

SOME CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES
INVOLVED IN THE STUDY OF COMMUNITY POWER

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ABSTRACT

In this paper a variety of conceptualizations of the term, power, are presented, and the methodological approaches used to study the exercise of power in the community are examined. Issues such as the distinction between political and non-political power, authoritative, influential, and functional power, and static and dynamic dimensions of power are discussed. More general questions, such as whether an elitist or pluralist distribution of power exists, whether society is characterized by conflict or consensus, and in whose interests power holders act, are also considered.

Three major methodological techniques, positional, reputational, and decisional analysis, are critically examined. Both the theoretical assumptions on which they are based and the processes involved in the execution of these techniques are considered. The strengths and weaknesses of each methodological approach are highlighted and are demonstrated by drawing examples from actual studies. The paper concludes with a discussion of the value of utilizing several theoretical as well as methodological approaches in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the exercise of power within the community.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to examine, explain, and suggest some alternatives to a number of the methodological problems involved in the study of community power. The first step toward a resolution of these issues is an understanding of the many possible conceptualizations of power. The complexity of the phenomenon precludes defining the term in a simple and concise manner, but the many dimensions encompassed by the concept can be laid out. Problems in methodology arise when one moves from the theoretical discussion of power to the issue of how power is actually exercised and how the researcher should study this exercise of power. A critique of the current methodological approaches to the study of power will be presented: the weaknesses, as well as the strengths, will be discussed. The thesis will conclude by suggesting an approach that synthesizes the present methods of analyzing the way in which power is exercised within the community.

A BASIC PERSPECTIVE

The task of analyzing the structures and processes of power is one fraught with difficulties. Many factors contribute to these difficulties, including the complexity and ambiguity of the concept,

power, itself, the many and often obscure, sources of power in society, and the difficulty of finding meaningful indices of power.¹

Underlying these issues is a more basic problem that is present, not only in the study of power structures, but in all areas of social research. This problem is related to one of the fundamental characteristics of social reality: the ongoing dialectical processes that exist between man and society. Every social scientist is faced with the questions, what is the nature of the relationship between the individual and the role, between the collectivity and the institution? How do these phenomena contribute to the construction of social reality? A constant challenge to social scientists is to develop tools which can adequately analyze these dialectical processes.

If this feat has not been fully accomplished, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann have presented a basic perspective which, on a descriptive level, captures this conception of reality.² These authors describe the 'objective' elements of social reality, i.e. the norms, values, roles, institutions, etc..., in terms of the symbolic value of these elements. These symbols provide human beings with common universes of meaning and, therefore, with a framework in which they can understand and relate to one another and to the social world they live in. Man 'wears' these social symbols in the form of his occupation, class, status, nationality, etc.... Other men respond to him largely in terms of the symbols that surround him, and he also sees himself, at least partly, in terms

of these symbols.

But the individual is not merely a passive bearer of his social roles. Although society will respond to him largely in terms of his symbolic self, the value of these symbols will be maintained only so long as he acts, within limits, in accordance with the expected behavior of his roles. A professor who is obviously unfamiliar with his topic or who constantly misinforms his students will soon lose the respect and status endowed in his role as professor. If all professors behaved similarly, the symbolic value of the role would gradually change to suit the behavior of the people playing this role. Basically, the value of social symbols can be maintained only so long as human beings legitimate these symbols by their actions. At the same time, the individual needs the norms, roles, and institutions that surround him in order to provide himself and others with some understanding of what he is, and in order to understand how to respond to others.

In studies of power, both the symbols that surround the individual and the individual himself may be sources of influence. The problem lies in distinguishing one source of power from the other. It also lies in understanding how each of these sources is related to the other, and how the dialectical processes that exist between them determine the nature of social power. Although Berger and Luckmann's treatise does not touch upon the methodological implications

of their perspective,³ it does provide a descriptive framework within which the problems in methodology can be approached. In this thesis, I shall adopt Berger and Luckmann's perspective as a basic approach to the methodological issues involved in power studies. I do not mean to suggest that this perspective will provide answers for all the problems involved in studying power, but it will contribute to a clarification of these problems.

POWER AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF SOCIETY

The exercise of power has been an object of investigation at almost every level of social reality. Systems ranging from the family to complex organization to the nation are characterized by the existence of power processes. The sources of power, the forms it takes, and the way it is exercised are all related to the level of society at which power is being studied. At each of these levels, the task of analyzing the structures and processes of power is a difficult one. But as the social system grows in size and complexity, the number of variables contributing to the exercise of power also grows, and the power system becomes a more and more complex phenomenon. This perhaps explains the abundance of research on power structures that has been carried out at the community level and the relative paucity of research on national power systems.⁴ Because the nature of the exercise of power may vary at different levels of society, it is difficult to discuss the analysis of power without specifying at what level this analysis is being directed. Therefore, the discussion of the methodological issues of power studies will be

concerned with power within a specific social system, namely, the community.

In spite of the many variations in the exact conceptualizations of this system, at least three basic characteristics are generally agreed upon among researchers of the community.⁵ One of these is that the community is located in a relatively well defined geographic area. Secondly, there exist within the community sets of interrelated subsystems (economic, political, religious, legal, educational) which serve the resident population and pattern much of their activities. Thirdly, individuals within this geographic area can, and generally do, share common activities and goals.

Within the parameters of this general conceptualization of the community, one can find a number of characteristics that can vary from one village, town or city to another. Differences in some of these characteristics can have a significant effect on the nature of the community power structure. Three factors which have been related to variations in the type of power structure are size of the community, autonomy (the degree to which it is subject to regulations and decisions that have been made outside its 'boundaries'), and the nature of the division of labour (the number of economic bases in the town and the complexity of the division of labour).⁶ The effects of these characteristics on the power structure will be elaborated on in the text.

Although the bulk of the discussion will be oriented toward community power structures, it will not be strictly limited to this topic. I will, at times, make references to studies of state or national power systems, and will generalize certain points to power at other levels of society. Because the purpose of this thesis is to suggest a possible methodological approach to the study of community power, it is important to maintain as practical an orientation as possible. This can be at least partly accomplished by restricting the focus to a specific social system. The final test of the usefulness of the ideas presented will be, of course, in the application of these ideas in actual research. Although this exercise has not been included in this thesis, the final aim of this theoretical exercise is to further the research in community power structures by offering a possible methodological approach.

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF POWER

An author once described power as being "one of those awful, big tent concepts under which a three ring circus, at least, is going on".⁷ The multitude of literature on the concept and the wide range of perspectives with which power is discussed may be some indication of the validity of this statement.⁸ This thesis could not possibly provide a comprehensive analysis of this multi-dimensional concept, but an attempt will be made to present some of the more important issues involved in arriving at an understanding of power.

Max Weber

Max Weber defines power as "the chance of a man or a number of men, to realize their own will in a communal action, even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action".⁹ The definition has the advantage of being a highly inclusive one, but sheds little light on how one would go about studying this phenomenon.¹⁰ Weber's discussion becomes much more concretized when he relates the potential to exercise power to three dimensions of stratification, class, status, and 'party'.¹¹ The first two, class and status, are easily understandable phenomena as Weber conceives them, but the third, party, is a more ambiguous concept, although possibly a more important one in terms of his theory of power. Weber's stratification theory has implications beyond its role in explaining the exercise of power, but it is this aspect of his theory that will be discussed in this thesis.

The first dimension of stratification that Weber discusses is class, which is a purely economic category. " 'Property' and 'lack of property' are, therefore, the basic categories of all class situations."¹² The importance of this category lies in the distinction it makes concerning the 'life chances' of individuals in different class situations. One's opportunity to acquire material, social, and intellectual goods and services is largely a function of one's social class.

Weber's next dimension of stratification is status, which he defines as "every typical component of the life fate of men that is determined by a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of 'honor' ".¹³ Status is generally a community phenomenon where such qualifications as style of life, social interactions, etc..., determine one's position in the status hierarchy. One's class situation can also be a determinant of one's status position, although it need not be. But generally, along with the appropriate class position, an individual must possess some of the 'finer qualities' of life, as manifested in his behavior, tastes, personal interactions, before he can qualify for the distinction of belonging to a high status group. "...all groups having interests in the status order react with special sharpness precisely against the pretensions of purely economic acquisitions."¹⁴

So, class and status are, according to Weber, two distinct dimensions of stratification, the former often being one of the indices of the latter. The two not only often exist compatibly together,

but they can also influence each other in that one's economic position can qualify one for membership in a certain status group, and one's status group membership can increase one's accessibility to economic wealth.¹⁵

The third dimension of stratification discussed by Weber, party, is defined very generally as being groups "whose action is oriented toward the acquisition of 'social power', that is to say, toward influencing a communal action no matter what its content may be".¹⁶ Parties can, in principle, exist at any level of social life, ranging from a social club to a nation state. The means used by parties in their struggle for domination can also range from physical violence to bribery to propaganda.

Weber's term, party, then, is a broad classification, and this generic definition is central to his theories on the exercise of power. That is, Weber believed that this power could rest on a wide range of bases, including economic domination, social honour, personality, skill, and physical strength, and that it could be exercised with a wide range of goals in mind, including economic and status interests, idealistic goals, personal achievement, etc....¹⁷ Power is often based on control of economic resources and the purpose of exercising power is often to defend these class interests, but many other factors could also be related to the exercise of power. "...parties may represent interests determined through 'class situation' or 'status situation', and they may recruit their following respectively from one or the other.

But they need be neither purely 'class' nor purely 'status' parties. In most cases, they are partly class parties and partly status parties, but sometimes they are neither."¹⁸ The relationship between class, status and party, then, may be very close, and it often is, but this is not necessarily the case.

Another feature which characterizes the party is that the actions of the party are "always directed toward a goal which is striven for in a planned manner".¹⁹ In trying to locate parties in society, Weber turns to an organization whose actions are planned in a rational manner and whose aim is domination over others, i.e. the political authority structure. He is careful not to equate the party with the political structure, but rather, views the latter as a framework within which parties can operate.²⁰ He stresses the point that his focus on the political structure does not mean that "parties are confined to the frontiers of any political community. On the contrary, it has been the order of the day that societalization* reaches beyond the frontiers of politics."²¹ Weber's point is, every party, in striving for social power, seeks to 'legitimate' the power it acquires by obtaining consensual validation from the wider society. If the society is not, under pressure, being influenced by the power of the party, but is willing to obey the party, the power of the latter will

*Weber defines 'societalization' as having a rational order and a staff of persons who are available to enforce it.

be enhanced by obtaining the right to command.²² In summary, Weber's theory on power states that:

1. there are many sources of power in society, i.e. it has a variety of resource bases,
2. power can be exercised to serve a wide range of interests,
3. the political authority structure can be seen as a framework within which the party, the group striving to achieve power, may operate.

Weber's discussion of class, status and party has some important theoretical implications. First of all, his distinction among the three implies that economic domination or social honour cannot be automatically equated with the exercise of power, which is the aim of the party. The three phenomena may be, and often are, closely interrelated, but power is a complex phenomenon, and extends beyond the frontiers of class and status interests.

Secondly, and this is really a derivation of the first point, the generic definition of party gives it the characteristic of being a sort of residual category, in that it encompasses any sphere of power acquisition, and allows for both materialistic and idealistic goals to dictate the exercise of power. This emphasis on the complexity of the phenomenon, power, can be seen as a response to Weber's interpretation of Marx's theory on power, i.e. that the power structure is determined by the economic structure.²³

Thirdly, Weber's focus on the political structure as a locus within which power can be exercised, although not as an equivalent of power, provides a point of entry for studying the actual processes of the exercise of power. The issues to be examined from this starting point will be the role that the political structure actually plays in the exercise of power, and the effect of any outside influences on the exercise of power. Weber's distinction between the party and the political structure make the exercise of power by the political authority structure an empirical question, rather than a taken for granted phenomenon. His distinction between party, class and status undermines the deterministic perspective on the relationship among the three. In other words, the role of the political authority structure in determining communal decisions; the relationship between this structure and class and status groups, and the role of class and status groups in the exercise of power are all issues that require examination. These issues can act as a framework for the discussion of the concept of power which will follow, and also as a perspective toward the study of actual power structures.

Political and Non-Political Power

Weber's initial definition of power as the "possibility of imposing one's will upon the behavior of other persons"²⁴ is a very abstract conceptualization of the phenomenon. In order to concretize the concept a little more, power can be broken down into two general

categories: political power and non-political power. 'Political', like power, is one of those concepts that one intuitively understands, but has a hard time defining precisely. The term, according to Webster's International Dictionary, "pertains to, or is connected with the government or administration of a state or nation (or, presumably, community - author's note), or to its structure, constitution, functions, control, etc..."²⁵. 'Political power' will refer to the control an individual or group has over decisions that are made concerning these aspects of the running of the community. 'Non-political power', on the other hand, will refer to the control an individual or group has over other people in spheres of 'private' activity, ranging from a business corporation to voluntary associations to intellectual institutions to social clubs. This classification will not always be a clear one, but the distinction is, I feel, overall, a useful one.*

Perhaps this distinction can be made more clear by giving examples of each type of power. Political power will refer, for instance, to the power of the mayor to make community decisions. It will not refer to the control that a corporate executive has in the running of his business (this would be an example of non-political power), but political power will refer to the influence this corporate executive may have in political spheres, as a result of his executive position. If the mayor either asks the executive to make a decision

* Although Weber never (as far as I know) explicitly makes this distinction, his discussion of power, particularly with regard to the party and to authority, seems to imply a concern with the area of political power, as it is discussed here, rather than with non-political power.

concerning, say, holding the Olympic games in the town, or responds to pressure the executive may exert regarding this issue, the latter will be exercising political power. He can have access to this power for a number of reasons. He may control large amounts of money, or he may be regarded as an honourable individual because of either his occupation or other characteristics, or he may have administrative skills which are considered valuable in decision-making processes. Or, what is more likely the case, his power will rest on some combination of these factors.

There will be several situations where the distinction between political and non-political power will be hazy. The institution of education, for instance, contains both a political dimension, as exemplified by the Minister of Education, and a non-political dimension as exemplified by the president of a university. Dividing power into political and non-political spheres is an analytic device, which, in many situations, will apply to reality, but which may also, at times, make the distinction clearer than it actually is.

This thesis is concerned with the general area of political power. Rather than referring always to 'political power', I will use simply the term 'power' with the understanding that 'political power' is being referred to, unless otherwise specified. I will also speak of 'community decisions' or 'community affairs' in reference to the political sphere of community life.

Authority and Influence

Political power, or power, can have a number of resource bases in society. These will be divided into two main categories. One will be the power derived from political 'authority'; which is the power based on the position a person holds in the official political hierarchies (e.g. mayor, councilman).²⁶ When a person exercises authority, he does so solely by virtue of the fact that he occupies a power position in the political institutional structures. The limits of his power are defined by the limits of the power of the position he holds. Talcott Parsons, when speaking of authority, defines it as being "the institutional code within which the use of power as a medium is organized and legitimized".²⁷ This definition can refer to legitimized or 'institutionalized' power in various spheres of social life, not just the political, but the same definition can be applied to political authority. Several other authors define authority, whether political or other, similarly.²⁸

The other dimension of power is what has been called 'influence',²⁹ which is the power that a person or group has for reasons other than occupying a position invested with political authority. These reasons can range from economic wealth to a prestigious occupation (possibly powerful in non-political spheres), to social status, to a charismatic personality. Whereas authority (synonymous with political authority, unless otherwise specified) is a relatively well-defined and easily observable phenomenon, influence is a much more vague concept. Influence tends to encompass those areas of power beyond the boundaries of authority.

The many bases on which influence can exist, and the many ways it can be exercised (ranging from outright participation in community decision-making to extremely subtle and covert influence upon others who are involved in decision-making), makes locating and measuring this type of power a much more difficult task than studying authority. D'Antonio and Form define influence as being "that more subtle phenomenon of power, manifested in the willingness of people to obey others who lack formal authority.... They obey because they have respect or esteem for, or fear of, the person, office, group...in its extreme form it becomes charisma."³⁰

D'Antonio and Form, in their definition of influence, introduce the notion of consensus of values ('willingness to obey') between the rulers and the ruled. The role of consensus and coercion in the exercise of power is a much debated issue that has not been resolved.³¹ D'Antonio and Form suggest that consensus is a more defining characteristic of influence than is coercion. Talcott Parsons also sees force as the 'limiting case', where power is no longer being exercised, but simply a brute, physical dominance, which is excluded from his notion of power.³² Weber, on the other hand, implies that the exercise of power can involve conflict ('even against the resistance of others'), and that power can rest on physical dominance.³³

Therefore, although conflict, as well as consensus, may be important aspects of both authority and influence, their exact roles in the exercise of power varies among authors. A person's influence may

rest on control of economic resources. The society may be unwilling to obey him, but may be forced to because they need his financial support. "In this case, his power tends toward being coercive." On the other hand, a politician will appeal more to the actual willingness of the public to accept him as their leader, and therefore, his influence will be used largely on the consensus of the public. The authority structure depends basically upon the consensual validation from the wider society. Once belief in the legitimacy of the authority structure is established, the system can apply force to exercise its will (e.g. jail, fines, capital punishment). Among different theories of power, different aspects of conflict and consensus will be emphasized.³⁴

Functional Elites

There is another issue involved in the exercise of power that is difficult to fit into the conceptualization provided in this thesis. This is the role that experts in various areas of specialization (the 'functional elite', as J.K. Galbraith calls them³⁵) play in the exercise of power. Authors, such as Galbraith and Suzanne Keller, have made experts in different fields the center of their discussion of the distribution of power.³⁶ Their argument is basically that technological expertise is a crucial resource in the running of the country, and therefore, the 'functional elite' possess one of the most valuable resource bases of power.³⁷ Both writers, incidentally, suggest that, because expertise in various fields of specialty is distributed over wide numbers of people, power is also distributed over wide numbers of people, and therefore, a pluralistic system characterizes the United States.³⁸

The role of experts in the exercise of power is an unresolved issue. Determining whether or not the functional elite exercise power, as defined in this thesis, depends upon distinguishing between the following possibilities: does the expert function as a 'method' of analysis, i.e. does he analyze the problem and present the alternative solutions, or does he function as a decision-maker, i.e. does he determine the way in which the issue will be resolved? To give an example, an administrative expert may be called in by the government to analyze the effects of implementing a new policy. If the expert simply presents the possible outcomes and withdraws, he tends to be not exercising power. If he makes a decision about the way to handle the issue and convinces the government officials to follow his advice, he tends to be exercising political power, in that he is deciding upon the direction of activity within the community.

The functional elite may be acting in various capacities, and the role they play in the exercise of power is a problematic issue. By defining power differently, the role of the elite becomes clearer. Galbraith, for example, defines power in terms of possessing valuable resources for the running of the society. Technical expertise is, according to him, an extremely valuable resource, and is becoming more so. Therefore, the functional elite possess power. Other authors, and this is the general orientation of this paper, define power as being the ability to determine communal action -- possessing a valuable

resource (i.e. a needed resource) may, but does not have to, result in the acquisition of power. Within this theoretical framework, the problem of the role of the functional elite will be left unanswered.³⁹

Distinctions Between Authority and Influence

To return to the discussion of authority and influence as the two main types of power, the following are several characteristics which distinguish one from the other. First, as mentioned, the power of authority is 'legitimized', i.e. by 'consensual validation', those possessing authority have the right to command and the wider society, the duty to obey. In contrast, influence has no legitimating structure that justifies its existence other than the fact that it exists -- it is 'factual', to use Ralf Dahrendorf's term, as opposed to 'legitimized'.⁴⁰ Secondly, whereas authority is related to a formal position in the political hierarchies, influence is related to the individual person. Of course, the person's formal position within a social institution can result in his having influence outside the limited sphere of his role. In this case, the authority he has because of the position he occupies becomes extended into influence. Third, influence is a 'generalized' type of power, in that it does not have specific, well-defined limits to its exercise -- as does authority -- but can cross into any sphere into which the esteemed or feared individual moves.⁴¹ Fourth, authority can be viewed as a 'static' dimension of power, whereas influence has a more 'fluid' quality.⁴²

Parsons makes this distinction in order to emphasize that only a certain aspect of power is fixed within a structured hierarchical system, i.e. authority, and he calls this type of power static. But there is another, highly important dimension of power, which is the fluid, shifting nature of influence. "There exists a relatively free-floating element in the power system"⁴³, and this quality of influence can result in the creation of new additions to the total supply of power or can take power away.

This distinction introduces another dimension of power that has been emphasized in the literature: the 'zero-sum' quality of power.⁴⁴

By focussing individually on authority and on influence, rather than on the more generic concept, power, the issue becomes easier to deal with. According to Parsons, only certain types of power have a zero-sum quality,⁴⁵ which is identified by the fact that when one individual or group gains in power, another will be deprived of this power. The authority of the political hierarchies has this quality: The power held by the authority figures can be located and measured, and only a limited number of people can hold these authority positions at a given time (this will vary with the degree of concentration of authority in the social system); those who do not hold these positions are excluded from the power endowed in them. In this sense, power is a zero-sum.

Influence, in contrast, does not have this quantitative nature. A number of characteristics of influence preclude it being conceptualized

as a zero-sum entity. An individual's influence depends, to a large extent, on the support that the wider society gives to the individual. Because this support is not fixed, but can fluctuate over time and over issues and circumstances, the individual's power will also fluctuate. The institutional structures that define authority are relatively stable, whereas the locus of influence, the individual, is a much less permanent entity. Consequently, influence will also have this variable nature. Often, when authors are studying power structures in a society, the ease and convenience of a zero-sum perspective leads them to disregard this elastic dimension of power.⁴⁶

An issue relating to both the authoritative and influential aspects of power is that concerning the distinction between 'potential' and 'actual' power. An authority position is, by definition, invested with power. This means that anyone occupying this position has the potential, by virtue of the fact that he holds this position, to exercise power. But, as Robert Schulze states, "persons that exercise power must, by definition, have had power potential, but not all persons who hold potential power do, in fact, exercise power."⁴⁷ If power is studied by locating potential power, e.g. authority positions, the possibility that the potential will not be realized should be considered.

The distinction between potential and actual power can become blurred at some point. If actual power is defined as "~~participating~~ in the making of decisions"⁴⁸, as opposed to potential power, which is

being able to exercise one's will if one wishes⁴⁹, the question could be asked, 'what exactly is participation in decision-making?' A person's potential to exercise his will could, by its mere existence, become converted into actual power if decision-makers respond to this individual's wishes without him taking any steps toward exercising his will.⁵⁰ In spite of the difficulties that may be encountered by the classification of power as either potential or actual, the distinction has some important implications.

The distinction between potential and actual power is especially relevant if one examines the function of the authority structure. Under the sub-class of authority, one will find individuals occupying leadership positions, what Harold Lasswell classifies as, "being those who 'ought' to decide".⁵¹ Lasswell's point is that, although having authority gives one the potential to exercise power, it does not necessarily mean that the individual will, in fact, exercise power. At the same time, it must be remembered that those who ought to decide often do decide and, according to Lasswell, having authority certainly does not exclude the possibility of having control. But, as Arnold Rose states, "those who are called officials do not always make the severely sanctioned choices, and the severely sanctioned choices are not necessarily made by persons called officials".⁵² He goes on to warn, "'officials' do 'make' community decisions...however...to describe power relations in this way would involve gross distortions. It is sometimes the case that decisions of community-wide import are made

by persons other than officials, who then merely act to 'rubber stamp' the already-arrived-at decision."⁵³ The 'already-arrived-at' decision is presumably made by people who have influence in the society -- either influence over the authority structure or over the community who will support the decisions or actions of the influential person.

Power, then, can be equated with Lasswell's 'control', but the term, authority is not interchangeable with power or control. Authority offers the potential for power. Whether or not this potential is realized is an empirical issue, and one that should be researched, if a realistic picture of community power is to be obtained. Therefore, in studying community power, one could begin with the questions, to what extent does the authority structure actually exercise power? If power is exercised outside this authority structure, what are these other sources of influence? This approach to the study of power is similar to the development of Weber's discussion of party. Weber first defines the term, party, as a sort of generic classification for power groups. He then focusses more specifically on the political authority structure as a framework within which the party operates. He finally suggests that the exercise of power extends beyond the political authority structure (a return to the more generic definition of party).⁵⁴

Summary

Some of the important dimensions of the concept, power, have been presented. At its most abstract level, power can refer to domination

of one party over another at almost every level of society, ranging from two individuals to the rulers and the ruled of a nation state. A less abstract focus is the power which Weber's 'party' strives after, i.e. the power that results from some degree of rational planning with acquisition of power as its aim. The party can achieve power on a number of bases, two of which are economic domination (class) and social prestige (status). The sphere of power with which the party is mainly concerned can be called 'political power', in that it is oriented toward control of the decision-making processes within the society at large (be it a community, state or nation), rather than within a specialized sphere, such as a religious institution, business corporation, etc.... Although the party can and does operate within many spheres within the society, the framework within which it often does exercise power is the political authority structure. Therefore, one base of power is the institutions of established authority of the society. But power will extend beyond the boundaries of the authority structure and will be exercised in the form of 'influence', which has numerous resource bases. Political power, then, can be divided into two main sub-categories: authority and influence. The party, which can be seen as groups who exercise political power, will possess power in the forms of authority and/or influence.

With this review of certain conceptualizations of power, I will turn to a discussion of some of the basic arguments concerning how this power is distributed, and how it is exercised within the society.

CHAPTER II

THEORIES OF POWER

Karl Marx

Social power has been a topic of concern to political philosophers since the time of Plato, but it was Karl Marx's theory of social development based on the exercise of power that has most influenced Western thought on this issue.⁵⁵ Marx presented what can be called a 'ruling class' model of society, a model in which, within the capitalist economic system, the majority of the population exist under the domination of the ruling minority in whose hands economic control, and hence, social power, is concentrated. The following is a brief outline of Marx's theory of class society.⁵⁶

Marx argued that social power originates primarily in control of economic resources, that it influences all aspects of social life, that the dominant social class monopolizes social power, and that the government is basically a servant of this class. The monopoly that this dominant social class, or ruling class, has over the forces of production results in control of the political, military and ideological institutions within the society, and these institutions act as instruments by which the interests of the rulers are served. Elites, i.e. those who occupy the most powerful positions, may exist in a variety of social spheres, including the political, educational, religious, etc. ...

but the role of these elites, whether they are recruited from the dominant economic class of the society or not, is to maintain the system that serves the interests of the economic elite.

The ruling class, because of the common interests shared by its members (i.e. economic gain), tends to develop a consciousness among its members which unites them into a cohesive body which sees itself as existing in opposition to the masses. The members of the subservient class or classes; because of the exploitative conditions under which they all live, also have the potential to develop a consciousness of their class condition, and therefore, become united against the rulers. But until this consciousness develops among the masses, they will be unable to free themselves from the domination of the economic elite.

Therefore, the rulers and the ruled form two polarized groups existing in opposition to one another. Whereas the ruling class is characterized by a consciousness of the interests it shares and must strive to realize, and consequently comprises a united, cohesive body, the ruled tend to be characterized by a lack of awareness (as a class, at least) of the exploitation of which they are the victims, and therefore, lack a consciousness of their condition which could unite them into a cohesive body. This, according to Marx, is the necessary condition of the capitalist economic system.

Marx also argues that within this system are elements required to eventually free the masses from their enslavement. As the rulers and the ruled become more and more polarized in terms of wealth as well as numbers, the plight of the masses will be made more and more obvious to them, and with leadership from within their own ranks, they will be able to join forces and overthrow the small body of economic elites. But until this social revolution takes place, capitalist society will exist in a state of conflict between the ruling class and the masses.

There are several dimensions to Marx's theory of class society, but the area that is of interest in this paper is his notion of centralization of power. Regarding this issue, Marx states that the ruling class will be that minority of individuals who monopolize control over the forces of production, and it is this economic domination that is the primary source of power in society. He argues that, even if the political and ideological elites are not actually members of this dominant social class, they will, nevertheless, be acting primarily to serve the interests of this class. In other words, the ruling class, because it controls the infrastructures of society, will also control the superstructures. Also, the interests of this ruling class exist in opposition to those of the masses and it will be the interests of the former, not the latter, that will be served in capitalist society.

Elitist Theory

Some of the elite theories that have developed, either as a follow-up of Marx or independently, have emphasized these elements of class society, but this has not necessarily been the case. One major theme which is shared by all of the elite theorists is that, regardless of the nature of the political system, if the true distribution of power is examined, an oligarchy of the few dominating the masses will inevitably be found.⁵⁷ Within the parameters of this basic assumption, a variety of images of social power have been presented, some of which support Marx's theories of economic dominance, class interests, class consciousness, and conflict between classes, and some of which differ greatly from the Marxian interpretation of class society. In the following discussion of the elitist and pluralist models of society, some of the distinctions that may exist between the ruling class and the elitist theories of power will become apparent.

Whereas Marx tended to limit the basis of social domination to control of economic resources (or, at least, to concentrate on this resource base of power), other authors have offered a number of sources of power (including domination in political, religious, intellectual spheres, personal qualities, physical strength, etc....)⁵⁸. As different resource bases for exercising power have been encompassed by social theorists, the term, elite, itself has taken on a variety

of meanings. The 'power elite' can range from C.Wright Mills' notion of the select members of the upper class who monopolize the command positions of the major economic, military, and political institutions⁵⁹ (which tends toward a Marxian interpretation of class society) to Suzanne Keller's notion of 'strategic elite' who are the individuals occupying the elite positions in a variety of spheres of activity, including politics, education, mass communications, economy, law, arts, etc.... The implication of Mills' usage of the term is that the elites in the three select spheres will, as a result of their positions in the social hierarchies, dominate the entire social order. Elite, in Keller's sense is not equated with concentration of power in the hands of a few, but allows for the possibility of a highly decentralized distribution of power, power being command of any valuable resource within the society, not just political or economic domination.⁶⁰

Whereas Mills discusses power as it relates to political activity, either directly or indirectly, Keller uses the term power in a much more generic sense. So, although she uses the term 'elites', Keller is not included in what can be considered the body of elite theorists of power. Within this circle of theorists, there may exist much variation in the exact definition of the term, power, as well as in the term, elite, but a general idea of the thesis proposed by these authors can be presented.

The elite model of society concentrates power in the hands of a small number of people. This group controls the sources of political power, in the forms of authority and/or influence, and the majority

of people are left powerless. A power elite will be said to control the society if a relatively small elite who occupy the command authority positions actually possess all decision-making power, and are relatively free from outside influence (an ideal type of totalitarian state).

A power elite can dominate where, although the authority positions are widely distributed, the power of influence is more effective than the authority (the authorities act as 'rubber stampers', to use Rose's term), and this influence is monopolized by relatively few people (a power elite in a formal democracy, for instance). Any combination of these two extreme types can result in an elitist distribution of power.

Pluralist Theory

The elitist theory of the distribution of power, then, defends the notion of a high concentration of power. In marked contrast, the theory of social pluralism rejects this central tenet and proposes that power, if it is not highly decentralized, is at least not as highly centralized as the elite theorists suggest. Again, among the pluralists there exists conflict over certain aspects of the nature and distribution of power in society, but a number of features are agreed upon.⁶¹ One of these features is, as mentioned, that power is relatively decentralized. Secondly, although elite positions may exist in the society, they will be dispersed throughout many social spheres (Keller's 'strategic elite') and will be occupied by a wide variety

of individuals. The degree to which there is overlapping membership or co-operation among these different sets of elites is an empirical question, but the notion of a small, well-defined oligarchy controlling the social order is rejected.

Another feature of the pluralist model is that society is characterized by many small, relatively autonomous groups, associations and organizations which act as a link between the individual and the state.⁶² The degree of interaction among these groups, and the degree to which cohesion or conflict characterizes their relations may vary among different authors, but the role of the intermediate organization, uniting individuals and creating a power base within these organizations is a key to understanding how power can be exercised by the wider population. Whereas elite theorists generally see the majority of the population as an atomized mass of powerless people (who, according to Marxian theory, have the potential to unite and oppose the ruling class in defence of their own interests), the pluralist model unites these individuals into organized and influential groups.

Therefore, in the form of authority and/or influence, power will be widely dispersed, according to pluralist theory. A pluralist distribution of power can exist where the authority positions are widely distributed and a large number of people are involved in decision-making processes, and where influence is also widely distributed (an ideal democracy). Pluralism could also exist in a situation where,

although the authority positions of the society are held by relatively few people, the influence that large numbers of individuals and groups can exert on these officials is strong and effective (keep in mind Lasswell's distinction between authority and control). These two extreme types can be combined in various ways to yield a pluralist model of power distribution.

This brief discussion of the two theories of power provides a general picture of the elitist and pluralist models, and the grounds on which the controversy rests. But there are several other issues which cross-cut this basic argument over the distribution of power. Some of these issues concern assumptions about basic characteristics of society: for example, is society characterized by a tendency toward conflict or by a tendency toward cohesion? Is society characterized by a tendency toward being 'open' or being 'closed', i.e. on what basis are power holders selected to occupy the leadership positions of the society?

Another issue which cross-cuts the elitist-pluralist controversy is the question of in whose interests power holders act. Not all theorists of social power consider all of these issues, or, in many cases, any of them. The differences in perspective over these issues that have been expressed make important distinctions among authors that might otherwise be classified together simply as elitists or pluralists. Within these two factions, significant differences in approach can exist. Because of these differences, widely divergent pictures of social power can be presented.

Although there are some power theorists who explicitly discuss these various issues, many simply present a certain picture of society in their discussion of power without abstracting the picture into a theoretical statement. These authors may object to being classified as proponents of one view versus another, and possibly it is invalid to impose a theoretical framework on these perspectives without the authors themselves offering one.

In the following discussion of these controversial issues, I will present examples of positions in the controversy from the literature on power. The purpose of doing this is not so much to slot each author into a well-defined category as to illustrate the points I am making with tendencies in these directions. Many of the classifications may be debatable, and I do not make them definitively.

Conflict and Consensus Models

Whether society is characterized by conflict or consensus is an issue that has been debated throughout the history of social philosophy. Briefly, the conflict theory holds that order in society is founded on force and constraint, in the form of domination of one group over the rest of the society (elitist perspective) or in the form of conflict within and among a variety of groups (pluralist). Although agreement may exist between the groups at certain times, the dominant tendency of society is toward conflict. This conflict can be seen as either a negative or as a positive force in society.

David Riesman, for example, sees the conflict among and within the multiplicity of power groups in society as a force which prevents individuals and groups from contributing to the growth and development of the society.⁶³ Georg Simmel, on the other hand, views conflict as a necessary and positive force which contributes to the integration and growth of individuals and groups in society -- conflict, to him, plays a fundamental role in holding society together and introducing development and change into the social system.⁶⁴

The consensus model, on the other hand, sees society as a cohesive whole, the dominant force which holds society together being a consensus of values. Although there may exist conflicts within the society, these conflicts are handled within an underlying system of agreed upon norms and values. The society is characterized by a tendency toward stability, and if changes occur, they are not caused by inherent characteristics of the social system, but rather, by extraneous forces acting on the society. Society equilibrates itself by the mutual adaptation of the various sectors to any disrupting changes that do occur.

In applying these two models (conflict and consensus) to perspectives of society provided in the literature, the distinction between conflict and consensus becomes less clear than in the abstract discussion. That is, few authors depict American society, for example, as being either a system of overt and continuous conflict or one of

completely-integrated values and goals. In actual fact, the distinction is not that clear, but it is still an important one, as authors do support tendencies in one direction or the other, and these differences make important distinctions between the authors. Examples of these differences will be presented in the following discussion.

Elite theorists have presented both conflict and consensus models of society in their discussions of the distribution of power. Elite theory states that power is concentrated in the hands of a few (by virtue of their authority and/or influence) and the majority of the population is excluded from power. By imposing a conflict model on this view of the power structure of society, the dominating power holders and the subordinate powerless are seen as two factions in opposition to one another (this, of course, does not exclude the possibility of conflicts within each faction). The powerful are struggling to maintain the status quo and the powerless are struggling to free themselves from the domination of the ruling elites. Baran and Sweezy, in adopting a Marxist perspective of American society, quite explicitly support this model of an elite society existing under conflict. ⁶⁵

C. Wright Mills also presents a picture of fundamental conflict between the rulers and the ruled in capitalist (at least American capitalist) society. In The Power Elite, Mills supports the notion of a highly elitist distribution of power in society. ⁶⁶ His emphasis

on the strong ties between the upper classes of society and the power elites in economic, political and military spheres is very consistent with the Marxian ruling class model. Similarly, Mills sees the rulers as a powerful minority acting in defence of their own interests and sharing a conscious awareness of the interests that these elites have in common. The lack of overt conflict between the elites and the masses is the result of the latter having been 'duped' into passively accepting the status quo; in other words, consensus between the two classes is the result of the 'false consciousness' under which the masses exist. In order that the true interests of the masses be served, they must confront the power elite, and this would inevitably involve conflict. If the masses could be aroused, Mills feels, they would have to overthrow the existing system in order to succeed in realizing their own interests. A number of elite theorists present this picture of the masses who, by coercion or by manipulation, exist as a passive and exploited majority. 67

The elite theory can also adopt a consensus model of society. This perspective holds that power is concentrated in the hands of a few and the majority of the population act in response to the leadership of the power holders. The power holders, in turn, act in the interests of the wider society. The aim of the leaders is to maintain the greatest level of integration and equilibrium within the society, and the powerless follow the leadership of the powerful. Both groups consent to the existing power structure because of its ability to

maintain equilibrium and avoid conflict. The elite distribution of power is accepted because this body is best qualified to maintain this equilibrium. Digby Baltzell's book, The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America, is a good example of this image of society.⁶⁸

Both the conflict and consensus models can be imposed on a pluralist view of the power structures of society. The application of a conflict model to this view results in a picture of society as being an agglomeration of overlapping interest groups of a multitude of sizes and dimensions, each one in conflict with other groups, and each one containing its own conflicting factions. The prime concern of each group is to defend its own interests against the interests of opposing groups. This concern is manifested by the struggle between the more and less powerful over any particular issue, or by a stalemate between equally powerful groups. The conflict groups in this perspective are not rigidly defined and static; rather, they fluctuate and re-form around the issues that are at stake.

David Riesman's picture of society as being an agglomeration of passive interest groups acting in defence of their own concerns more than as participating leaders of the society as a whole is an example of this perspective.⁶⁹

Besides the idea of consensus existing between the ruling minority and the larger population (as Baltzell perceives the American system), the image of a multiplicity of power groups existing in a

consensual relationship to one another has been presented. 70

In this conception of society, power is distributed over a multiplicity of groups. The function of these numerous power groups is to defend the interests of segments of population that they represent. Because there will often exist conflict of interests among these groups, they will oppose one another in the attempt to realize their own aims. But underlying the conflicts that arise over particular issues, there exists a consensus among these groups concerning the overall aims and values of the society. The interests of the different segments of the population will be supported, but the conflict that results will take place within the agreed upon standards of the society.

This image of conflict existing within a consensual framework brings up an important point. Unless it is made clear at what level of generality the existence of conflict or consensus is being discussed, the distinction between the two phenomena begins to lose its meaning. The question is basically, within what terms will conflict be expressed? A consensus model supports the thesis that society is characterized by an underlying set of rules and beliefs which are accepted by all members of the society (except, of course, for the 'deviants'). Within these parameters, various factions may oppose one another. But, in confronting others, each party will act according to the 'rules of the game', and conflict will be resolved by 'legitimate' means. For example, when labor and management confront one another in defence of specific interests, they may agree to accept the ruling by a board of

arbitration in order to resolve the conflict. In this situation, there exists a consensus between both parties over how the conflict will be expressed and resolved.

If, on the other hand, one of the parties in a conflict situation decides not to honour the rules of the game, the consensual framework within which the parties interact will be destroyed. A perfect example is the Chicago Trial of Seven, where the defendants challenged the legitimacy of the court system itself, and hence, the entire social system. Therefore, the distinction between conflict and consensus is not a clear cut one, but is, to some extent, dependent upon the level of generality at which society is being analyzed.

Interests in Which Power Holders Act

During the discussion of the conflict and consensus models of society, the question of in whose interests power holders act was a pervasive issue. This issue of interests involved in the exercise of power can be broken down into two elements. The first is the issue of motivation behind the exercise of power, i.e. what is the aim of the power holders? The second issue is the effect of the exercise of power, i.e. what proportion of the population is actually represented by the exercise of power? In an elitist distribution of power, if the motivation of the power holders is to serve their own interests (which the conflict theorists would argue), the effect will be that only a

minority of the population is represented. If the motivation of the elites is to serve the wider society (as the consensus theorists would argue), the majority of the population will be represented. On the other hand, in a pluralist distribution, although the motivation of the numerous power groups will be to serve the interests of the segments of society they represent, the effect, because of the wide distribution of power, will be that the interests of the majority of the population are served.

In most of the literature on power discussed in this paper, the authors deal quite explicitly with the issue of in whose interests power holders act, and only implicitly, if at all, with the issue of whether society is basically characterized by conflict or consensus.⁷¹ Exactly how one determines what is the motivation behind the exercise of power is a problem that has not been resolved. The indicators that researchers use generally enable them to make only vague assumptions, rather than draw definite conclusions. The comparison between Kolko's⁷² or Weinstein's⁷³ and Baltzell's⁷⁴ illustrates the difficulty in drawing conclusions from testable indicators. Both Kolko and Weinstein assume that, because the American power elite is recruited mainly from the upper classes, these rulers will act in the interests of their own class. Baltzell, while he asserts that the ruling elite generally are (or should be) recruited from the upper classes, asserts also that this very fact qualifies them to act in the interests of the

wider society, by offering moral, as well as functional, leadership. It becomes obvious that there is no simple means of resolving this issue, this limitation being magnified by the importance of the issue for understanding the role of power holders in society.

In summary, there are three issues concerning characteristics of society which are being discussed: first, whether an elitist or pluralist distribution of power exists; second, whether the basic tendency of society is toward conflict or consensus; and third, in whose interests power holders act. The three issues are interrelated in many respects.

Within a power elite model, conflict is generally viewed as bi-polar, i.e. as conflict of interests between the rulers and the ruled. If the ruled are aware of the fact that their interests are not being served, and can be aroused to defend these interests, they will confront the rulers and overt conflict will result. If, on the other hand, the masses are characterized by a 'false consciousness', i.e. by a lack of awareness of the fact that they are being exploited to serve the interests of the rulers, the lack of conflict that results will be caused by manipulation by the rulers, not by the true interests of both classes being served. True consensus between the rulers and the ruled would be the result of the power elite acting in the interests of the wider population, and offering moral, as well as functional, leadership to the wider society.

Therefore, an elite distribution of power can exist, in theory, in a situation of conflict, as well as consensus, between the rulers and the ruled. In the former case, the power elite will be acting in defence of their own interests. The masses can exist in a state of blind acceptance, where the elites have 'brainwashed' or coerced them into accepting a system that denies them fulfillment of their 'true' rights and needs as human beings. Or, the ruled can struggle against the rule of the power elite in the attempt to realize their own interests, which are in conflict with those of the elites. If true consensus (rather than manipulated or coerced) exists between the rulers and the ruled, it is because the elites represent the interests of the wider society, and rule to realize these interests.

Within a pluralist model of society, the interrelations among the distribution of power, the interests in whom power groups act, and the degree of conflict or consensus within the society is less clear. Whereas the elite distribution of power allows for the possibility of conflict, as well as sharing, of interests, the pluralist model, almost by definition, implies a conflict of interests. Because the various power groups represent certain segments of the population with specific goals and interests, the attempt by these various groups to realize their goals will result in conflict within the society. But underlying the conflicts that arise over specific issues, there may exist agreement over the basic assumptions concerning how the groups

should go about defending their interests. In other words, conflict will be exercised within the parameters of the generally accepted 'rules of the game'.

As a concluding statement on the above discussion of the relationships among the distribution of power, conflict and consensus, and the interests in whom power holders act, I feel that the following will often hold true. Authors who support an elitist distribution of power generally argue that only the interests of the elites are being served by the existing system (Baltzell is one exception), and that any consensus that exists between the rulers and the ruled is accomplished by manipulation and/or coercion. Authors who support a pluralist distribution of power also argue that conflict will exist among groups, but it will be expressed within the generally accepted standards of the society. Because most segments of the population are represented by the multiple power groups, the interests of the majority will be served. There will be many exceptions to these general perspectives, but if the theories on power were to be broken down into two main camps, I suggest that these general descriptions would encompass much of the literature on power.

Degrees of Social Mobility

The last issue I will consider in this chapter is the basis on which individuals acquire the leadership positions in society.

The basic question is, are the power holders of society selected on the basis of some ascribed characteristic (such as being a member of a specific social class) or are they selected on the basis of achievement, i.e. being best qualified to fill a particular power position?

Power elite theorists generally support the notion that power is achieved on the basis of ascription. If power is ascribed, that is, if power holders are recruited primarily on the basis of some trait (the most common one being social class membership), and only secondarily on the basis of technical excellence, i.e. being best qualified to occupy the position, the society tends toward being 'closed' (the extreme case being where excellence is irrelevant).⁷⁵

Although it is not necessarily the case, this view can also imply that these power holders will act in the interests of the class from which they were recruited, and the majority of the population will not be represented. The power elite model can also view society as being 'open', i.e. power holders are recruited primarily on the basis of proficiency in the required skill, and only secondarily, if at all, on the basis of some ascribed characteristic (the extreme being where ascribed characteristics are irrelevant).

A complicating issue, which Weber deals with, is the problem of the means toward attaining technical excellence itself being 'open' or 'closed'.⁷⁶ If the power elite are recruited on the basis of

achievement, but only the wealthy classes can afford a high quality education, then the power elite will most probably be drawn from this select class. In this case, the society is formally 'open', but the opportunities for achieving the proper qualities are limited to a certain segment of the society, which suggests that it tends toward being 'closed' (Baltzell's image of the American power structure illustrates this exact situation).

In a pluralist society, the questions of ascription and achievement are less relevant. Pluralism implies possession of power at all levels of society, and because of this, the idea of obtaining power through ascription becomes less plausible. The pluralist model suggests that power holders are recruited from all levels of society, and that they are recruited on the basis of technical excellence, where excellence is not on an absolute scale, but refers to the needs of the particular interest group. It is possible to conceive of a society with a wide distribution of power where a single class represents all levels of the society, and is selected on the basis of ascription and/or achievement, but this is an extreme conception, and the more realistic means of recruitment to power positions in a pluralistic society is by achievement. In other words, a wide distribution of power suggests a tendency toward openness.

The previous discussion presented some of the complicating issues involved in the debate over the degree of concentration of power

in society. At every level of society, from the complex organization to the nation state, these issues are relevant. Unfortunately, being aware of the factors involved in the exercise of power does not solve the problems of how to deal with them when one is studying power in society. Knowing how power is distributed does not explain how and why it is exercised. Both the distribution of power and the processes involved in its exercise must be dealt with in order to arrive at an understanding of community, state, or national power systems. The following chapter will discuss the techniques that social scientists have used in their efforts to accomplish this feat.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POWER

Because of the complexity of the concept, power, researchers involved in studying the structures and processes of its exercise are faced with difficulties on a theoretical, as well as an empirical, level. One of the crucial steps involved in the development from the initial conceptualization of power to the completion of the actual study of power structures is the selection of an appropriate methodological approach. The methodological technique a researcher uses is closely related to his conceptualizations of power, to the level of society on which he focusses, to the indices he uses to locate power, and finally, to the findings that result.⁷⁷ In other words, the assumptions one makes about what power is and where it lies will largely determine how one goes about studying it. This methodological approach will tend to focus on those aspects of power encompassed by the initial assumptions.

There are presently three major methodological techniques used to study power structures: the positional, the reputational, and the decisional, or issue analysis, approaches. Each of these plays an important role in analyzing power, but each is also faced with insufficiencies and weaknesses. The three techniques will be discussed and the strengths, as well as weaknesses, of each will be highlighted.

POSITIONAL ANALYSIS

The first approach, positional analysis, was a popular technique for studying power prior to the '50's.⁷⁸ It has since been largely replaced by approaches that encompass a wider range of sources of power, but it is still often used in combination with the reputational or decisional techniques.⁷⁹ Positional analysis is based on the assumption that "an actor's power is closely correlated with his position in an official or semi-official hierarchy".⁸⁰ The technique selects those individuals who hold official power positions, and attributes possession of power to these people on the basis of their positions. Using Berger and Luckmann's terminology, positional analysis restricts its focus to the 'symbolic universe' and assumes the legitimacy of this universe. The individual is important only in so far as he bears symbols in which power is invested. The technique is generally limited to a sort of structural analysis of power, i.e. it focusses on the social roles invested with authority without examining how power is exercised within these structures.

The procedures followed using the positional technique may vary among researchers to some degree, but the same general approach is usually followed. The researcher acquires lists of the top officials in a number of social spheres (the three most common being political, economic, and social). These lists are usually obtained through official records, news clippings, informants, etc.... The researcher using the positional technique assumes that a delineable power elite exists within the community, and one can locate this elite

by selecting the top officials in each of the important social hierarchies.⁸¹ After he has established who comprise the elites within the community, the researcher can examine the nature of the interactions among these officials by carrying out interviews with the members of the power elite or by studying the formal and informal activities of these men. In C. Wright Mills on the American power structure,⁸² he focussed largely on the interaction among the members of the economic, political, and military establishments. He emphasized the cohesion among these three bodies in terms of decision-making policies, as well as in terms of the degree of class consciousness shared by these elites.

If the researcher wishes to obtain a more detailed account of the distribution of power within the body of elites, he may do a sort of quantitative analysis of the positions held by each official. He can take individual x, for example, and look at the number of elite positions he holds in various social hierarchies, e.g. membership of the upper class, presidency of a company, chairmanship in civic clubs and associations, etc.... A certain score is assigned for each position, depending on its importance in the particular hierarchy. The total score for the individual is determined by adding together the scores for all the positions he holds.⁸³ The people with the highest scores are considered the 'top officials' within the community.

Mills, in his study of the American power system, used a variation of positional analysis. His methodological approach was to determine which were the commanding posts in the economic, military,

and political spheres. The people holding these positions (especially in the economic sphere), he asserted, comprised the power elite of the nation.⁸⁴ By examining the backgrounds of these individuals, he discovered that there was a highly disproportionate percentage of the upper classes who occupy these power elite positions.⁸⁵

On the basis of this fact, Mills drew two conclusions concerning the distribution of power in the United States. One was that power was highly concentrated and that the majority of the population had no control over the direction of national events. The second was that the power elite were recruited from the upper social classes and, therefore, it was the interests of these classes that were being served by the exercise of power.⁸⁶

This latter conclusion drawn by Mills is not so much a function of the findings of the positional analyses themselves, as of Mills' own understanding of the relationship between social class and the power elite. The technique uncovered the strength of this relationship, and Mills assumed that the motivation (and, consequently, the effect) behind the exercise of power by this elite would be that the interests of the upper classes be served (for an alternative interpretation, see the discussion of Bartzell's book in this text on pages 33-34).

W. Lloyd Warner, in his study of Jonesville, employed positional analysis to examine the role of the upper classes in community participation.⁸⁷ The purpose of his study was to establish empirically

the connection between ascribed social status and various kinds of social participation. He focussed, not on official power positions in economic and political spheres, but rather on the upper classes and the degree to which they do monopolize the running of community affairs.⁸⁸ Within the parameters of this basic orientation, Warner provides several examples of upper class dominance, ranging from membership in elite clubs,⁸⁹ to relationships between management and labor,⁹⁰ to social class discrimination at the high school level.⁹¹

The positional technique has the advantage of being relatively simple, straightforward, and reliable. The objectivity of the indices ensures that, unless the structure of the community changes radically, the same picture of the power structure will be obtained if the study is repeated.⁹² Over time, it can be expected that the individuals occupying these power positions will change, but this is a relatively unimportant factor, as the focus of the study is primarily on the positions themselves. The technique also has a number of disadvantages, some of which will be highlighted in the following discussion.

Critiques of Positional Analysis

A criticism often directed at this technique is that it operates on the assumption that the community contains a power elite who dominate in the running of the community, rather than determining whether or not this is so through empirical examination. By assuming that individuals with potential power will always realize this potential,

and will, therefore, always control the decision-making processes, the technique fails to distinguish between the formal structures of authority (which may be very elitist) and the actual exercise of power. The technique basically assumes a power elite exists, and simply goes about determining who comprise this elite. This self-fulfilling element of positional analysis has received much criticism, particularly by the pluralist school, who approach power studies with the question, "does anyone in particular run this community?", rather than, "who run this community?".⁹³

Nelson Polsby, one of the 'Yale pluralists', directs this criticism at Warner's study of Jonestown.⁹⁴ Warner, Polsby states, cites a number of situations where the lower classes succeed in realizing their wishes in opposition to the social elite. An important example of 'lower class influence' is the controversy over unionization of workers at the Mill (the 'hum' of Jonestown's economy⁹⁵), where the workers won their battle against the President, Waddell, and the management and became unionized.⁹⁶ In contrast to the general orientation of Warner's study, this example demonstrates the influence of the working classes in community affairs. It does not necessarily contradict Warner's main thesis, which is that the upper classes prevail in controlling community life, but it does demonstrate that, when actual issues are examined, a variety of sources of power can be found, whether or not these are established power holders in the community. By itself, the positional technique does not tap into this level of the power structure, and if issues had not been examined, there would be no evidence of any degree of pluralism in the exercise of power.

Another object of criticism is that there is no proof that the sources of power selected using positional analysis' actually control decision-making within the community. Mills, for example, places primary emphasis on the role of the economic elites in running the nation (with the military running a close second). It is also possible to focus on the political and civic elites as the primary source of power, as Samuel Stouffer, in his book, Community, Conformity, and Civil Liberties, did.⁹⁷ Whereas one study may emphasize the role of the economic elite, and another the role of the political elite, each is done on the assumption that the resources being tapped are important in the running of the community, without testing the validity of this assumption. Therefore, regardless of the facility and reliability of positional analysis, "there is the very serious problem of whether the top leadership roles in various social, political and economic institutions are actually those most vitally and importantly concerned with decision-making within the community, and hence provide a valid understanding of the distribution of community power".⁹⁸

A third object of criticism is directed at the assumption that people in power positions will necessarily exercise power. The validity of this basic assumption, and, hence of the results of using the positional technique, may be highly questionable. The approach aims at determining who runs the community. It assumes that the legitimized authority structures will monopolize control; that is, those holding positions of authority actually make key decisions and those who do not occupy such positions do not make key decisions.

The major weakness of this technique lies in making this notion an a priori assumption rather than a proposition to be tested. It may be reasonable to assume that, if formal authority structures do exist within the community, a source of power will be found within the parameters of these structures. But it may also be reasonable to assume, first, that not every individual occupying an official authority position will, in fact, realize the potential power of his position. Secondly, one can assume that there will exist many individuals outside the formal and semi-formal institutional hierarchies who will exert power. This technique, although it will most likely tap a number of individuals who do actually exert influence, will also select many who are token officials only and will exclude many who possess power, but who do not occupy official power positions.⁹⁹

Because the positional approach presents these problems, it is not often used as the sole means of studying power. It is more often used in combination with other approaches.

REPUTATIONAL ANALYSIS

The second major technique used to study power structures is reputational analysis. Although this technique had been used in the '40's to study status stratification,¹⁰⁰ it was Floyd Hunter's use of reputational analysis in his famous study of Regional City¹⁰¹ that developed interest in this method as a means of studying power structures.¹⁰²

Reputational analysis is based on the assumption that those who become

known as being powerful will, in fact, be those who possess power. The technique also assumes that power is often exercised on a 'covert' level which is not accessible for direct observation. In other words, behind the official authority structure and the overt participants in decision-making processes, are individuals who, for a number of reasons, are highly influential in the running of the community. These people may occupy official authority positions and they may play active roles in decision-making processes, but they may also do neither and still be an important source of power. One of the ways of locating these 'behind the scenes' officials is by using, as informants, people who are able to identify who these influentials are and how powerful they are. If the right informants can be found, they can screen out the 'token' officials and 'token' decision-makers, and tap those people who actually exert influence.

Although there may be minor differences in various researchers' use of the reputational technique, the basic steps are generally quite similar to those followed by Hunter in his study of Regional City. The following is a brief outline of the processes involved in Hunter's use of the reputational technique: he drew up an extensive list of members of a number of social spheres (political, economic, civic, social). Hunter used these people as a starting point for selection of elites by the informants. These informants can be chosen in a number of ways (e.g. randomly from the general public, from specific spheres of social life). Hunter does not specify how he selected his fourteen 'judges', but does state that they were comprised of

"business executives and professional people."¹⁰³ They were asked to either select from each of the four initial lists ten people whom they consider the most powerful in the community or name people not included in the lists. The forty who were most often chosen were considered the power elite of the community. After having established who comprised the 'power base' of the community, Hunter interviewed these people in order to examine the types of relationships (both formal and informal) that existed among the power elite and to determine how this power structure operated. A variation of this approach which has also been quite commonly employed is to exclude the initial step, i.e. obtaining lists of officials in various spheres. The researcher, in this case, simply asks his judges or informants whom they consider most influential in the community without providing them with names from which to choose.

The reputational technique, although it includes the institutional structures as a possible source of power within the community, also encompasses the individual per se as a possible source of influence. Certain similarities can be seen between the theoretical foundations on which reputational analysis is based and some of Weber's theories on the exercise of power. Both perspectives allow for the possibility of a wide range of sources of power. Neither restricts its focus to the official authority structure, although both accept the possibility that this may be an important source of power.

Reputational analysis demonstrates this by obtaining a list of government officials from which the informants can choose those whom they consider highly influential, but also by assuming that the official political elite can easily be excluded from those selected as the community's most powerful people. A person's power is not determined by his position in the formal hierarchies. Weber also focusses on the governmental structures, but emphasizes that this is only a relatively valid index of power. Similarly, both perspectives attest to the possibility of class and status elite possessing power without making this a definitive statement. Both Weber and the reputational technique encompass the individual as a possible source of power and they both, at the same time, encompass the institutional hierarchies as a probable locus of the power structure. The actions of the man per se can effect the shape of the power structure and the roles and institutions through which much of power is wielded can also command large amounts of power. Weber's theory begins with emphasis on the role of the individual in wielding power, and then, with a more specific focus, locates the individual in the political authority structure.¹⁰⁴ Reputational analysis continues Weber's exercise by starting with the authority, class and status structures and then introducing the element of the individual as a possible source of influence.

This, in principle, is the aim of reputational analysis.

This approach encompasses a number of important dimensions of power which are excluded by the positional technique. Because this approach does present a much more complex notion of what power is and how it is

exercised, it must face many problems in both the validity and the reliability of the findings. The following is a list of some criticisms that have been directed at reputational analysis.

Critiques of Reputational Analysis

One of the problems in the use of this method is the unclear distinction between perceptions of power and the actual existence of power. That is, the reputational technique taps those who are perceived by others as being powerful. The argument that, when people are perceived by others as being powerful, they acquire influence by this very fact is one justification for using the reputational technique, but users of this method do not consider its value restricted to this minor role.¹⁰⁵ Because power is often exerted 'behind the scenes', because the wishes of people with much influence are often the basis on which the 'official' power holders make the decisions they make, the only way to locate these officials is through people who are in a position to be aware of, or to feel the effects of, their influence, i.e. the informants. But, as mentioned, this technique really gets at the perceptions of the distribution of power, and the assumption that this is interchangeable with the actual existence of the power structure is, although possibly a reasonable assumption, still an unproven one. "In the study of community power, as in other areas of sociology, the examination of intentions, reputations, and attributions is to be applauded. The interpretations we assign to these 'meanings' must, however, always be modulated and enriched by our knowledge of the behavior which accompanies them."¹⁰⁶

The selection of informants is, to an extent, an arbitrary one, and there is no way of ensuring that these people will be adequate judges of who runs the community. Even if one can assume that reputation is an adequate index of possession of power, the researcher must select adequate sources of information.

The concept, power, is an ambiguous and ill-defined one among the social scientists who devote a large part of their time to the study of it. The chances of it being a well-defined, or even a consistently defined, concept among the informants are very slight. There is no way of knowing how the informants conceptualize power, if they distinguish it from other dimensions of social stratification (class, status), or if they consider it potential or actual behavior.

Robert Presthus, in his study of two American communities, Edgewood and Riverview, encountered this difficulty. He used the reputational technique, as well as the decisional, in his investigation into the power structures of the two towns. As he became more and more familiar with the complexities of the community power structures, he found that there existed the danger of the reputational technique becoming "an instrument of sociometric preference rather than one of the 'real' differences in power."¹⁰⁷

In other words, the researcher has little, if any, control over the indices that the informants use in their selection of influentials.¹⁰⁸ Even if certain criteria are set by the researcher

(still relatively arbitrary criteria), he cannot control the informants' interpretation and/or use of these criteria in selecting the influentials of the community. The ambiguity of the concept is passed from the researcher onto the informants and this ambiguity causes problems of validity at this point.

There exist numerous 'issue-areas' in a community that are relevant to segments of the population. Whether or not these issue-areas are represented by the informants (something the researcher must consider in his selection of informants) will determine whether or not influentials in each of these areas are included. The acceptance of diverse areas of interest existing within the community is not proof that there will exist also diverse power groups, but it allows the researcher to locate 'specialized' power holders who represent only specific interests if they do exist. Because the researcher cannot control the bias that the informant may have as a result of his own involvement or interest in the community, he must attempt to compensate for this bias by considering the various areas in which powerful people may be involved.¹⁰⁹ As Polsby points out in his critique of Hunter using mainly "business executives and professional people"¹¹⁰ as informants, the nature of this group of judges can very possibly explain the findings that resulted from Hunter's study, i.e. that the economic elite dominated community decision-making.¹¹¹

The issue of criteria by which informants make their selections raises another problem. The reputational technique may be little more than an indirect way of locating the official

authority structures or the overt decision-makers. Hunter's approach increased this tendency. He initially drew up lists of people who occupied formal positions in four different social hierarchies, and asked his judges to make their selections from these lists (with the added option to include any other names they felt should be included.¹¹² Later studies in which reputational analysis was employed¹¹³ tried to avoid this tendency by not providing the judges with lists of community officials, but simply asking them to name people whom they felt were influential in the running of the community. This precaution does not, nevertheless, ensure that informants will not make their selections on the basis of the official positions that individuals occupy.

If this is the case, it has been argued that the researcher would be better off tapping these sources of power directly through the positional technique (which focusses on official authority positions) and the decisional technique (which focusses on decision-making processes).¹¹⁴ Theoretically, reputational analysis is concerned with a more implicit possession of power. It aims at going beyond the explicit indices which the other techniques employ. It, theoretically at least, distinguishes between holding a formal power position and actually possessing power, and it allows for the possibility that powerful people may act 'behind the scenes' where their influence is not manifested by observable behavior. But it only succeeds in accomplishing these aims if the technique actually taps those with power besides the position holders and overt decision-makers.

The method will only be successful if the researcher can ensure that the informants' criteria are not restricted to formal position or overt participation in decision-making. So, although it may be reasonable to assume that the covert influentials exist and can exert much power, one cannot automatically assume that these are the people who will be tapped by use of the reputational method.¹¹⁵

Although it is not necessarily the case, the reputational technique is often related to the locating of a 'power elite'.

The very fact of asking informants who are the most powerful people in the community implies that x number of people occupy elite power positions and that these positions monopolize the distribution of power in the community. These implications present a number of possible problems:

a) the 'most' powerful, although they hold more power than other individuals in the community, may possess only a small percentage of the available power. Large numbers of individuals and/or groups can possess small amounts of power that can outweigh the influence of the few with greater amounts of power. The assumption that the most influential will also possess most of the power in the community may be false.

b) The attempt to locate the people with the most influence in the community suggests a static distribution of power.¹¹⁶ It implies that the distribution of power will remain more or less constant from time A to time B, and that the issues and events of relevance at any given time in the community will not disturb or shift this distribution of power. Although there may exist a relatively permanent power elite,

the effects of coalitions, shifting alliances, mass support or pressure are sources of influence that are not considered in this approach to studying power. ¹¹⁷

Presthus, in his comparison of the findings when he used reputational analysis and decisional analysis, demonstrates this tendency of the former technique. He found an almost total exclusion of individuals with specialized interests in community decision-making from the lists of people who are known as being influential. He concludes that reputational analysis "provides an excellent starting point, but used alone, it will probably fail to identify individuals whose interests, energy and sense of community responsibility propel them into decisions despite their comparative lack of rather more concrete and durable attributes of power." ¹¹⁸

The reputational technique, while it basically is attempting to get at power that is not wielded in overt ways and yet strongly effects the direction of events within the community, ends up, to an extent, dealing with this kind of power as though it were distributed as objectively and as statically as the power within the official institutional structures. This conception of power is not manifested so much at the level of data collection as at the level of interpretation of the data. That is, the reputational technique makes it possible to tap into very subtle levels of the exercise of power. The point is, reputational researchers then quantify the distribution of power as though they were studying a rigid system, rather than a dynamic process.

By assuming that an elite rules, rather than by making this an empirical question, by equating 'most powerful' with 'most of the power', and by assuming that power remains statically located, the technique itself can tend to determine the nature of the findings that will result from use of it.

The last problem that I will mention in the use of reputational analysis is the possibility of carrying the probe for 'behind the scenes' officials to the point of 'infinite regression'.¹¹⁹ As mentioned, one of the justifications for using this technique is that it provides a means of getting at those influentials under whom the overt decision-makers act, or those whose influence is not manifested in occupation of an official authority position. One may ask, what about the people who influence the 'behind the scenes' influentials? How can the researcher be sure that he has tapped the source of power, rather than those who are responding to the source? Unless the researcher decides to accept the testimony of his informants without going beyond their statements, he could carry on his analysis of covert behavior endlessly. The tendency to emphasize these covert levels of power could, if carried far enough, result in "substituting unfound speculation for plain fact".¹²⁰ In other words, the selections made by the informants can be based on a level of analysis that can range from their direct observations to unsubstantiated gossip. Therefore, emphasis on non-overt exercise of power can lead the researcher to discard observable behavior in favor of highly speculative testimony, and it can lead the informants to base their judgments on unsubstantiated

evidence. Hunter, for example, decided to ignore the roles of the Negro population and leaders in his study of Regional City (leaving them for a separate study).¹²¹ Although only a small number of Negro influentials were selected by the judges (three), the fact that one third of Regional City's population is black is at least some indication that this body of people cannot justifiably be excluded from a study of the city's power structure.¹²² This illustrates one of the basic problems of reputational analysis, which is that the basis for selection of influentials is ambiguous, and therefore, the meanings of the findings will also be ambiguous.

The weaknesses of the reputational technique seem, most of all, to lie in the lack of clarity in what information the researcher intends to obtain, the basis on which informants can make their selections, and consequently, in the meaning of the findings that result. The reason for the lack of clarity in all these areas is basically that four types of information may be obtained using this technique, and there is no way of determining into which category any of the selected influentials belongs.¹²³ These four types of information are:

1. the general formal structure of authority, i.e. a sort of positional analysis
2. the general informal structure of power, i.e. a sort of decisional analysis
3. the particular formal and informal interaction partners of members of the power structure, i.e. a sort of sociogram of subgroups within both the formal and informal structures

4. perceptions of formal and informal power by the informants.

Each of these types of information would have to be conceptualized in advance and focussed on separately in order to obtain a clear understanding of the meaning of the data. The reputational technique, in spite of the advantages it offers to power studies, does not accomplish this.

DECISIONAL ANALYSIS

The last major technique used to study power structures and the main competitor of reputational analysis is the decisional, or issue analysis, approach.¹²⁴ The strongest proponents of this technique come from the pluralist school of thought, who object to the elitist bias of reputational analysis.¹²⁵ As an alternative, they support issue analysis as an approach which does not assume the existence of a power elite, but rather, examines how issues are actually resolved and determines what is the range of sources of influence involved in the resolution of these issues. The technique allows for the possibility of a power elite monopolizing control within the community, but does not assume it.

The decisional technique approaches the study from a different perspective than the reputational technique. Whereas the latter attempts to first establish the power base of the community by determining who are the known influentials, and then examines how this power elite operates, decisional analysis starts out by analyzing who participates in the resolution of community issues, and, from this starting point, determines who, if any one, comprise a relatively permanent power base,

and also, what amount of influence lies in the more specialized interest groups.

Issue analysis is based on the assumption that possession of power is best and most directly manifested in its actual exercise, and therefore, the exercise of power, i.e. participation in community decision-making, must be studied in order to understand the power processes. "The process of decision-making is recognized as the nucleus of the phenomenon of power and it is this process that is the object of research."¹²⁶ The following is an outline of the steps usually involved in the decisional method of studying power structures.

The researcher's first task is to pick out a number (an arbitrary number) of 'salient' issues or problems which would provide a point of entry into the range of participants in the decision-making process. He can utilize a variety of sources of information to help make his selection, such as official governmental records, newspaper accounts, testimony of representatives of a number of areas of community life, etc..¹²⁷ The researcher must try to ensure that the sources of information will yield a selection of issues covering a range of areas of interest, and that these issues are relevant to at least some segments of the community population.

After the issues have been selected, the researcher establishes who comprised the bodies of participants in the resolution of each issue. These lists can include both the members 'officially'

involved, i.e. those who comprised the formal committees drawn up to handle the issue, and those who exerted influence, regardless of their official positions. The former group, the formal committees, can be obtained through written records. The latter groups of participants can be obtained through less official sources of information, e.g. newspaper accounts, interviews with official members, with the public, and with these influentials themselves. Through these interviews, the researcher, besides establishing who were involved in the decision-making processes, can also acquire information concerning how much influence different parties exerted, what sorts of factions existed, and who influenced whom. In other words, he can obtain some indication of how power was exercised.

The decisional technique, then, attempts to encompass within its parameters all the sources of influence that contributed to the resolution of the issue. Both the key decision-makers and the more indirect sources of influence, such as action groups, citizen groups, lobbyists, etc... can be tapped by this method. Because a wide range of sources of power are encompassed by the technique, a more pluralistic picture of the distribution of power is generally presented.¹²⁸

Robert Dahl employed this technique in his study of the power structure of New Haven.¹²⁹ He initially examined public documents and reports in mass media to acquaint himself with the relevant community issues. He then selected several areas of community decision-making as the focus of his study, the three most important being urban

redevelopment, public education, and political nominations.¹³⁰ He used various criteria in making his selection, such as relevance to the wider population (e.g. public education), focus of political campaigns (e.g. urban redevelopment), etc... After becoming familiar with the issues and who were the publically visible participants in them, he carried out extensive interviews with the participants in and observers of each of the issues. He also had a member of his research team play the role of participant observer, and study the actions of the Mayor and some of his close administrators.

Dahl concluded from his study that the economic elites and status elites definitely contributed to community decision-making, but there was no evidence that they monopolized control or that decisions that were made were made in the interests of the upper classes.¹³¹ He did find evidence of relatively widespread sources of influence, and also alliances between certain community elites and members of lower status groups, such as that between the leaders of the Republican party and the Italians of the community.¹³² Dahl's study of New Haven has been considered the pluralist 'benchmark', in much the same way as Hunter's study epitomizes the elitist tradition.¹³³

The use of decisional analysis is justified on a number of grounds. One is that it offers the possibility of identifying overt power holders, rather than those with potential for control. Rather than assuming that potential power is a reliable index of actual social control, which both positional and reputational analysis do, it focusses directly

on the exercise of power.¹³⁴ Presthus, who employed both reputational and decisional analysis, concluded that, "by itself, reputational analysis is probably not a valid index of power, since, in positivist terms, power must be exercised in some way, however subtle or indirect, before its existence can be documented."¹³⁵

Theoretically, official roles or having a reputation for being powerful are irrelevant in decisional analysis. It encompasses only those individuals and groups who actually participate in decision-making processes. Unlike the other methods, whose indices of power are either cause (authority position) or effect (reputation) of social control, the index of possession of power in this method is participation in its actual exercise. Occupation of an official power position or having a reputation for being influential may have made participation in community decision-making available to certain people, but they are neither necessary, nor sufficient, factors in determining who is selected by this technique.

The second justification for using decisional analysis is the assumption that the distribution of power within the community is, to some extent, dependent upon the problem that is being dealt with.¹³⁶ As different areas of interest become controversial, different groups of people to whom the particular issue is relevant will participate in the resolution of this issue, and are, in this sense, a source of power. These people may not occupy official power positions or may not involve themselves in other areas of community decision-making, but will,

nevertheless, play an important role in supporting their own interests. Therefore, as different issues become controversial, the distribution of power may shift from one group of people to another. This is not to suggest that all power in the community is transient and dependent upon problem area, but rather, that, besides the more or less permanent power holders, if they exist, there will also exist a source of power that is created among various groups by their interest in certain issues. This technique is, consequently, able to tap the less well-defined sources of power which are created by the involvement of various groups of people in the resolution of issues that are of special interest to them. Presthus drew this conclusion after comparing the findings of reputational and decisional analysis. (See quote on page 56 of this text.)

The third justification for using this technique is that it presents a more dynamic picture of the way in which power is exercised within the community.¹³⁷ Whereas positional, and to some extent, reputational analysis tend to emphasize the structural aspects of the community power system, a main focus of this technique is the variable and shifting nature of community power. Decisional analysis focusses on who participates in different issues, what sort of influence these different participants exert, and how the distribution of power shifts over issues. From this starting point, generalizations may be attempted concerning the existence of a relatively permanent power base, but the technique is usually more concerned with presenting power relations as processes than as structures.¹³⁸

Although studying social control by determining who are involved in the actual exercise of power is a valid and useful approach, there are a number of problems involved in the use of this technique. The following is a discussion of some of these problems.

Critiques of Decisional Analysis

The weakness most often pointed out by critics of the decisional technique is the issue of problem selection. As Andrew McFarland states, "...the catchall critique of an empirical decision-making analysis is the assertion, 'You have studied the wrong issues.'"¹³⁹ There are several levels on which the selection of issues can be problematic. First of all, the argument has been made that, in any sizable community, it is difficult for the researcher to become familiar with all of the important areas of conflict (as will be seen later, concentrating on areas of 'conflict' only can also be problematic). The possibility of the researcher selecting a representative range of issues, where most segments of the population are represented, is limited, given the time and money this sort of procedure would require. The researcher must, in the end, make a relatively arbitrary choice of issues -- or let his informants make an arbitrary choice. Therefore, issue selection can be problematic in that unimportant or irrelevant issues may be selected. It can also be problematic in that only relatively few issues can be studied and, even if they are relevant, they may present an incomplete picture of the distribution of power within the community.

Proponents of decisional analysis have returned these arguments by asserting the importance of studying the processes of decision-making as a means of understanding the power system, regardless of the difficulties that may be involved. They emphasize that the decisional technique, besides offering some insight into the actual processes involved in the exercise of power, encompasses a source of power which is untapped by both the positional and reputational techniques, namely, the community at large, or at least, segments of it. Dahl, for example, states that value lies in simply being able to offer evidence for or against the existence of a homogeneous elite, or, in other words, for or against the existence of widespread sources of power in the community.¹⁴¹ In his study of New Haven, Dahl presented evidence that sources of power were distributed throughout the community, but did not attempt to make definitive statements about a permanent power structure.

Proponents of this technique support 'moderateness' in generalization: "Part of the art of power analysis is to find the maximum level of generality at which this effective conceptualization of the relevant universe of subissues or decisions is possible."¹⁴² This same author states, in defence of the subjectivity involved in this method, "... nor should we mask the unavoidable subjectivity which enters the selection of basic areas for inquiry."¹⁴³ Advocates of decisional analysis consider this approach to the study of power important enough to carry on with this type of study in spite of its limitations.

Along the same vein of criticism is the problem of the 'non-issue'. A non-issue, to use Frederick Frey's definition, "involves the effective use of power by some actors in a political system to deter other actors in that system from attempting to exert influence."¹⁴⁴ Researchers who emphasize the importance of studying non-issues view the restriction of decision-making analysis to controversial areas as a gross limitation in the study of power structures.¹⁴⁵ This covert exercise of power is, according to the proponents of non-issue analysis, both pervasive enough and crucial enough to the running of the community that limiting analysis to explicit decision-making will severely limit the understanding of community power systems. A political science that cannot cope with these aspects of power is, according to Frey, inadequate; and most decision-making studies focus only on areas of explicit conflict.¹⁴⁶ If the non-controversial exercise of power, where influential individuals or groups get their own way without opposition, are recognized as existing and/or being important to researchers of decision-making processes, they are generally ignored by them. If the decisional technique can be criticized for including individuals who may have participated in the resolution of an issue, but were relatively inconsequential (a common critique from the elitist school), it can also be criticized for excluding individuals whose power is manifested by a lack of opposition.¹⁴⁷

Of course, the problems involved in studying the non-issue are considerable and justify, to some supporters of decisional analysis, avoiding this area of research. Raymond Wolfinger outlines some of the

problems that would be involved in the analysis of non-issues.¹⁴⁸

In order to conduct a successful analysis of non-issues, the researcher would have to:

a) measure the actor's anticipation to alternative courses of action to illustrate that he did not act in a certain way because of the response he anticipated from the power holder under whose influence he is acting;

b) distinguish between an actor avoiding an issue due to fear of opposition and due to lack of interest;

c) distinguish between an actor not participating in a potential issue due to not having enough interest in the issue to confront the opposition and due to not being aware of the need to confront an issue, i.e. being 'brainwashed' by power holders into accepting a status quo that is detrimental to his own welfare.

When people consciously avoid conflict through making a choice that will not arouse the opposition of power holders or through not taking any part in the issue, or when they unconsciously avoid conflict through not being aware of the issues that threaten their interests, this non-conflict can be the result of the exercise of power by highly influential people.

To tap into these processes would, as Wolfinger points out, be extremely difficult. Researchers who oppose analysis of the non-issue base their argument on the assertion that this type of analysis is beyond the scope of social scientists (although proponents of reputational analysis consider their technique an answer to this problem),

These researchers feel that, because the non-issue cannot be handled at what they consider a scientifically acceptable level, it should be avoided at this stage of research on power structures.

A problem that is suggested by the non-issue problem is the role of covert actors in decision-making. Where does one draw the line between what is participation and what isn't? If decision-makers are acting under the influence of a person who does not actively engage in the decision-making process, is that person considered one of the participants? The problem is similar to that faced in reputational analysis: the possibility of 'infinite regression' versus selecting 'token' power wielders only. Because the decisional method relies, at least in part, on the statements of the participants, the bases on which they make their choices cannot be controlled by the researcher, and the people 'behind the scenes' may or may not be included in their selections.

A final criticism that has been directed at issue analysis in the study of power structures is that focusing only on issues directly involved in decision-making processes is an inadequate means of understanding the power structure.¹⁴⁹ The exercise of power is intricately tied to political and non-political structures and, unless these are understood, the value of analyzing decision-making processes will be diminished. The framework within which decisions are made is an important element of power processes. If positional and reputational analysis tend to ignore processes in the

exercise of power, decisional analysis underestimates the importance of structures.

The basic assumptions underlying each methodological approach, the processes involved in applying these approaches, and the criticisms directed at the techniques have been presented. It is obvious that there is no perfect means of studying power. On both a conceptual and a technical level, each methodological approach has its weaknesses. Conceptually, each one makes reasonable assumptions about the nature and distribution of power, but the focus of each is limited to a certain sphere of community power and excludes from its parameters important aspects of the power structure. On a technical level, there exist numerous problems in use of indices, selection of issues, data collection procedures, etc. . . . which threaten the validity and reliability of the findings. In most cases, there is no solution for these problems; the researcher must simply be aware of them and be moderate in his generalizations (besides, of course, doing his best to minimize the weaknesses). Until more adequate tools for studying power structures are developed, the researcher must be content with the ones at hand. What social scientists can do is de-emphasize the superiority of his own particular perspective, be it from a positional, reputational or decisional standpoint, over the others. He can recognize that each makes a useful, but limited, contribution to the understanding of power structures. In short, many of the technical weaknesses cannot be overcome, but the conceptual approach to power studies can shift to accommodate alternative perspectives.

CHAPTER IV

SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Each of the three methodological techniques discussed above has its strengths and weaknesses. In this chapter I am going to map out a hypothetical methodology in the study of power that would encompass the perspectives of all three approaches and would, therefore, result in a more comprehensive picture than is obtained by any of the three techniques when used alone. This exercise has several purposes. One is to help clarify some of the differences among the positional, reputational, and issue analysis approaches on a theoretical level. It has been demonstrated that "the type of power structure identified by studies that rely on a single method may be an artifact of that method."¹⁵⁰ One of the explanations for this phenomenon is that each technique is based on certain theoretical assumptions about what constitutes power and how it is distributed in society. The technique, consequently, contains within it procedures that locate specific dimensions of power in society. For example, reputational analysis assumes that, by identifying those people who have a reputation for being the 'most powerful' in the community, it will uncover the power elite of that community, on the unquestioned assumption that there is an elite.¹⁵¹ The result is that a limited number of people are

selected, and an elitist picture of the distribution of power is, almost by definition, presented. The point is, an important source of power may have been tapped by using reputational analysis, but certainly not a sufficient one if the researcher is interested in understanding the distribution of power within the community.

The other techniques, similarly, tap necessary, but not sufficient, sources of power within the community. Just as it is reasonable to assume that, if people actually exert influence, they will become known for it, it is also reasonable to accept the thesis that the official authority positions are an important source of power (positional), and that the distribution of power is, to some extent, dependent upon the issue that is being debated, as different people will exert influence over different issues (decisional analysis). By integrating each of these techniques into a comprehensive methodological approach to the study of power, I hope to be able to clarify some of the differences in the assumptions on which each technique is based, and to demonstrate the relationships between these assumptions and the type of power structure uncovered.

Another reason for carrying out this exercise is that it will, hopefully, indicate some of the various bases on which power is actually established in society, and the various forms which power can take. Because power is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, its various aspects cannot all be encompassed by any one of these methodological techniques.

For this reason, the use of one technique will focus on one type of power to the exclusion of others. This exercise, then, is also meant to distinguish between some of the different dimensions of power as it exists in society, and to show the relationships among these dimensions.

Another purpose of combining methodological approaches is to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of each in relation to the others. Each approach satisfies some of the requirements of a comprehensive study of power, but each also excludes from its parameters some vital aspects of power in society. The dimensions of power excluded by each approach are, to some extent, encompassed by the others. In this sense, each approach does not contradict the other, but rather, compliments it. The apparent contradiction in the pictures of power which result from the various approaches arises more from differences in the focus of study than from the validity of one technique as opposed to another. In contrast to the ongoing debates regarding the supremacy of one approach versus the others, I hope to demonstrate that the issue is not that one technique is more valid than the others, but rather, that the three deal with very different dimensions of power, and that they are, in this sense, not comparable.

The various roles and institutions that comprise the social system are assigned certain functions. For example, that of the education system is to ensure that people go to school and learn; that of the economic institutions is to provide the members of the society with their material needs (to look at these institutions in

a very simple light). The assigned function of the political authority structure is to ensure the integration and smooth running of the society as a whole -- to make sure that things happen 'as they should', given the norms and values accepted within that society. ¹⁵²

This structure is invested with power to make decisions concerning the direction of events within, say, the community. The roles within this and other institutional structures in various areas of community life possess certain amounts of authority, and the limits of this authority are defined within the specific role. If the community ran exactly the 'way it should', the president of a company, for example, would have power within his economic sphere, but would be only 'one vote' in the political life of the community. The mayor would be able to place certain restrictions on the actions of economic enterprise, but could not tell the company executive how to run his business or where to invest his money.

Because society is not comprised of machines that passively perform their appropriate functions, social reality rarely, if ever, functions strictly 'as it should'. Individuals who can act beyond their assigned roles, who can alter the definitions of the roles they play, and who can respond to others beyond the roles they play, have significant control over the processes of social reality.

For this reason, the institutional structures ~~may~~ provide the researcher with a referent point for studying certain aspects of

community life -- in this case, the exercise of power -- but it will be only a relatively accurate portrayal of the processes that actually go on within and around these structures. Just as one can expect that the political authority structure will not perform all its functions exactly as its definition requires, one can also expect that other roles and institutions within the community will act beyond their assigned functions and will, to some extent, take over the power institutionally assigned to the political authority structure. Consequently, phenomena such as economic wealth, social status, control over mass media, personality, expertise, etc... can all become transformed into political control. To the extent that this happens, the socially defined locus of political power, the political authority structure, becomes transformed from a source of control into a tool or medium through which others exercise power. By using this authority structure as a point of departure and extending the scope of research to encompass the individuals, roles, and institutions that act through this political structure, the researcher can determine where power actually lies and obtain some notions of why it lies there.

Max Weber, in his discussions of power, the party, and the political authority structure, suggests this approach to analyzing power. 153
He uses the political authority structure as a possible source of social control and as a medium through which power may be exercised by a wide range of individuals and groups. By examining the exercise of power within these parameters, one could determine the extent to which the political authority structure actually controls decision-making and, if other sources of influence contribute to the exercise of power, what

these sources are. By examining the possible bases on which power is exercised, the researcher could establish some notion of the role of various social institutions and personal characteristics in influencing communal action.

Determining the nature of the exercise of power within the community is a multi-step procedure. It involves answering a number of questions and synthesizing these answers into a coherent picture of power.

The first issue to be dealt with is the type of political authority structure that exists within the community. In a large urban area the authority structure can encompass the mayor, his Council and the city Aldermen, which can range from ten to forty or fifty people. In a small rural town, the official authority structure may include only a mayor and a few, if any, assistants. Generally speaking, the degree to which a highly structured political system characterizes a community is, at least in part, a function of the size of the community. It is also reasonable to expect that, in a larger city, the outside sources of influence that contribute to decision-making will tend to stem more from institutionally defined positions than from personal characteristics of individuals. That is, as the system becomes larger and more impersonal, more objectively defined social symbols, such as wealth, occupational prestige, etc., become more important qualifications for acquiring influence than personal characteristics, such as morality, life style, social participation, etc....

In contrast, in smaller towns, it is more likely that the authority invested in the political structure will be outweighed by the influence of individuals, and these individuals will tend to acquire their influence more on the basis of personal characteristics than on the basis of institutionally defined roles.

Another feature which may affect the nature of the community power structure is the degree to which the community is free from state and national control.¹⁵⁴ In a city where there are strong ties to the state, the sources of power will tend to extend beyond the boundaries of the community. The city will not be a self-contained, autonomous unit, but will, to some degree, respond to state controls. The relationship between the community and larger social systems, such as the state and the nation, is a highly complex one, and I will not delve into the many complexities involved, but the presence of external controls will most probably have some effect on the power structure. For one thing, there may be an increased tendency for community officials to function as persons who carry out policies, rather than initiate them. For another, positions in state hierarchies, because of these ties to the community, may become an important source of influence. That is, in more autonomous towns, the elites within various spheres within the town itself tend to become sources of influence. If the town is closely tied to the state, state hierarchies may become more relevant to community life.

The third factor which may affect the nature of the power structure is the economic base of the community and, related to it,

the division of labor within the community. In a one company town, for instance, the vitalness of this one organization will give it much influence in the running of the community. In a town with several economic bases, i.e. in which several economic institutions contribute to the life and development of the community, no one plays so vital a role, and, consequently, influence will more likely be less concentrated. Besides the shift in concentration of power, the nature of the exercise of power will tend to become more complex, in terms of factions, conflicts, interrelationships among power holders, as opposed to the tendency toward monolithism in a one company town. The size of the community, its autonomy, and the nature of its economic base can all have a significant effect on the power structure. Studying a variety of communities will demonstrate the type and extent of effect these factors have on power processes. 155

Regardless of the size or nature of the community government a certain amount of decision-making authority will generally be invested in more or less well-defined roles. The people who perform these roles will be granted authority by virtue of the fact that they occupy positions invested with authority.

The first task in studying community power will be to determine what positions comprise the political authority structure. At this point the focus will be on the social structure, i.e. its roles and institutions. The justification for focussing on these social roles, on their functions in the political institutions, and on how power

is distributed among them is that it will provide a referent point for determining the actual location of power within the community. That is, by beginning with the political authority structure, the researcher can then ask the question, 'to what extent does the actual exercise of power depart from this structure?' The answer may be that community decision-making is completely controlled by the political authority structure, which acts as an autonomous and integrating institution, and which functions in the service of the community as a whole. Or it may be that the political authority structure plays a very minor role in community decision-making. This power, instead, lies in the hands of other sectors of the community, such as economic institutions, status groups, prestigious individuals, vested interest groups, etc.... The degrees to which the answer tends toward either of these extremes will depend on the community which is being studied.

In a large urban center, where the political authority structure is more complex and rigidly defined, position in the official hierarchy may be a more reliable index of possession of power than in a community where the weight of the institutional hierarchies is balanced by other, less structurally determined social phenomena (e.g. popularity, expertise, status). Therefore, the more the community is characterized by formal bodies of decision-makers, the more valuable will be the positional technique for locating sources of power.

By locating the official power hierarchy, the aim of the positional technique (although it often encompasses non-political social

hierarchies, on the assumption that they will exert influence), one can obtain a sort of skeleton view of the distribution of power within the community. As mentioned, it will also provide a starting point for examining other sources of power that contribute to community decision-making. In other words, by focussing on the sphere of the community whose formally-defined function it is to control the direction of community events, i.e. the political authority structure, the researcher can begin to determine how power is actually exercised. Therefore, examining the nature and distribution of power at this level should play an essential part in identifying the community power structure.

Establishing the official distribution of authority is a relatively straightforward task. It involves obtaining the formal policies and functions of the different roles. Again, in a larger, more complex political system, the limits of authority of each position may be fairly rigidly defined. In a small political system, the division of authority may be relatively arbitrary, i.e. whoever is around handles the issue. Nevertheless, strictly speaking, positions, not individuals, define the limits of authority. To the extent that the hypothesis, "an individual's power is closely correlated with his position in an official or semi-official hierarchy",¹⁵⁶ is true, this information yields the actual distribution of power in the community.

The structurally defined authority system is, however, rarely, if ever, a perfect index of the processes involved in the exercise of power. It is unlikely that the question, how are community decisions

actually made, can be answered simply by obtaining the official distribution of power within the community. Determining the nature of the power processes is a complex task, and one that may be accomplished with only relative success. The first step toward accomplishing this task would be to determine what the actual functions of the political authority structure is in the running of the community. The focus, then, shifts from the structural dimensions of authority to the processes involved in the exercise of power.

In order to examine how power is actually exercised, the researcher could select a number of issues that have recently been or are being resolved in the community. Many of the problems involved in issue selection cannot be overcome. The researcher may rely on sources of information, such as newspaper accounts, government records, informants in various spheres of community life, the general public, etc.... From these sources, he must try to ensure that the issues he selects are as relevant and representative as possible.

The next step would be to draw up lists of people 'officially' involved in the resolution of these issues. These people could serve as a preliminary list of participants and also as initial informants. The researcher could interview them regarding the various sources of influence that contributed to the decision-making process and to the outcome of the controversy. This body could serve as a point of entry into the range of individuals and groups who participated in resolving the issue, including key participants, political and non-political authorities, and pressure groups representing segments of the population.

By interviewing several of these various participants, a number of questions could be answered. To what extent did the political authorities/control the direction of events? Was there any indication that these authorities were bowing to outside pressure? If so, what or who were these sources of influence? Who, besides any political authorities, were officially involved in decision-making? On what basis did they participate? Did the same people officially participate in a number of issues? If so, who were these people, i.e. what social positions and/or personal qualities characterized them? Were there unofficial participants who exerted pressure on the decision-makers? If so, who were these sources of influence? Did they represent special interests as determined by the issues they involved themselves in, or did they exert influence in a number of the issues? If the former, how much influence did these special interest parties exert, i.e. was there any indication of widely distributed sources of influence? In short, the issue-analysis approach can help determine three main factors:

1. the extent to which the political authority structure controls decision-making,
2. the extent to which there exists a relatively permanent power elite outside the realm of the political authority structure,
3. the extent to which power is decentralized, i.e. the extent to which there exist a wide variety of individuals and groups who exert power in specific issue areas.

By obtaining information on the various participants, the researcher can establish some indication of why these people possess

power. The range of power bases can include economic wealth, occupational prestige, social status, control over mass media, expertise in some field, popularity, group solidarity, and the right to vote. By relating these resource bases to the individuals' or groups' level of involvement in decision-making (weak to strong, specific to generalized), he can establish some notion of the role that various resource bases play in the exercise of power.

The next step in examining the power structure of the community would be to establish if there exists a relatively well-defined body of known power holders. The individuals encompassed by the previous procedure could be interviewed to find out if they felt there existed any particular individuals or groups whom they considered 'the' leaders of the community. If so, who are these people? To what extent do they overlap with those who participated in decision-making? Assuming that the issue analysis helped to seek out some of the 'token' political elites, the reputational approach may offer some indication of the degree to which people are perceived as being powerful on the basis of their actual exercise of power. If it is found that there are individuals who have reputations for being influential and who did not participate in the resolution of any of the issues studied, they could have acquired their reputations for a number of alternative reasons.

One of these is that they occupy elite positions in various social hierarchies. If it is found that there are individuals named as

being generally powerful and these people occupy elite positions (political or other), but they did not exert a significant amount, if any, of influence in the resolution of issues; there is some indication that their reputations are based largely on their positions.

On the other hand, the researcher may discover that the known influentials did not actively participate in the decision-making processes, but that the apparent key decision-makers were, in fact, representing the interests of these covert influentials. Within specific issue areas, the active decision-makers may be considered highly influential, but in the overall picture of running the community, these covert influentials are considered significant sources of power. It will be difficult for the researcher to analyze the meanings of the responses concerning the 'generally' powerful people in the community. The weak point of reputational analysis is the ambiguity of the data that is collected by this technique. On the basis of the material he does collect, the researcher can establish certain points:

1. the extent to which having a reputation for being powerful correlates with participation in decision-making,
2. the extent to which having a reputation for being powerful correlates with occupying an elite position in the institutional hierarchies,
3. whether or not there is any indication of the existence of a covert elite.

By interviewing the people selected by reputational analysis, the researcher can determine what sorts of relationships exist among these

people, the extent to which they perceive themselves and the others as comprising an elite and who influences whom within this group.

With the material that the researcher collects using the positional, reputational, and decisional techniques, he will be able to draw certain conclusions about who constitutes the power structure of the community, how widespread the distribution of power is, what indication there is of the existence of a power elite, and the extent to which this elite, if it exists, controls decision-making. Because he has approached the study of community power from several perspectives, the researcher will be able to accommodate divergent and often apparently contradictory types of data. His systems of conceptualization will leave open a number of possibilities concerning the exercise of power, rather than limiting his perspective to one dimension of the power structure.

At the same time, the researcher must also be aware of the limits of his analysis. No matter how thoroughly the researcher investigates the community, he must expect to find contradictory information, unclear notions within the community over who makes decisions, biases in response by the informants, etc.... What power is, who possesses it, how and why it is exercised are ambiguous areas of research and it is unlikely that the researcher will get completely straightforward sets of responses.

The researcher must also be aware of the extent to which he can draw legitimate conclusions from his study. He cannot distinguish

among all the various roles and traits of every individual who exercises power or who becomes known as being influential. He also cannot study the motivation behind the exercise of power, other than relate certain characteristics of individuals to the exercise of power. The researcher, in other words, must ensure that the statements he makes are based on the material he gathers, and not on his own assumptions or biases about who control decision-making and why. At the same time, he can maximize the probability of capturing many of the important dimensions of power by utilizing as many perspectives and methodological techniques as possible.

The researcher, then, is left with a picture of the political authority structure, a distribution of the range of people who participated in the resolution of a number of issues and a list of people with reputations for being powerful. There may be more or less overlap among the three groups. The results of issue analysis can indicate the extent to which the political authorities exercise power. The results of reputational analysis can suggest the extent to which those who exercise power become known as being influential, the extent to which those with reputations for being influential participate in decision-making, and whether or not covert influentials characterize the community power structure.

It is reasonable to assume that, in most communities, some sort of political authority structure will exist, that a certain amount of influence will be decentralized, and that there will exist a relatively

small body of people who play very active roles in community decision-making. The importance of these three factors will vary among communities, but it is likely that they will all play some part in the power processes, and each, therefore, requires examination.

In summary, the political authority structure can be seen as an institution whose function is to ensure the integration and smooth running of community processes. On closer examination, it may be discovered that parts of this structure are controlled by outside forces, and that the locus of power, instead of being within this structure, is in the peripheral areas of the community. The political institution, instead of acting as a controlling and integrating force, has become one of the means by which these peripheral structures ensure that their specific interests are served.

The researcher's aim is to discover how much power is dispersed to these peripheral areas, how it is distributed among them, and how they operate to control the direction of events within the community. He can most adequately accomplish this difficult task if he avails himself of as many perspectives and of as many kinds of information as possible. No one methodological approach can provide the researcher with the scope to uncover the many levels of the structure and exercise of power. No number of approaches can ever provide the researcher with the scope to uncover every aspect of the exercise of power. But he can maximize his potential to uncover the structures and processes of community power by approaching the problem from many different angles.

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Not only will the various types of data he collects increase the value of his research, but by utilizing several conceptual approaches, he can encompass many of the complexities of power and, hopefully, provide a more comprehensive analysis of the community power structure. The value of utilizing more than one approach in the structures and processes of society is well expressed in a statement by Eugene Webb, et al.

" As long as the research strategy is based on a single measurement class, some flanks will be exposed.... If no single measurement class is perfect, neither is any scientifically useless...for the most fertile search for validity comes from a combined series of different measures, each with its idiosyncratic weaknesses, each pointed to a single hypothesis. When the hypothesis can survive the confrontation of a series of complementary methods of testing, it contains a degree of validity unattainable by one tested with the more constricted framework of a single method.... There must be multiple operationalism. "

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER I

1. M. Herbert Danziger, "Community Power Structure: Problems and Continuities", American Sociological Review, XXIX (October, 1964), 4; Arnold Rose, The Power Structure, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 43.
2. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), pp. 185-9.
3. Ibid., pp. 188-9.
4. The following is a partial list of community power studies:
Robert E. Agger, et al., The Rulers and the Ruled: Political Power and Impotence in American Cities, (New York: Wiley & Co., 1964);
Charles M. Bonjean, "Community Leadership: A Case Study and Conceptual Refinement", American Journal of Sociology, (May, 1963), pp. 672-81; Robert Dahl, Who Governs: Power and Democracy in an American City, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961);
William H. Form & William V. D'Antonio, "Integration and Cleavage among Community Influentials in Two Border Cities", American Sociological Review, XXIV (December, 1959), 804-14;
Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure: A Study in Decision-Makers, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953);
Floyd Hunter et al., Community Organization: Action and Inaction, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960);
M. Kent Jennings, Community Influentials: The Elites of Atlanta, (New York: Free Press, 1964); Richard P. Lowry, Who's Running This Town?, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965); R. S. Lynd & H.M. Lynd, Middletown, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1929);
R. S. Lynd & H.M. Lynd, Middletown in Transition, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937); Delbert C. Miller, "Decision-Making Cliques in Community Power Structure", American Journal of Sociology, LXIV (November, 1964), pp. 299-310; Charles Press, Main Street Politics: Policy Making at the Local Level, (East Lansing: Michigan Institute for Community Development, 1962); Robert Presthus, Men at the Top: A Study in Community Power, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); Robert O. Schulze, "The Bifurcation of Power in a Satellite City", in M. Janowitz (ed.), Community Political Systems, (New York: Free Press, 1961), pp. 19-80; Arthur Vidich & Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1958); W. Lloyd Warner et al., Democracy in Jonesville, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1946).
In comparison, the following are studies done on national power structures; many of them are theoretical statements based on preliminary evidence, but not systematically researched:
Digby E. Baltzell, The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America, (New York: Vintage Books, 1964);

- Paul A. Baran & Paul M. Sweezy, Monopoly Capital, (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1966); G. William Domhoff, The Higher Circles, (New York: Vintage Books, 1971); John Kenneth Galbraith, The New Industrial State, (New York: Mentor Books, 1968); Floyd Hunter, Top Leadership, U.S.A., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959); Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism, (Chicago: Quadrangle Paperbacks, 1963); C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956); David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950); Arnold M. Rose, The Power Structure, Political Process in American Society, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).
5. Harold Kaufman, "Toward an Interactional Conception of Community", in L. Warren, Perspectives on the American Community, (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1966); (see other articles in Warren for various perspectives on the community.
 6. For a more detailed discussion, see M. Joseph Smucker, The Impact of Community Status Systems Upon Personal Appraisals of Life Conditions, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Michigan State University, 1967), pp. 26-53.
 7. Quoted in M. Aiken & P.E. Mott (eds.), The Structure of Community Power, (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 4.
 8. The following contain statements on the concept, power: Aiken, op.cit., part I; Amitai Etzioni, The Active Society, (New York: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 314-23, 357-61; Robert Bierstedt, "An Analysis of Social Power", American Sociological Review, XV (December, 1950); Terry N. Clark, "The Concept of Power: Some Overemphasized and Underrecognized Dimensions", Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, XLVIII (December, 1967); Edward Lehman, "Toward a Macrosociology of Power", American Sociological Review, XXXIV (August, 1969); Roderick Martin, "The Concept of Power: A Critical Defence", British Journal of Sociology, XXII (September, 1971); Hans H. Gerth & C. W. Mills, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), part II; Marvin E. Olsen (ed.), Power in Societies, (London: Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1970); Talcott Parsons, "On the Concept of Political Power", in S. M. Lipset & R. Bendix (eds.) Class, Status, and Power, (2nd ed., New York: The Free Press, 1966); Arnold M. Rose, op.cit., pp. 43-53; Richard A. Schermerhorn, Society and Power, (New York: Random House, 1961); Dennis Wrong, "Some Problems in Defining Social Power", American Journal of Sociology, LXXIII (May, 1968).
 9. Gerth & Mills, op.cit., p. 190.
 10. R. Bendix, Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1962), p. 290.

11. Gerth & Mills, op. cit., pp. 180-95.
12. Ibid., p. 182.
13. Ibid., p. 187.
14. Ibid., p. 192.
15. Ibid., p. 194.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., p. 194-5.
18. Ibid., p. 194.
19. Ibid., p. 194.
20. Ibid., p. 195.
21. Ibid.
22. R. Bendix, Max Weber, op. cit., p. 290.
23. Ibid., p. 86.
24. Ibid., p. 290.
25. Webster Universal Dictionary, (New York: Harver Educational Services, 1970).
26. Weber uses the term 'authority' to refer to this form of legitimized power, cf. Bendix, Max Weber, op. cit., pp. 286-97; for other examples of this usage of the term, see: W. V. D'Antonio & W. H. Form, Influentials in Two Border Cities, (Notre Dame; University of Notre Dame Press, 1965), p. 11; Aiken, op. cit., p. 9; Parsons, op. cit., p. 248; Olsen, op. cit., p. 7, 13; Schermerhorn, op. cit., p. 5.
27. Parsons, op. cit., p. 248.
28. see references in footnote 26.
29. Rose, op. cit., pp. 44-5.
30. D'Antonio & Form, Influentials, op. cit., p. 11.
31. for discussions of the role of conflict in the exercise of power, see: Etzioni, op. cit., pp. 314-23; Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 246; M. A. Neal, Values and Interests in Social Change, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), pp. 2-7; Parsons, op. cit., p. 246.

32. Parsons, op. cit., p. 246.
33. Gerth & Mills, op. cit., pp. 78, 180.
34. Schermerhorn reviews emphasis on both conflict and consensus in theories of power: op.cit., pp. 35-71.
35. Galbraith, op. cit.
36. Suzanne Keller, Beyond the Ruling Elite, (New York: Random House, 1963).
37. Galbraith, op. cit., pp. 62-68, 304-5; Keller, op. cit., pp. 4-6.
38. Galbraith, op. cit., pp. 68-70; Keller, op. cit., pp. 261-272; for a more direct statement by Galbraith on the distribution of power, see: J. K. Galbraith, American Capitalism, The Concept of Countervailing Power, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1956), pp. 200-1.
39. M. J. Smucker brought this issue to my attention.
40. Dahrendorf, op. cit., 165-7.
41. Ibid., pp.166-7.
42. Parsons, op. cit., pp. 255-6.
43. Ibid., p. 259.
44. Dahrendorf, op. cit., p. 169; Parsons, op. cit., p. 257-9.
45. Parsons, op. cit., pp. 257-9.
46. see Parsons, op. cit., for a statement on this issue.
47. R. O. Schulze, op. cit., p. 19.
48. C. Wright Mills. Power, Politics and People, J. L. Horowitz (ed.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 23.
49. see Rose, op. cit., pp. 45-50 for a discussion of the distinction between potential and actual power.
50. Howard J. Ehrlich, "Power and Democracy: A Critical Discussion", in W. V. D'Antonio & H. J. Ehrlich (eds.), Power and Democracy in America, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961), p. 92.
51. Harold Lasswell, Daniel Lerner, and C. Easton Rothwell, The Comparative Study of Elites, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1952), pp. 7-8.

52. Rose, op. cit., p. 51.
53. Ibid.
54. Gerth & Mills, op. cit., pp. 194-5.

CHAPTER II

55. Marvin E. Olsen, "Marx as a Power Theorist", in M.E. Olsen (ed.), Power in Societies, (London: Collier-Macmillan, Ltd., 1970), p. 70.
56. Ibid., pp. 70-1. See also T. B. Bottomore, Elites & Society, (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 24, and T. B. Bottomore & Maximilien Rubel, Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology & Social Philosophy (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1956).
57. M. E. Olsen, "Elitist Theory as a Response to Marx", in M.E. Olsen (ed.) op. cit., pp. 106-7; the following authors support the elitist model of the distribution of power: Digby Baltzell, The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America, (New York: Vintage Books, 1964); P. A. Baran & P.A. Sweezy, Monopoly Capital, (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1966); G. W. Domhoff, The Higher Circles, (New York, Vintage Books, 1967); Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure, (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953); Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism, (Chicago: Quadrangle Paperbacks, 1963); C. W. Mills, The Power Elite, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959); Robert Presthus, Men at the Top: A Study in Community Power, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); Floyd Hunter, Top Leadership, U.S.A., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959).
58. Olsen, op. cit., p. 70.
59. Mills, op. cit., p. 6.
60. Suzanne Keller, Beyond the Ruling Elite, (New York: Random House 1963), pp. 57-60.
61. M. E. Olsen, "Social Pluralism as a Basis for Democracy", in Olsen (ed.), op. cit., pp. 182-88; the following belong to the 'pluralist' school of thought: Robert Dahl, Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961); J. K. Galbraith, American Capitalism: The Concept of Countervailing Power, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1956); J. K. Galbraith, The New Industrial State, (New York: Mentor Books, 1968); David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950); Arnold Rose, The Power Structure: Political Processes in American Society, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

62. Olsen, "Social Pluralism", in Olsen (ed.), op. cit., p. 183.
63. D. Riesman, The Lonely Crowd, op. cit., p. 222-224.
64. Georg Simmel, Conflict and Web of Group Affiliations, K. Wolff and R. Bendix, trans., (New York: The Free Press, 1955), pp. 17ff. See also L. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict (New York: The Free Press, 1956), 29-31.
65. Baran & Sweezy, op. cit., pp. 336 ff.
66. Mills, op. cit.
67. see, for example, Kolko, op. cit., p. 303; Hunter, Community, op. cit., pp. 241 ff.; Mills, op. cit., pp. 321-4.
68. Baltzell, op. cit.
69. Riesman, op. cit., pp. 246-7.
70. The basic perspective of Parsonian sociology.
71. Dahrendorf and Baran & Sweezy are exceptions.
72. Kolko, op. cit., pp. 279-87.
73. James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal and the Liberal State, (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1966).
74. Baltzell, op. cit., pp. 380-3.
75. Authors who see American society as being 'closed' are:
Kolko, op. cit., pp. 279-87, 303; Baran & Sweezy, op. cit., p. 339; Hunter, Community, p. 228; Domhoff, op. cit., pp. 344-6; Mills, op. cit., p. 11;
some who see American society as tending toward 'open' are:
Galbraith, Industrial, pp. 76-8; Keller, op. cit., p. 235; Riesman, op. cit., p. 240; Rose, op. cit., pp. 484-5.
76. H. Gerth & C. W. Mills, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 180-95.

CHAPTER III

77. Linton Freeman, T. J. Fararo, W. Bloomberg, and M.H. Sunshine, "Locating Leaders in Local Communities: A Comparison of Some Alternative Approaches", American Sociological Review, XXVIII (October, 1963), 797; Nelson W. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 6 ff.

78. Charles Bonjean and David M. Olson, "Community Leadership: Directions of Research" in M. Aiken & P. E. Mott (eds.), The Structure of Community Power, (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 203.
79. Rose, op. cit., p. 257.
80. S. Fisher, "Community Power Studies: A Critique", Social Research, XXIX (Winter, 1962), 449-50; for a description of the positional and other techniques, see: Robert Dahl, Modern Political Theory, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 52 ff., and Rose, op. cit., pp. 255-80; the following researchers have used positional analysis either alone or in combination with other techniques: Wendell Bell, R. J. Hill and C.R. Wright, Public Leadership, (San Francisco: Chandler, 1961); C. Freeman, and S. C. Mayo, "Decision-Makers in Rural Community Action", Social Forces, XXXV (1957), 319-22; A. B. Hollingshead, Elmstown's Youth, (New York: 1949); M. K. Jennings, "Public Administrators and Community Decision making", Administrative Science Quarterly, VIII (1963), 19-43; R. S. Lynd and H. M. Lynd, Middletown in Transition, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937); R. O. Schulze and L. U. Blumberg, "The Determination of Local Power Elites", American Journal of Sociology, LXIII (1957), 290-96; R. O. Schulze, "The Role of Economic Dominants in Community Power Structure", American Sociological Review, XXIII (1958), 3-9; W. L. Warner et al., Democracy in Jonesville (New York: Macmillan Co., 1946); C. W. Mills, The Power Elite, (New York: Oxford University Press 1956).
81. R. O. Schulze and L. Blumberg, "Determination", op. cit., p. 290.
82. C. W. Mills, The Power Elite, op. cit.
83. Bonjean and Olsen, op. cit., p. 212.
84. C. W. Mills, Op. cit., pp. 3-29, 274-5.
85. Ibid., pp. 286-97.
86. Ibid., pp. 298-324; T.B. Bottombre, Elites & Society, op. cit., pp. 33-4.
87. W. L. Warner, et al., Democracy in Jonseville, op. cit.
88. Ibid., pp. xiii-xviii.
89. Ibid., pp. 30 ff.
90. Ibid., pp. 101-114.
91. Ibid., pp. 193 ff.
92. Aiken and Mott, op. cit., p. 194.

93. Nelson W. Polsby, "How to Study Community Power: the Pluralist Alternative", Journal of Politics, XXII (August, 1966), 474.
94. N. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory, op. cit., pp. 39-42.
95. Warner, op. cit., p. 101.
96. Ibid., pp. 107-108, 113.
97. S. Stouffer, Community, Conformity, and Civil Liberties, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Books, 1955).
98. Aiken and Mott, op. cit., p. 194.
99. Bonjean and Olsen, op. cit., p. 204; Rose, op. cit., pp. 256-7.
100. Bonjean and Olsen, op. cit., p. 204.
101. Floyd Hunter, Community.
102. the following authors have employed reputational analysis:
R. E. Agger and D. Goldrich, "Community Power Structures and Partisanship", American Sociological Review, XXIII (August, 1958);
D. A. Booth and C. R. Adrian, "Power Structure and Community Change", Midwest Journal of Political Science, VI (August, 1962);
C. M. Bonjean, "Community Leadership: A Case Study and Conceptual Refinement", American Journal of Sociology, LXVIII, (May, 1963);
W. H. Form and W. V. D'Antonio, "Integration and Cleavage among Community Influentials in Two Border Cities", American Sociological Review, XXIV, (December 1959); Floyd Hunter, Community;
D. C. Miller, "Industry and Community Power Structure: A Comparative Study of an American and an English City", American Sociological Review, XXIII (February, 1958);
Robert Presthus, Men at the Top: A Study of Community Power (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).
103. Floyd Hunter, Community, pp. 255-63; Rose, op. cit., pp. 258-9, provide descriptions of this technique.
104. See discussion in this text, pp. 2-6.
105. W. D'Antonio and H. J. Ehrlich, (eds.), Power and Democracy in America, op. cit., pp. 92 ff.; Raymond Wolfinger, "A Plea for a Decent Burial", American Sociological Review, XXVII (December, 1962), 841-47.
106. Nelson W. Polsby, "The Sociology of Community Power: A Reassessment", Social Forces, XXXVII (March, 1959), 236.
107. R. Presthus, op. cit., p. 110.

108. R. Wolfinger, "Reputation and Reality in the Study of Community Power", American Sociological Review, XXV (October, 1960), 638-40.
109. H. J. Ehrlich, "The Reputational Approach to the Study of Community Power", American Sociological Review, XXVI (December, 1961), 926.
110. Hunter, op.cit., pp. 261-62.
111. Polsby, Community Power, p. 51.
112. Hunter, op.cit., p. 256.
113. W. H. Form and W. V. D'Antonio, op.cit.
114. M. H. Danziger, "Community Power Structure", pp. 710-11.
115. N. Polsby, "Community Power", p. 51.
116. Wolfinger, "Reputation and Reality", p. 644.
117. Freeman, et al., "Locating Leaders", p. 798.
118. Presthus, op.cit., p. 424.
119. Rose, op. cit., p. 265.
120. N. Polsby, "Power in Middletown: Fact and Value in Community Power", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, XXVI (November, 1960), 602-3.
121. Hunter, op. cit., p. 262.
122. Rose, op. cit., p. 276.
123. C. Kadushin, "Power, Influence, and Social Circles: A New Methodology for Studying Opinion Makers", American Sociological Review, XXXIII (October, 1968), 694.
124. For a description of the decisional technique, see Rose, op. cit., p. 277-80; Aiken and Mott, op. cit., pp. 197-99; the following authors have used decisional analysis: W. Bloomberg and Morris Sunshine, Suburban Power Structure and Public Education, (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1963); M. E. Burgess, Negro Leadership in a Southern City, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960); Robert Dahl, Who Governs?, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961); Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism, (Chicago: Quadrangle Paperbacks, 1963); R. C. Martin, et al., Decision in Syracuse, (Bloomington, Indiana: University of Indiana Press, 1961); Robert Presthus, The Men at the Top, op. cit.; James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal and the Liberal State, (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1966).

125. Aiken and Mott, op. cit., p. 197.
126. W. D'Antonio, et al., "Further Notes on the Study of Community Power", American Sociological Review, XXVII (December, 1962), 927.
127. E. T. Barth and S. D. Johnson, "Community Power and a Typology of Social Issues", Social Forces, XXXVIII (October, 1959), 29-32.
128. See Freeman, et al., "Locating Leaders", pp. 797-8; N. Polsby, "The Pluralist Alternative", pp. 474-84.
129. Dahl, op. cit.
130. Ibid., pp. 121-33, Ch. 11, 12.
131. Ibid., pp. 101-06, 151, 161-64.
132. Ibid., pp. 39 ff.
133. M. K. Jennings, Community Influentials: The Elites of Atlanta, (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. 17.
134. Bonjean and Olsen, op. cit., p. 286.
135. Presthus, op. cit., p. 110.
136. Polsby, "The Pluralist Alternative", p. 475.
137. Bonjean and Olsen, op. cit., p. 286.
138. Ibid.
139. A. S. McFarland, Power and Leadership in Pluralist Systems, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 87.
140. Rose, op. cit., pp. 278-9.
141. Dahl, quoted in D'Antonio and Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 106.
142. McFarland, op. cit., p. 101.
143. Ibid.
144. F. Frey, "Comment: On Issues and Non-Issues in the Study of Power", American Political Science Review, LXV (December, 1965), 1092.
145. Ibid., pp. 1099-1100; see also Rose, op. cit., pp. 279-80.
146. Frey, op. cit., pp. 1092-3.

147. Freeman, et al., "Locating Leaders", pp. 792-3.
148. R. Wolfinger, "Nondecision and the Study of Local Politics", American Political Science Review, LXV (December, 1971), pp. 1078-80.
149. S. Fisher, op.cit., p. 454.

CHAPTER IV

150. John Walton, "Substance and Artifact: The Current Status of Research on Community Power Structures", American Journal of Sociology, LXXI (January, 1966), 348.
151. L. Freeman, et al., "Locating Leaders in Local Communities: A Comparison of Some Alternative Approaches", American Sociological Review, XXVIII (October, 1963).
152. Using Parson's typology; see M. A. Neal, Values and Interests in Social Change, "Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 12.
153. See pp. 2-6 of this text.
154. A clear description of this situation is presented in A. Vidich and J. Bensman's book, Small Town in Mass Society, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958).
155. M. J. Smucker, The Impact of Community Status Systems Upon Personal Appraisals of Life Conditions, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (Michigan State University, 1967), pp. 26-53.
156. See footnote # 80.
157. E. Webb, et al., Unobtrusive Measures: Nonreactive Research in the Social Sciences (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966). pp. 173-4. quoted in Norman K. Denzin, The Research Act, A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), p. 27.

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