply the
direct consequences of inapporpriate socialization into the pattern of
economic life.   Jacques Ellul well understands this problem when he
asserts that technologically oriented theories of contemporary, liberal
education actually pose the extreme risk of making people "happy in a

milieu which normally would have made them unhappy" (1964: 348). Ellul
pinpoints the danger in the milieu of totalitarianism, which in his
estimation is a further development of mass society.

Because of its frequent interlinkage with mass society or at least
with the political-sociological concept of mass society, some account
must be taken of the important problem raised by the totalitarian state.

It has frequently been said that the theorists of mass society
hypothesize a developmental progression from the mass, liberal democratic
state to totalitarianism. Bramson (1961), for example, takes it as a
matter of course that these theorists, the most important of whom were
refugees from European fascism, "see totalitarianism lurking around the
corner in ... the United States" (128). Shils, as he points out, views
their perspective in a similar way. Shils (1957) says that according to
these theorists,

> It was because man was alienated and uprooted that he so
> eagerly accepted the cruel and spurious ethnic community preferred
> by National Socialism ... It is therefore to be expected that
> the mass culture which has been created to meet the needs of
> alienated and uprooted men will further the process, exacerbate
> the needs and lead onto an inevitable culmination in Fascism
> (601).

Although there is a certain element of truth in these assertions,
it should be apparent that the theories examined in the foregoing
analysis make no such reductionist hypothesis that mass culture has
ever been or will ever "lead onto an inevitable culmination in Fascism".
the forces which create mass cultures — the social conditions of unrest
in the urban-industrial milieu, in Collective Behavior theory and the
political-economic forces behind the dislocation of social life in
industrial society, in Critical Theory — and not mass culture or its
artifacts, are the forces which are predisposed to entrenchment in the

life-dominating organization of totalitarianism. This threat, according

to both theoretical viewpoints, is directed at the members of mass

society and toward the institutions of their mass culture. It is not a

threat constituted by mass culture as such.

Bearing in mind this important distinction between mass culture

and the totalitarian state, specifically contained in Critical Theory

and by implication, in collective behavior theory, a brief overview of

the problem of totalitarianism may be useful in order to sufficiently

clarify the theoretical issues involved in this distinction.

Totalitarianism may be defined as the centralization of control

authority over institutional and personal life carried to its maximum

extent — Lewis Mumford refers to the "nucleation of power" (1970: ch. 9)

— in a large (i.e., populous), industrial, mass society. Simply put,

it is the achievement of a mass political party's ambition to realize

total power over the life of a large, industrial state.

It is important to recognize that the term "totalitarian" and its

definitions have traditionally and commonly developed from attempts to

critically analyze European fascism — German National Socialism and

Italian fascism being the most prominent examples upon which most discus-

sions have concentrated — and Stalinist bolshevism. The concept has

developed in frames of analysis that have interrelated these specific

cases of twentieth-century authoritarian political experience. It is

therefore a characteristic of the term that it is specifically critical

of the phenomena it describes although it was originally a concept created

and used by fascist theoreticians to describe their own program.

According to Ernst Wolte, the "Communist interpretation" of fascism is

in fact the only one among the various contenders that postulates a

"complete antithesis" between fascism and bolshevism. "Even the political-

liberal interpretation tends to equate fascism with bolshevism — actually the central thesis of all other conceptions /of fascism and totalitarianism/" (1969: 38).

The fundamental problem that arises from this framework, for a sociologist working in terms of traditional sociological concepts, is that two historically distinct and dissimilar societies — Russian and German (leaving aside, in this project, the problem of the other major fascist state, Italy) — are seen as having converged on a novel social formation distinct from and yet integrally related to other modern industrial societies. The issue is made clear by Hannah Arendt:

> In the preceeding chapters we emphasized repeatedly that the means of total domination are not only more drastic but that totalitarianism differs essentially from other forms of political oppression known to us such as despotism, tyranny and dictatorship. Wherever it rose to power, it developed entirely new political institutions and destroyed all social, legal and political traditions of the country. No matter what the specifically national tradition or the particular spiritual source of its ideology, totalitarian government always transformed classes into masses, supplanted the party system, not by one-party dictatorships, but by a mass movement, shifted the center of power from the army to the police, and established a foreign policy openly directed toward world domination. Present totalitarian governments have developed from one-party systems; whenever these became truly totalitarian, they started to operate according to a system of values so radically different from all others, that none of our traditional legal, moral, or common sense utilitarian categories could any longer help us to come to terms with, or judge, or predict their course of action. (1958: 460, italics added).

This clearly ambiguous relationship between fascism and Stalinism is interpreted from the standpoint of an analysis of fascism by Nolte in this way:

> FASCISM IS ANTI-MARXISM WHICH SEEKS TO DESTROY THE ENEMY BY THE EVOLVEMENT OF A RADICALLY OPPOSED AND YET RELATED IDEOLOGY AND BY THE USE OF ALMOST IDENTICAL AND YET TYPICALLY MODIFIED METHODS, ALWAYS, HOWEVER, WITHIN THE UNYIELDING FRAMEWORK OF NATIONAL SELF-ASSERTION AND AUTONOMY (1969: 40).

Structurally, in terms of Arendt's analysis, the only clue we have
at this point to a linkage between Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany
is the transformation of both totalitarian systems from one-party states.
Certainly, given the circumstances surrounding this common denominator in
Germany and Russia it is insufficient to explain the phenomenon of
totalitarianism. The problem which we are confronting here that are
susceptible to sociological analysis in terms usually utilized are:
technology, power and what we might refer to as institutional adjustment.
For example, Parsons in an essay entitled, "Some Sociological Aspects of
the Fascist Movements", discusses the uneven effects of the rationalizing
process of Western technology on various participant societies and within
them. His thesis is that in certain cases extraordinary conditions of
anomie result from this process resulting in institutional (and class?)
conflicts to which technological devices are applied, bringing together
traditional and contemporary patterns of thought and action which may
result in a conflict wherein the technological devices merely abet the
reassertion of traditional symbols. What follows is a revolutionary
reaction against scientific rationality (1964: 124-141). This is close
in many respects to the statement by Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew
Brzezinski that, "/A̲ totalitarian ideology̲/ might accordingly be defined
as 'a reasonably coherent body of ideas concerning practical means of
how totally to change and reconstruct a society by force, or violence,
based upon an all-inclusive or total criticism of what is wrong with
the existent or antecedent society'" (1966: 88).

According to most analyses, varied as they may be in other respects,
totalitarianism is a uniquely twentieth-century phenomenon. As has
been noted there is a common agreement that it is a unique type of
despotism arising from conditions specific to modern, advanced industrial

societies. The primary preconditions — which have been referred to — for its generation appear to be 1) a large population, 2) an advanced industrial economy and 3) a fundamental dislocation of the traditional social institutions of the society from the economic life of the larger elements of the population. Analysts as diverse in their theoretical perspectives as Fromm, on the one hand and, as has been shown, Parsons and Friedrich, on the other, cite the breakdown of traditional values and institutions and their consequential effects on the class relationships and psychological security of the masses, as the conditioning basis of fascism in particular and of totalitarianism in general.

Reference has been made several times to the postulation of historical uniqueness with regard to totalitarianism. These analyses generally rely upon some conception of the technological base upon which the institutions of all-encompassing social domination are built. In other words, it is crucial to the usual analysis to assign priority to the conditions of advanced industrial society as opposed to emphasis upon the development of political dictatorships, as such, in an industrial milieu. This priority is reversed by certain writers, Mumford being possibly the most notable example.

Friedrich and Brzezinski (1966) specify six interrelating characteristics as the defining traits of a totalitarian dictatorship: "The 'syndrome', or pattern of interrelated traits ... /are/ an ideology, a single party typically led by one man, a terroristic police, a communications monopoly, a weapons monopoly, and a centrally directed economy" (21). Franz Neumann (1957) cites five essential factors which are: 1) the transformation "from a state based upon the rule of law ... to a police state," 2) "the transition from the diffusion of power in liberal states to the concentration of power in the totalitarian regime", 3) "the

existence of a monopolistic state party", 4) "the transition from a plur-
alist to totalitarian social controls" and 5) "the use of non-calculable
violence as a permanent threat against the individual" (244-245).

While it is debatable whether or not these interrelating structures
and patterns must coalesce in the person of a single leader, it is a
fact that such a leader has always been an identifiable and central
factor in every historical totalitarian society. Usually, those leaders
have in fact highly approximated Weber's "charismatic" leadership type.
To their followers, they present an image of superhuman qualities and
invariably caste their roles in trans-historical if not divine or super-
natural terms of reference. To say that their personal appeal is their
primary quality might be to underestimate their frequently superlative
organizational capacities. Nevertheless, their personal dynamism and
attractiveness is usually displayed or symbolically represented by their
actions and pronouncements or at least by the representations of them,
made by their propagandists.

To leave the matter of leadership as solely a fortuitous combination
of a powerful personality with a society predisposed to his leadership
would be a serious mistake. A given leader or even a given personality
type is at the very least not a sufficient cause for the establishment of
any social organization beyond the smallest imaginable group of zealots
(if, indeed, such a band would even qualify as a social organization).
In any event, such a simplistic reliance upon the existence of, for
example, a demagogue or any other single personality or even combination
of such persons is clearly not a part of any sociologically oriented
accounting. However, it might well be suggested that the historically
invariant presence of charismatic, or at least demagogic, leaders across
such a wide social spectrum as is presented through the various instances

of totalitarianism, suggests the importance of the leader as a principal

factor in totalitarianism and its sociological analysis; a critical

factor commonly recognized but possibly underemphasized in most socio-

logical inquiries into the subject.

Even if the leader is not theoretically necessary to the totalit-

arian social structure, he nevertheless indicates, through his common

existence and role, what the structure is based upon. The role of the

totalitarian leader is precisely the traditional role of a leader as the

principal agent of his society's attempt to consistently organize itself.

The difference between the totalitarian leader and his charismatic fore-

bears is equally precisely the difference between the organizational

principles of pre-totalitarian and totalitarian societies. It has

been suggested that totalitarianism is definable in terms of the maxim-

ization of central authority through the life of a society. Insofar as

organization is a technical problem, totalitarian leadership is first

produced in a technically advanced society. Moreover, the contradictory

relationship between totalitarianism and supreme individual leadership is

a direct consequence of the fact that the leadership role is itself a

transitional stage in the development of totalitarian organization. A

leadership person is required to implement theoretically advanced organ-

izational principles until the moment when their complete realization can

be achieved through technological (i.e., fully rationalized) leadership

agencies. The totalitarian leader may therefore finally be a historically

contradictory element, rather than a definitive characteristic of total-

itarianism.

Examination of Friedrich's and Brzezinski's six and Neumann's five

interrelating factors discloses the fact, in other words, that totalitar-

ianism is not the organization of a society into an efficient, productive

mechanism but is rather the imposition of the principle of total organiz-

ation, as such, on a society.   This difference is consequentially enormous, accounting for the necessary conceptual separation not only of totalitarianism and historically prior forms of tyranny but also for its enormous differences from mass culture.   It is the difference between, (1) organizing in order to more readily achieve a definable object and, (2) organizing for organization's sake.   In the first situation, ideology and its implementation and dissemination remain separate, the latter being created in order to serve or implement the ideology.   In the second case, ideology and the techniques for its maintenance become tautologous.   This is what Arendt means when she says that the totalitarian system operates without reference to its socio-cultural antecedents and what Nolte means in saying that fascism is anti-Marxism which operates almost exactly like (Bolshevik) Marxism.

The theory that totalitarianism represents the total structuring of a society in conformity with an organizational ideology therefore postulates a radical alternative to traditional theories of social organization and change, whether of a conflict or an institutional-integration type. The theory assumes that in the case of advanced industrial society, traditional institutions and patterns of action may be replaced by institutionally transcendent organizational principles as the vehicle of socialization and of the general organization of social life.   Institutionalized habits and values are replaced by an overriding performance principle characterized by obedience or organizationally inspired command.[1]

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1   While the interpretation of totalitarianism as the invention or instauration of a total and self-reflexive principle of social organization appears to be clearly justified on the basis of the literature which has been cited, this conceptual simplification must be recognized as such.   It will however be seen in the context of this and the previous chapter that the organization of social power has historically constituted am irrational expropriation of social authority directed solely toward its own enhancement.

It may therefore be said that although cultural massification does not presuppose the formation of totalitarian regimentation it is nevertheless clear that the existence of both social forms is conditioned by a similar set of socioeconomic circumstances and their consequential social psychological effects. While totalitarianism has heretofore evolved from previously undeveloped mass economies it is also clear that theoretically, mass industrial society is not immune to the possibility of totalitarian organization. It is, in fact, in the extreme form of totalitarian organization that the theory of social massification acquires its greatest credibility.

In the mass cultural society, the problem remains centered on the reconciliation of the traditional roles of primary group associations and institutions — or, at a minimum, their residues — with the increasingly non-traditional development of the techniques of production and its artifices designed to bond its alienated servants to itself.

In North American sociology, persons concerned with the pervasiveness of alienation have largely focussed on the impact of processes of mass communications. The characteristic feature of this research has been its effort to clarify the relationship between mass techniques of communication and their effectiveness in forming mass opinion audiences. The question raised, in other words, is to what degree the mass audience has or has not assumed a pattern of attitudinal and behavioral conformity to the interests conveyed by the mass media.

In the first place, it is an incontestable fact that the enormous costs involved in mass media presentations are borne by sponsorship designed to persuade the largest possible group of persons to accept a particular commodity or lifestyle which serves the producer-sponsor's interests. In the words of Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton:

Since the mass media are supported by great business concerns geared into the current social and economic system, the media contribute to the maintenance of that system. This contribution is not found merely in the effective advertisement of the sponsor's product. It arises, rather, from the typical presence in magazine stories, radio programs and newspaper columns of some element of confirmation, some element of approval of the present structure of society...

Since our commercially sponsored mass media promote a largely unthinking allegiance to our social structure, they cannot be relied upon to work for changes, even minor changes, in that structure ... Social objectives are consistently surrendered by the commercialized media when they clash with economic gains (quoted in Sandman, Rubin and Sachsman, 1972: 323).

To what extent does the mass media audience assume the role of mere receiver and direct responder to the message? By the nature of its own interests which correspond to its methods of production and distribution, mass media communications should be a key instrument in any mobilization of a plurality of opinion and public behavior into a unified, media centered mass public.

The negative implications of any such observable tendencies are clear. Conversely, because of its central and pervasive role in the life of advanced industrial society, an entirely different evaluation would be indicated if cleavages, particularly in the form of personally oriented associations may be identified as significantly affecting the influence of mass communications. In fact, just such evidence, derived from empirical research into the influence of the mass media, has stimulated severe criticism not only of classifying mass communications as a necessary and sufficient instrument of mass socialization, but also of the identification of mass culture with industrialism, sui generis.

Bramson cites three specific elements of the theory of mass society that have been challenged by communications research. They are that:

1. Modern mass society has resulted in a breakdown of the primary groups, so that informal communications play a relatively minor role in the reception of the mass media. 2. The audience for mass communication is an atomized one, consisting of individuals from different backgrounds who are uprooted, isolated, anonymous and detached. 3. The mass media themselves are omnipotent; they can influence attitudes and behavior at will, and whoever controls the mass media can manipulate the isolated individuals in the mass with considerable ease (1961: 99-100).

Bramson traces the North American critique of mass society theory to the research conducted by Lazarsfeld and his associates on the media influence on voting behavior in the 1940 American presidential campaign. The classic study, published as, The People's Choice, indicated that rather than following the direction of media communications, voting behavior tends to follow the leadership patterns of personal association. In fact, family membership was discovered to be the primary influencer of opinion insofar as family members rended to vote alike. Furthermore, opinion leaders tended to form their opinions early and it was their influence at the level of personal association that produced changes in the voting intentions of those whose opinions were changed during the course of the campaign. In other words, the content of the media is filtered through personal communications networks which mediate between the content of the message and the response of the audience. In Bramson's words:

Thus the small group was viewed as intervening between the mass media and the individual-in-the mass, modifying the effects of the former, American sociologists became sensitized to the social context of communications behavior, whereas before the formulation of Park, Blumer and Wirth had retained elements of the European theory of mass society, by their insistence on the isolation, anonymity and detachment of the individual, the lack of social context, and the breakdown of the primary groups, as well as the power of the mass media in molding opinion (1961: 100-101).

The message may be universal but the message is — perhaps, consequentially —

universally amorphous.

What has followed from such rudimentary observations might be generally described as a sociology of informal, personal association and interpersonal influence. The influence of these studies of informal status and power relationships beside and within the formal structural milieu of community organizations and larger, political and economic bureaucracies, has been enormous. So far as this thesis is concerned, they have led to serious, empirically oriented questionings of the validity of any assumed equation of socio-cultural massification with industrialism. The key ingredient of this rejection has, however, not been based upon citation of such contrary evidence against the claims of mass culture theory, although such empirical data is offered as supposedly providing such a challenge. In fact, as has already been indicated, such evidence of a rupture between mass institutions and the lives of their respondents, establishes solid empirical just-ification for asserting that alienation actually is the central problem of mass industrial life. The continuing viability of traditional patterns of association within a structurally antagonistic mechanism of production generates alienation and conflict whose resolution should be expected to be determined by the interests of the stronger party.

The real question is, therefore, not the meaning of alienation or its place in industrialism but rather it is: What are the sources, purposes, limits and consequences of social power and who wields it?

Certainly, nobody would deny that power and productive wealth are closely associated. Probably few would deny that, in the aggregate, economic wealth is generally equatable with the balance or preponderance of socio-political power. The dilemma, such as it is, is therefore not even involved with where power lies so much as it is concerned with

defining the sources, limits, goals and consequences of power. Given

the coincidence between power and wealth, and leaving aside the probably

insoluble as well as doubtfully meaningful question of their relative

primacy, the problem is therefore to determine the interests behind the

exercise of power, including their relative plurality or singularity.

In The Power Elite, Mills (1956) held that in the United States

power is possessed by a coalition of economic and political and, more

recently, military interests. This coalition in certain respects

represents a pluralistic decentralization of family-centred property

interests. On the other hand, as it has in fact been constituted, the

originally narrow, property-based power of the economic elite has been

transformed into a much broader and consequently more pervasive and firmly

entrenched combination of economic, political and technical power and

skill. Though "The American government is not, in any simple way nor

as a structural fact, a committee of 'the ruling class'" (170) the

message is clear: Power in America is held by a very few persons whose

intertwined interests determine the choices and character of the life

enjoyed and suffered by the overwhelming majority of persons who may, more

or less successfully, achieve status and privilege within the structure

determined by those elite interests. Accordingly, "the idea of the

community of publics is not a description of fact, but an assertion of

an ideal, an assertion of a legitimation masquerading ... as fact" (300).

Mills (1956) specified that while the United States is not a

community of publics, neither is it "altogether a mass society" (302).

According to his analysis,

> The public and the mass may be most readily distinguished
> by their dominant modes of communication: in a community of
> publics, discussion is the ascendant means of communication,
> and the mass media, if they exist, simply enlarge and animate

discussion, linking one primary public with the discussions of
another. In a mass society, the dominant type of communication
is the formal media, and the publics become mere media markets:
all those exposed to the contents of given mass media (1956: 304).

In an earlier essay, Mills (1963) reflecting on the sources, struc-

ture and effect of personal communications against the influence of the

mass media, refers to the "drift" potential of modern society into a

"mass-like set of performances" (1963: 585). Again, in The Power Elite

he says, "The institutional trends that make for a society of masses are

to a considerable extent a matter of impersonal drift..." (1956: 310).

This idea of unintentional, impersonal drift, provides an important

insight into the rise of centrally organized, mass power and mass response

in the milieu of multiform public interests and expressions. By this

simple conceptual device, Mills is suggesting a way out of the either/or

dilemma of public versus elite interests.

Mills clearly recognizes both the fundamental power and the motivat-

ional rationale of monopoly capital. However, he also admits to the

fact of the apparent residual power or staying capacity of the amorphous

public. The solution to the problem for him, furthermore, avoids predi-

cation upon an absolute determination of the relative strength of mass

productive interests against traditional political and personal-associa-

tive interests. Rather, recognizing the increasing monopolization and

central organization of economic, political (and military) power and

further recognizing the increasing conformity of public response to the

demands of those industrial elite interests, he suggests a straightforward

interpretation. It is not that the liberal conception of the community

of publics is theoretically faulty. Although for Mills the public of

classic democratic theory is little more than a conceptual fraud designed

to justify the real workings of power, he recognizes that the voice of

the public traditionally has substantially influenced the progress of those political-economic forces. The evidence of the role of personal associations in reinterpreting and redirecting the intentional impact of the mass media is precisely a case in point.

Finally, however, in Mills' view the objective fact of the increasingly mass character of social institutions and personal behavior is the result of the increasing sophistication and impact of mass productive economic interests, along with the dissolution of the influence of traditional institutions and associations. It is not a simple cause-and-effect relationship of theoretically greater power asserting its strength against inferior power. Rather, the unorganized and disheartened public is found by Mills to be drifting before the advancing tide of organized industrial interest. It is the inevitable end of the long process of alienation, as previously described. In Mills' words,

> ... given all the mass communications that do not truly communicate; given all the metropolitan segregation that is not community; given the absence of voluntary associations that really connect the public at large with the centers of power — what is happening is the decline of a set of publics that is sovereign only in the most formal and rhetorical sense. Moreover, in many countries and remnants of such publics as remain are being frightened out of existence. They lose their will for rationally considered decision and action; they lose their sense of political belonging because they do not belong; they lose their political will because they see no way to realize it (1956: 324).

Who would seriously argue the point that such a state of affairs is the price which should be expected to be willingly paid by individual interests in return for the material affluence offered by mass commercial interests and their military-political adjuncts? It is, after all, no longer a contest between privatized and social interest but only a matter of individual concern for success in the marketplace.

The cultural and personal effects of this situation are clear enough that they hardly warrant elaboration. The essential point to be made is that no matter how well-integrated the present social system may be, this present technologically rationalized cohesiveness is not comparable to the socio-cultural integration which has historically constituted the basis for self-understanding and social commitment. Culture, as an accretion of enduring, common understandings and expectations built upon collectively-shared experiences, recollections and epistemologies, is fast becoming anathema in a world of rapid change in the uninhibited pursuit of technological increase. The community of rational relationships and secure existence is not necessarily being frightened out of existence so much as it is simply at a loss in maintaining or instituting, on a new basis, the collective consciousness upon which such a community is necessarily based.

Chapter IV

CONCLUSION

Mass Culture Theory as Addressed by

Critical and Collective Behavior Theory

The macro-sociological and historical theory of the Frankfurt

Institute on the problem of mass industrial society establishes a

comprehensive basis for the interpretation of the issues addressed by

Collective Behavior theory.   Because of the radical differences in

the orientation of Critical theory and Collective Behavior theory, this

possibility has generally been overlooked or disregarded.

As articulated by Critical theory, the fundamental social problem

posed by industrial society is that of the diminution of culture to

the single experience of mass production and consumption.   It is that

which is assimilable by all parties and which justifies itself by

defending the establishment from the assault of ideas and activity which

would challenge its perpetuation.

Emphasizing the historical nature of social power and the various

historically constituted devices of its defense, Critical theory advances

the idea that the present cultural problem is centered on the individual's

attempt to construct a non-privatized, social but personally meaningful

and defensible life.   If previously the problem of life was measured in

terms of social defense against the threat of nature, now it must be

understood in terms of the defense of organismic nature against society.

As was suggested in the previous chapter, with reference to the narrowing

spectrum of permissible cultural play with the natural environment, this

is neither abstract nor immaterial.   In the words of The Frankfurt

Institute (1973: 94-95):

> The chaotic and frightening aspect of the contemporary
> technological civilization has its origin neither in the
> concept of civilization nor in the technology as such, but
> rather in the fact that technology has assumed a specific
> structure and position in modern society, which stands in a
> highly disrupted relationship to the needs of human beings.
> It is not the rationalization of the world which is to blame
> for the evil, but the irrationality of this rationalization.
> ...The economic insanity, which is interwoven into the
> technology, is what threatens the spirit and today even the
> material survival of mankind, and not technological progress
> itself.

The Institute defines the existence of and the role of the mass,

as such, primarily in positive terms.   Insofar as the mass, for example,

is the point of reference in the individual's immediate social experience,

its existence has been the historical condition for the development of

language, morals and intellectual creations (The Frankfurt Institute,

1973: 79).   However, the character and quality of a particular mass

grouping is subject to the consequences of the manipulation of its

members as individuals whose conduct, as group members, achieves extra-

individual significance and power.   "The mass phenomena do not arise due

to enigmatic qualities of the mass as such, but due to psychological

processes which take place within every individual who is part of the

mass" (The Frankfurt Institute, 1973: 79). On the other hand, the individual's qualities become subsumed in the mass experience which, again, is an immediate reference point and the agency of his social experience. As a consequence, the individuals comprising the mass effect eventual mass readiness or predisposition for authority structures, including the particular relationship between followers and leaders. In return, the life of the individual becomes increasingly circumscribed by this social process.

As may be seen at this point, the problem that Critical theory has exposed is the application of technologically rational symbols to a primary agency of interaction: the mass. Moreover, the technological development of mass culture threatens, because of its consequently in- creased efficiency and expansiveness, to overwhelm other conduits of personally oriented, traditional institutions of cultural power and security.

Writing from a different tradition and locale, Blumer addresses some of the same issues. Blumer is adamant about the association between modern industrial society and the increasing atrophy of social defense mechanisms against mass manipulation. He takes this association, defines the features of the mass and of mass behavior and isolates and describes the specific types of influence and response which occur between the mass and the instruments of mass manipulation.

Blumer (1955) defines the mass as a collective grouping which forms and acts spontaneously in the manner of a crowd but which is distinguished from the latter according to four specific characteristics in its constitution. The first characteristic of the mass is that it is composed of a socially amorphous membership, including "people of differ- ent class position, of different vocation, of different cultural

attainment, and of different wealth" (185). Secondly, the mass "is

composed of anonymous individuals" (186) who do not recognize themselves

or one another as constituting part of the mass organization or enter-

prise. Thirdly, the mass collectivity is characterized by its non-

interaction between its members who "are usually physically separated

from one another, and, being anonymous, do not have the opportunity to

mill as do the members of the crowd" (186). The fourth and final

characteristic follows from the first three, particularly the second

and third. It is the fact of the very loose organization of the mass

and its consequential inability "to act with the concertedness or unity

that marks the crowd" (186).

Blumer (1955) contends that it is a matter of historical fact that,

"Under conditions of modern urban and industrial life, mass behavior has

emerged in increasing magnitude and importance" (187). He sees this

situation as a direct consequence of the same preconditioning factors

which the Critical theorists have identified: the detachment of the

individual from traditional, local cultures and associations. Moreover,

like the Critical theorists, Blumer sees the detachment from stable group

life as affecting the behavior of the individual in such a way that the

pursuit of social interest is undermined insofar as each individual is

reduced to acting solely out of regard for personal survival (cf. 1955:

186-188). Only as a member of the mass does the individual achieve a

common interest and similarity to other persons and this identity is

directed primarily through the blandishments of mass advertising, sales

and purchase.

Smelser's (1963) definition of collective behavior is more limiting

than Blumer's (and Turner's and Killian's) insofar as he defines it as

activity organized around some generalized belief and respondent to some

stress-inducing situation for which no agency of social regulation presents

itself as a satisfactory guide (cf. Smelser, 1963: 47-54). Moreover,

Smelser does not address the issue of the relationship between collective

and mass behavior. His interpretation does, however, clearly leave room

for the inclusion of mass behavior within the general category of collect-

ive behavior, to the extent that the former may exhibit anxious attitudes

and organize and mobilize around institutionally unmanaged beliefs.

Alternatively, the Collective Behavior theorists quite clearly differ

from the Frankfurt theorists' opinion that the traditional institutions

which socialize the individual and provide him with a sense of meaning and

security have themselves lost their credibility as independent forces,

thus contributing to the successful rise of the agencies of mass manipu-

lation. Rather, they view the rise of mass behavior as a result of

industrial forces and technologies such as, "Migration, changes of

residence, /mass communications and/ education" which tear people away

from their traditional settings (Blumer, 1955: 187).

A second and equally important difference in their respective analy-

ses is that in contrast to the Critical theorists, Blumer believes it to

be sufficient to define and explain mass behavior in terms of mass

communications and the social isolation endemic to the lifestyle of the

industrial social order. He does not believe it necessary to address,

as do the Critical theorists, such problems as the effects of politico-

economic power on the formation and activity of mass behavior. Thus,

he is able to account for the emergence and describe the organization

even of revolutionary and nationalistic social movements without reference

to social power other than in the rise and role of organizational

leadership. Smelser's (1963) extensive analysis of the value-oriented

movement exhibits similar tendencies although his discussion centers

upon the conflict between institutionalized and newly-emergent norms

and value-structures (cf. Smelser, 1963: 313-381).

This reduction, by Collective Behavior theory of mass social

formations to a group of behavioral sets, appears appropriately to follow

from the theoretical and methodological concerns which appear to be

characteristic of American sociology.   In fact, this procedure may have

admirably elucidated the actual social behavior patterns which more

broadly philosophical approaches to the problem of mass culture and

society, such as critical theory, largely abstracted from theoretical

premises.

Bramson (1961) suggests that the differences between Collective

Behavior theory and Critical theory may be simplified in terms of the

difference between reviewing the same themes as "social problems" versus

presenting them as manifestations of "the social problem".   Suggesting

that the difference derives largely from traditional differences between

American and European sociological theory, he says,

> The first indicates a field of research resulting in long,
> detailed studies of juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, divorce,
> criminality, race relations, minority problems, poverty and
> slums.   It ... might be /partially/ summarized by saying that
> it represents an effort to make intransigent individuals and groups
> ... behave like white, Protestant, northern members of the American
> middle class ...
> ... these areas of interest, these "social problems", are a
> far cry from being the same as "the social problem" of the
> European sociologist.   The latter turns on the stubborn question
> of relations among the social classes ... (1961: 48-49).

Alvin Gouldner has pointed out in another context that such a

bifurcation of perspective need not necessarily coincide with a differ-

ential of ultimate concern with the social totality.   The opposition

results from differing methodological assumptions regarding the contain-

ment of the constituents of the social whole which may be viewed as either

relatively isolated but dependent parts or as wholly independent aspects

of the totality (1970: 94). Gouldner traces the origins of this dispute

back to the immediate disciples of Saint-Simon. He attributes the

foundation of "Academic" (i.e., primarily American) sociology, with its

emphasis on the parts of the social totality, to Comte. On the other

hand, he traces the more thoroughly holistic orientation back through

Marx to Enfantin and Bazard (1970: 101).

Earlier in this thesis, Collective Behavior theory was interpreted

as being strongly characterized by its concern with identifying parti-

cular social processes as parts of an ideally predominating orderly

social structure. In short, emphasis has traditionally been placed in

Collective Behavior theory on processes of integration. Conflicting

patterns of behavior and unassimilated social groups are interpreted

according to the norms of the predominating social structure.[1] Discord

and friction basically represent at most a challenge for institutional

readjustment, serving to integrate new elements into the social system.

This orientation, according to both Bramson and Gouldner, is a character-

istic feature not only of Collective Behavior theory but of American

sociology in general.

European sociology on the other hand may be characterized in terms

of a radically opposite view of the social system. If concern with

accommodation and assimilation characterizes American sociology, force

and fraud are the twin problem confronted by European sociology.[2] The

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1 This interpretation of Collective Behavior theory coincides with but
appears to be more substantial in the sense that it is more broadly
encompassing than the critiques of Collective Behavior theory such as
Currie's and Skolnick's (1970) and Couch's (1968).

2 I am indebted to Professor John Whitworth for this observation,
made in conversation with respect to Pareto.

problem of social conflict in European sociology is the problem of the

condition against which and by which any social order is established.

As a result, in the European tradition order becomes much more of a

problem demanding explanation, if it is not in fact viewed as an out-

right illusion.

This difference in orientation is described by Gouldner in terms of

a "binary fission" which occurred in Western sociology following the

emergence of Marxism.   One side of the now split and mutually isolated,

antagonistic "camps" of institutional and theoretical opinion followed,

in Gouldner's words,

> ... Comte's program for a "pure" sociology, which, in
> time, became Academic Sociology, the university sociology of
> the middle class, that achieved its fullest institutional
> development in the United States.   The other was the socio-
> logy of Karl Marx, or Marxism, the party sociology of
> intellectuals oriented toward the proletariat, which achieved
> its greatest success in Eastern Europe (1970: 111).

Discussing the same issue in terms more explicitly related to the

conceptual paradigms of the traditional European and American schools,

Ralf Dahrendorf states that,

> Generally speaking, it seems to me that two (meta-) theories
> can and must be distinguished in contemporary sociology.   One
> of these, the integration theory of society, conceives of social
> structure in terms of a functionally integrated system held in
> equilibrium by certain patterned and recurrent processes.   The
> other one, the coercion theory of society, views social structure
> as a form of organization held together by force and constraint
> and reaching continuously beyond itself in the sense of producing
> within itself the forces that maintain it in an unending process
> of change. (1959: 159 (italics in the original)).

Dahrendorf cites Parsons, as does Gouldner, as the preeminent

theorist of integration.   On the other hand, Marx also stands out in

Dahrendorf's view as the giant if somewhat antiquated (along with the

other figures of nineteenth century sociology) figure in conflict, or

coercion theory.

As far as Marx and his sociology is specifically concerned it must
of course be taken as unimportant whether or not a specific North
American or European school is Marxist or conflict-oriented. The point
is that North American sociology has at least until very recently
neither chosen nor been forced to confront Marxian theory while European
sociology has traditionally, by force of circumstance if not necessarily
by inclination, been so confronted. In other words, Bramson, Dahrendorf
and Gouldner are identifying dominant intellectual trends and other
distinguishing characteristics of outlook separating European and
American sociology. These characterizations appear to apply to the
distinguishing qualities of Collective Behavior theory and of Critical
theory, within the terms set out in this thesis.

The increasing circumscription of social and individual life in
the industrial age — indeed, in all machine-structured epochs — is
hardly an unrecognized phenomenon. The observance of this fact does not
require a naive unawareness of the rigorously enforced and often virtually
inviolable belief and ritual systems of non-industrial societies. Neither
does the recognition of this problem necessarily require the often assoc-
iated but in fact independent belief that this circumscription primarily en-
tails an eclipse of community and consequent dictatorial or more subtle forms
of social determination and persuasion. The facts and arguments reviewed
in the previous chapters suggest that the primary distinguishing charact-
eristic of modern social life is that it encompasses or is confronted
by a highly contradictory combination of expanding conceptual alternatives
(for the structuring and performance of social life) with diminishing
practical alternatives for the pursuit of those (alternative) possibilities.

The picture which emerges from the combined views of Collective Behavior and Critical theory is that social and individual life in the contemporary, industrial social epoch is at least beset by if not entirely characterized by enormous contradictions which bode ill for any transition to a more rational set of institutional arrangements. Perhaps of greater significance, however, given the fundamental divergence between the two theories on the role of socioeconomic and political power in mass society, is the importance which both place upon the potential role of rational (public) opinion in reestablishing social community. Again, this fact seems all the more surprising given their mutual agreement that the historical tendency is away from, even directed against, the rational communal relationships embodied in the idea of the public. For Critical theory, the current cultural trends in themselves show little respect for moderating or negating impulses and Blumer can only say, "... in many ways the public and the mass are likely to exist intermingled with one another" (1955: 196).

Both theories contain a profound respect for the capacity of the public as a community of rational, if not always intelligent, discussions to achieve practical results in the efforts to acquire and maintain a viable social community (cf. Blumer, 1955: 189-193) and Habermas, 1970: ch 5). Except for the fact that in their view such a community has never existed in historical fact, the Critical theorists might appear to be correctly subject to the charge that they envision the reestablishment of lost, traditional forms of rational community. In point of fact, it is Blumer and his colleagues and not the Critical theorists who appear to see the extant remnants of an unravelled public which might be reconstituted in a more tranquil, future period.

This brings us back to the issue of the relative repetitiveness versus

spontaneity of interactive behavior within any given social system. In the previous discussion it has been observed that both Critical and Collective Behavior theory hold to the general view that social order evolves from tendencies toward regularity which respond to but are not directly determined by social systemic conditions. It has been shown how the two theories nevertheless diverge in their assessments of the role of powerful social interests in affecting the circumstances in which interaction occurs, and thereby the alternatives for action which are available at any particular moment.

As has been stated, one of the central theses underlying Critical theory's perspective on the modern social order is that the contemporary family structure has become characterized by its functional failure to instil in its members the behavioral attitudes which would conform to the requirements of the larger social structure. Concomitantly, the Critical theorists contend that the functionally inadequate family (as an instrument of socialization) nevertheless serves the process of preparing its members for submission to the demands of state-corporate authority and power. It is argued that the authority-dependency rel-ationships observable in the advanced industrial state are related to the sense of lost authority and power in the realm of individual assoc-iation and in the individual's position in the social structure. This is the nexus of the rift between the undeniably socially dependent individual and his sense of personal power, integrity and well-being in relationship to the values, norms and symbolic and functional demands of the society in which he operates.

The common denominator joining the two schools' interpretations of mass behavior is specifically their mutual tendency to regard it as being cut loose from the constraining influence of cultural authority. Each theory clearly renders the judgment that in certain fundamental respects,

advanced industrial society either presupposes and/or renders the des-
truction of traditional modes of communal life and individual security
by having rendered obsolete the values and codes of conduct upon which
they were necessarily based.

Although the Collective Behavior and the Critical theorists disagree
in their basic interpretations of the formation of social interaction
(Blumer viewing it as fundamentally based on invention but tendentially
repetitious, Smelser seeing it as somewhat more influenced by established
norms and values and the Critical theorists contending that it is largely
forced by politico-economic power) both schools accept the proposition
that social rules, values, norms and institutionally-structured, persis-
tent relationship-patterns form the essential basis for any enduring and
personally satisfying social system. Mead's perspective on this
problem may be regarded as consistent with both of their perspectives and
serves to illuminate their convergence:

> ...without social institutions of some sort, without the
> organized social attitudes and activities by which social
> institutions are constituted, there could be no fully mature
> individual selves or personalities at all; for the individuals
> involved in the general social life-process of which social
> institutions are organized manifestations can develop and
> possess fully mature selves or personalities only in so far
> as each one of them reflects or prehends in his individual
> experience these organized social attitudes and activities
> which social institutions embody or represent (1962: 262).

This is precisely what both schools contend is absent or unduly diminished
in the contemporary social environment. Critical and Collective Behavior
theory suggest that in the mass cultural milieu life is increasingly
characterizable as a series of responses to momentary exigencies which,
in turn, are increasingly regarded as demanding the abandonment of
traditional conceptions and agencies of social conduct. This perspective

might be described as an argument that social agitation, under the
conditions described in the foregoing chapter, is basically an attempt
by the individual participants to reestablish their identity as active
members of some community. Traditionally sanctioned values and norms
and their traditionally established enforcers may persist and retain
some of their former power or influence, as the case may be. That they
do persist is perhaps the only evidence that mass society has for being
deemed civilized.

From the standpoint of this thesis, the crucial insight which both
schools have developed is that the paradoxical relationship between
modern techniques of mass manipulation and traditional forms of cultural
authority actually illuminates the nature of the crisis of individual and
social instability in the modern world. Both schools adhere to the
view that the mass social system is orderly and peaceable insofar as
culturally established modes of interaction persist. Except in extremis,
such as may have occurred under National Socialism or in the Stalinist
terrors, these habitual patterns of social interaction have in fact
maintained themselves, albeit in diminished and sometimes even self-
destructive forms.

The inescapable conclusion reached by these two perspectives on
mass social life is that the coexistence of technologically rationalized
social institutions and relations with their traditional counterparts is
a transitory state of affairs. No society or cultural system can long
endure if its members can not depend upon themselves and their fellows
to act with at least some modicum of consistency in relationship to comm-
only understood standards of appropriate behavior. Social habits,
"human patterns of reaction which have become stabilized in interaction
with a system of cultural formations on the basis of the social life-
process" (Horkheimer, 1972: 67) are the very stuff of human civility.

As Blumer explains it, although a human society is formed in the process of its participants' efforts to secure their living within an inevitable flux of changing circumstances and interpretations of them, "Nevertheless, ... one must see the activities of the collectivity as being formed through a process of designation and interpretation" (1969: 21). There may be other ways by which stable, collectively shared patterns of designation and interpretation may be established but heretofore this social function has largely been performed by cultural authority.

This, in fact, appears to be the real foundation of their critics' frequent contention that Critical and Collective Behavior theory illegitimately denigrate the character of collective behavior and of mass social life (cf. Couch, 1968; Currie and Skolnick, 1970 and Shils, 1957). Although it is a matter of interpretation to classify the social phenomena addressed in this thesis as 'primitive' (i.e., uncomplicated by rational reflection) or as evidences of barbarism, it appears that such an estimation may honestly reflect the character of these behavior patterns to the extent that they are in fact not culturally designated. As has been demonstrated, however, neither Critical nor Collective Behavior theory adheres to a hypothesized construct of social normalcy or delineates the requisite social conditions for individual well-being. Moreover, both theories have been shown to forcefully argue that even the forms of activity most indicative of stress and least influenced by standards of normative conduct frequently and possibly always are directed towards establishing new or reestablishing old norms and values. The common contention of the two theories is that the modern social system encompasses a sometimes intolerable combination of traditional and newly emergent institutional arrangements and social relationships which,

combined with increasing conceptual alternatives of possible conduct,
frequently encourage and even force individuals and collectivities to
engage in efforts at social realignment.

At the outset of this study it was observed that Collective Behavior
and Critical theory have each entered a period of obscured influence over
the course of research and explanation of the phenomena they address.
This neglect of their potential contribution to empirically oriented
research appears to be quite clearly undeserved. It would be truly un-
fortunate, given the quality of each theory, if the two schools actually
became simply artifacts in the sociological museum rather than serving
as guides, separately and together, to empirical research into the crucial
emergent problem areas of modern society.

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