

OCCUPATIONAL MYTHS

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Myths abound in occupational life, but the topic of myths has generally been neglected by occupational sociologists. This paper attempts to rectify the omission. It is contended that we find myths at points of occupational stress and the myths are used by workers to cope with the stress. Six broad occupational types are discussed in this paper: professions, semi-professions, managers, white collar clerical workers, low status employees and deviant occupations. For each type, I describe major points of stress and the myths that have developed in an effort to cope with the conflict. It is hoped that this type of analysis will be extended to other points of stress as well as to additional types of occupations.

The goal of this paper is to discuss the myths which exist within a variety of occupational types. The basic thesis is that these myths develop around points of stress between a given occupation and its environment. The concept of myth as it is used here is similar to what Mannheim calls ideologies or "the more or less conscious deceptions and disguises of human interest groups" (Mannheim, 1936:265). These deceptions may be "intentional or unintentional, conscious, semi-conscious, or unconscious, deluding of one's self or of others, taking place on a psychological level and structurally resembling lies" (Mannheim, 1936: 265-266). Following Mannheim, a major task in contemporary sociology has become the uncovering of these ideologies, deceptions, fictions or myths. This goal is either explicit or implicit in the concepts of "latent function" (Merton, 1969), "debunking" (Berger, 1963), "the sociological imagination" (Mills, 1959), "dramaturgy" (Goffman, 1959), and many others. Among occupational sociologists, Everett Hughes (1958) has had a longstanding interest in myths. Talking of our most prestigious occupations, Hughes notes that prestige carries with it "a tendency to preserve a front which hides the inside of things" (Hughes, 1958:49). Although myths are found in all types of occupations, Hughes urged his students to study low status occupations because "the processes which are hidden in other occupations come more readily to view in these lowly ones" (Hughes, 1958: 49). Thus the search for myths has a long tradition in sociology in general as well as in occupational sociology. However, we must not be satisfied with simply uncovering myths. Rather, we must attempt to relate them to more general social processes. In the present paper, therefore, we will be concerned with the relation of occupational myths to occupational conflict and stress.

Members of occupations frequently encounter stress as they interact with their environments: clients, customers, and those in other occupations and organizations. One way in which members of occupations deal with stress is through the use of occupational myths. Occupational myths commonly develop around points of stress between occupations and their environments and thereby enable members of the occupation to cope with the stressful situation. In the following discussion, six broad occupational types are considered: the professions, semi-professions, managers, white collar clerical workers, low status employees, and deviant occupations. For each type major points of stress and the myths that have developed are described in an effort to cope with the conflict. Only a few of the many particular occupations are included under each general type. Thus, the present paper is merely suggestive, not exhaustive. By focusing on a few broad occupational types, I hope to demonstrate the utility of looking for occupational myths at points of stress. The thesis can then be applied to specific occupations in a variety of particular settings.

Professions

The professions stand at the pinnacle of the occupational hierarchy; so it is not surprising, following Hughes, that there has been extremely little discussion of ideologies at this level. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that myths abound among the professions. There are two basic types of professionals: the "free" professional (e.g., the doctor or lawyer in private practice) and the professional employed in an organization (e.g., the college professor or the industrial scientist). The myths which abound in each differ because the professions possess very different structures. Because their occupational structures differ, professionals face different problems and it is around these areas of stress that we are most likely to find occupational myths.

I will start with the "free" professional whose major problems revolve around his relationship with clients. In order to survive, the "free" professional must attract and keep a clientele. As a defense against his clients the free professions have developed an ideology of "professional authority." That is, the client, according to the free professional, is not supposed to question the judgment of the professional. In this way, ostensibly, the problem of the client is resolved because control is in the hands of the professional. Clients are not to "shop around" because they are supposed to be incapable of judging whether one professional is better than another. Further, the client is not supposed to question the judgment of the professional because he can never understand why he has made that judgment. A client is unable to understand the reasons for a professional's decision because the professional has expertise acquired through long years of training. Thus, the free professional would have us believe that he is all knowing and that clients accept whatever judgments he makes.

Are professionals all-knowing? Are clients unable and unwilling to question their judgment? Or is the idea of "professional authority" a myth? Considerable evidence indicates that the idea of professional authority is a myth. Fox (1957), for example, has discussed the uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine and the fact that one of the major functions of medical school is preparing students to deal with the uncertainty they will face when they enter the work-world. Henderson (1966) has focused on the tenuous control physicians have over patients. He discusses a series of rules physicians follow in interacting with patients which are aimed at preventing the patient from becoming dissatisfied and seeking another doctor. Along the same lines Freidson (1960) has noted that physicians will even resort to giving placebos in order to keep patients satisfied. Freidson also discusses the fact that patients do shop around for a suitable doctor. Peers are seen as crucial determinants of which doctor an individual will see and whether he will continue to see him. The mass media has played a crucial role in making patients more aware of what is wrong with them as well as the inadequacies within the profession of medicine. In these and other ways we are witnessing what Haug and Sussman (1969) have called "the revolt of the client." For these reasons the idea of professional authority is largely mythical.

The free professional, therefore, has attempted to solve his problems with clients with the ideology of "professional authority." The professional employed in an organization has a different set of problems. Although the amount of conflict varies between types of organizations, professionals in organizations must almost inevitably cope with conflict between the norms of the employing organization and those of the occupation. In order to deal with this conflict, professionals in organizations rely on the ideology of "professional autonomy." Related to professional authority, the ideology of professional autonomy is aimed mainly at other occupations and employing organizations. In effect, the professional in an organization is telling those around him that they cannot evaluate him or determine

his activities. Only a fellow professional is supposed to be capable of evaluating or supervising a professional.

The idea of "professional autonomy" is as much a myth as the idea of "professional authority." Because professionals have, with increasing frequency, become employees of complex organizations, they have found themselves supervised by non-professionals. It is precisely because non-professionals can supervise the work of professionals that professionals have developed the myth of autonomy. In practice this myth has been a fairly successful device. Managers and officials in organizations which employ professionals have accommodated themselves to the myth of autonomy by setting up separate sub-organizations for professionals and appointing professionals to supervise the work of other professionals. Some managers and officials, however, have recognized the mythical nature of professional autonomy and countered it with a myth of their own. In response they say that the manager is the only one with a broad scale view of what's going on in the organization. Hence they say they must retain control over the activities of professional employees. Whether it is successful or unsuccessful, the idea of professional autonomy remains a myth because non-professionals can evaluate the work of professionals as well as determine their activities.

Managers

In the discussion of professionals, it was indicated that some managers have adopted an ideology toward one source of difficulty for them, the professional. Although professionals are a problem for managers, they are hardly the major source of stress. In this section I will point out just a few of the ideologies at the managerial level.

Because they are in the center of their organization, managers are asked to make decisions by various significant others within the organization. In fact, decision-making is the defining characteristic of the managerial occupations. Because they are faced with conflicting expectations, managers have had to surround themselves with an ideology which satisfies those whose expectations have not been satisfied by their decisions. This ideology might be termed "managerial rationality." That is, managers digest all information, analyze it rationally, and come out with the best possible decision. Because only they have all the information, and because they take such pains to analyze it rationally, significant others whose expectations are not satisfied by the decision are supposed to find solace in the fact that it was made "rationally."

The mythical elements of "managerial rationality" have been well documented in the literature. A good starting point is the work of Herbert Simon (1957). Simon does not reject the rationality of managers; rather he recognizes its limits. In his concept of "bounded rationality" Simon argues that because such factors as inadequate information, or lack of ability, the rationality of managerial decision is limited. Others, however, have gone much further in debunking the myth of managerial rationality. William H. Whyte, Jr. (1957) and C. Wright Mills (1951), among others, have pointed out that the most successful managers never make decisions, let alone rational decisions. The route to the top in contemporary organizations, according to this view, is never to take any risks by making clear decisions. If a manager does not make any decisions, how can he be criticized by others in the organization? Thus Mills advises the manager on the rise: "So speak in the rich, round voice and do not confuse your superiors with details. Know where to draw the line. Execute the ceremony of forming a judgment. Delay recognizing the choice you have already made, so as to make the truism sound like the deeply pondered notion. Speak like the quiet competent man of affairs and never personally say No. Hire the No-man as well as the Yes-man. Be the tolerant

Maybe-man and they will cluster around you, filled with hopefulness. Practice softening the facts into the optimistic, practical, forward-looking, cordial brisk view. Speak to the well-blunted point. Have weight, be stable; caricature what you are supposed to be but never become aware of it much less amused by it. And never let your brains show. . . ." (Mills, 1956: 142-143).

More recently, a psychologist, Lawrence Peter, assisted by Raymond Hull, (1969) has gone much further in his critique of the ideology of managerial rationality. Peter's basic contention is that everyone in modern organizations rises to his "level of incompetence." That is, one who performs well at a relatively low level will be promoted. If he performs well at that level he will be promoted again. This sounds like highly rational managerial policy. However, Peter contends that this process will be repeated over and over until an individual is promoted to a position in which the duties are beyond his capabilities. Thus each position in an organization will ultimately be filled by those who are incompetent to handle the duties associated with it. The works discussed here, and others, tend to cast serious doubt on the ideology of managerial rationality.

The managerial ideology discussed above is generally attributed to line managers. That is, those managers who are directly involved in the production functions. There are also staff managers in many organizations who are involved in the supervision of activities which provide services to the production end of the organization. Included here might be accounting, engineering, purchasing and personnel managers. Since they are in charge of service departments, they have a slightly different ideology. Although they contend their decisions are rational, they deny the fact that they ever make decisions for line managers. They contend that they only offer advice and that the basic decision is left to the line management. However, there is considerable evidence to indicate that much of this is mythical. The ideology is nevertheless, like all other ideologies, adaptive. Since staff managers are in an advisory position, they have had to cloak the fact that they make decisions in this ideology. If they were to admit that they were decision makers, great strain would be placed on their relationship with line managers. Line managers view themselves as the final decision makers and a staff manager who asserted his right to make decisions would upset their ideology. Dubin (1968) calls both of these ideologies "organizational fictions." "Organizational fictions are those fictions that are necessary in order that action within the formal organization may proceed" (Dubin: 341). Despite the fact that everyone is aware of these myths, they continue because the truth is disconcerting. Thus by silent agreement among members of the organization the truth is clothed in fiction. In order to maintain the equilibrium of the organization, line managers continue to contend that they make all the decisions and staff managers contend that they are only advisors.

There is considerable evidence, however, that staff managers do make decisions for the line. Miller (1967), for example, in discussing the basic line manager, the foreman, demonstrates how the growth of staff departments has encroached on the domain of the foreman and drastically reduced his authority. A good example of the gap between myth and reality, in terms of the foreman, is the case of hiring. Generally, the personnel department will advertise, interview, test, and screen out applicants it wishes to hire. Those selected are then brought to the foreman who needs replacements. The foreman then "decides" whether to hire those selected by the personnel department. In fact, he "decides" in virtually all cases to hire those selected by personnel. Thus, who has made the decision, personnel or the foreman? Quite clearly personnel has, but the charade goes on.

The strongest evidence on this point comes from a study by Ritzer and Trice (1969) of personnel managers. Of all staff managers, personnel managers are the strongest in their adherence to the ideology that they never make decisions. In

talking of personnel in particular, but all staff departments as well, a leading personnel textbook says: "The staff can provide information from which the line can base its decisions, of course. . .line management should decide. . ." (Strauss and Sayles, 1967: 435). In the Ritzer and Trice study the personnel managers were given hypothetical situations into which were built conflicting expectations from line managers. Rather than conforming to the expectations of line managers as the ideology would lead us to believe most personnel managers chose an independent course of action. That is, they made a decision based on what they thought was best, rather than merely doing what the line managers wanted. In addition, Ritzer and Trice conducted open-ended interviews with personnel managers to ascertain whether they acted the same way in real-life situations. Once again the majority of personnel managers made similar kinds of independent decisions. Thus personnel managers make decisions for line managers, know they do it, but refuse to publicly admit that they do. Line managers are the major source of stress for the personnel manager and he is unwilling to upset the equilibrium by proclaiming that he makes decisions for them. Thus personnel managers, and other staff officers, wage rather elaborate public relations campaigns to project a false image to line managers. Under the guise of this false image they are allowed to continue to make decisions for the line, while at the same time claiming that they never make such decisions. This is the kind of "silent agreement" which allows the organization to function smoothly.

White Collar Clerical Workers

The major problem for white collar workers is their rather tenuous claim to status. They have maintained their status by comparing themselves to blue collar workers and concluding that they are far better off. A number of recent social changes, however, have threatened this myth. Because of these changes white collar workers have found it increasingly difficult to maintain their ideology. These changes, which have served to reduce the status of white collar workers and increase the status of blue collar workers, have resulted in what Mills calls the "status panic" among white collar employees (Mills, 1951). On the one hand, offices have become more like factories, automation has replaced many white collar workers, and the closeness of the secretary to the executive has been replaced by secretarial and stenographic pools. These and other changes have threatened the status claims of white collar workers. On the other hand, the conditions of blue collar workers have greatly improved. Many automated factories look like offices, many blue collar workers can now wear white shirts, and their pay is close to, or in some cases exceeds, the pay of white collar workers. In the face of changes at both these levels, white collar workers have refused to give up the ideology that they are of higher status than blue collar workers.

An important piece of evidence in support of the contention that white collar workers continue to subscribe to this ideology is the failure of white collar unions. In response to threats to their status, it would seem logical that white collar workers would turn to labor unions to maintain their position. However, the very concept of a labor union constitutes still another status threat to many clerical workers. "The overwhelming majority of salesmen, typists, file clerks, and professionals will not join because they consider it beneath their dignity, because they feel differently from blue collar workers about their jobs and their status, because they are afraid it will hurt their advancement, and because the face of the labor movement seems to them crude and exploitative" (Bruner, 1964:188). Thus a major opportunity to reduce the threats to their status is blithely ignored by white collar workers because of what Bruner calls their "will-o'-the-wisp dignity" (Bruner:190). Ignoring labor unions, white collar employees cling desperately to their mythical image in the face of enormous occupational changes which are making the reality of their situation clearer to both them and outsiders.

The Semi-Professions

The major sources of stress for those in the semi-professions (e.g., nursing, social work, and public and secondary school teaching) are the barriers to the goal they so desperately desire, recognition as professionals. To deal with this problem semi-professionals have developed the ideology that they are, or will soon become, professionals. A glance at any journal of the semi-professions will reveal a host of articles dealing with the question of professionalization. "Why we are professionals," or "why we will soon be professionals" are the favorite topics of these articles. Despite such articles, and active public relations campaigns by semi-professional associations, most of those outside the semi-professions would agree that they are not professions and are unlikely ever to become professions. This is especially true of those in the established professions who work with those in the semi-professions. Thus, while the nurse treats a physician with the respect due a professional, the physician is highly unlikely to reciprocate. Similarly, school teachers respect the professional status of the college professor, but the college professor denigrates the professionalism of school teachers. Despite these and other rejections, semi-professionals cling doggedly to their ideology.

Semi-professionals subscribe to their ideology because they would be greatly rewarded if they could convince others that they are worthy of being labeled professionals. However, it is mythical because what they are seeking is unattainable. For one thing, they are attempting to emulate the established professions of medicine and law. However, physicians and lawyers attained recognition as professionals while they were still "free" professionals. The semi-professions, however, are not "free," they are creatures of formal organizations. Because they are employees, they can never become like the free professions. They will always be more responsive to their employing organization than their professional association because they are paid by their employer. Another characteristic of the established professions is their possession of general systematic knowledge. As of this moment the semi-professions have been unable to develop such knowledge which they can call their own. What knowledge they have acquired is either drawn eclectically from the established professions or through practical experience. It is highly unlikely that we will ever see a theory of teaching, or nursing, or social work. Because the semi-professions will never be autonomous (because they will always be responsive to superiors within their employing organization), and never acquire a systematic body of knowledge of their own, they are unlikely to be treated like professionals by those around them. The physician, for example, is unlikely ever to view a nurse as a professional colleague to be consulted, not supervised. Similarly, patients are unlikely to be as accepting of the advice of a nurse as they are of the advice of a physician.

Low Status Workers

One of the basic problems for those in low status occupations is the fact that they are in low status occupations in a society which measures status primarily by the level of one's job. Thus workers at this occupational level have had to develop myths which resolve this dilemma. Many low status occupations are characterized by an ideology which serves to inflate the importance of the occupation. We are all familiar with the garbageman who wants to be called a "sanitation engineer." This phenomenon has been reported in a number of studies of low status occupations. For example, the work of telephone switchboard operators is similar in many ways to assembly-line work, yet most switchboard operators emphasize the cleanliness of the work, their better manners, and superior dress. One operator contends: "It's not like manual labor, it's more like office work" (Seidman, *et. al.*: 1962:494). Another states: "It is the same as any business office. In fact, I think they (telephone workers) should be called communication secretaries because they do a great deal of work for business firms" (Seidman, *et. al.*: 494). Others in

the telephone company have a more realistic appraisal of the switchboard operators: "I tell you I simply can't see that they are classified as white collar people. . .it's just like an assembly line. . .But if you say that they all resent it - they don't want to admit it because it degrades them. . ." (Seidman, et. al.:495).

As Simpson and Simpson point out, low status workers "seize upon some aspect of their work which is highly valued, either throughout society or in the work sub-culture, and build a self-image around it" (Simpson and Simpson; 1959:389). Their study of the psychiatric attendant clearly reveals the development of such an ideology. Most of the psychiatric attendants gave extrinsic reasons (salary, not qualified for anything else, etc.) for taking their jobs, but gave intrinsic reasons (interest in patients, etc.) for staying on the job. When the activities that attendants say are most important are compared to the activities they say are most time consuming some interesting differences appear:

Activity	Percentage of attendants mentioning activity as most important	Percentage of attendants mentioning activity as most time consuming
Interaction with patients	28.4%	4.9%
Physical care of patients	45.4%	29.9%
Supervision and observation of patients' behavior	18.4%	13.2%
Housekeeping and miscellaneous	7.8%	52.0% (Simpson and Simpson:391)

It is clear that the attendants stress activities which relate to the care of the patient while they spend the majority of their time on housekeeping and miscellaneous chores. By focusing on the highly valued aspect of patient care the psychiatric attendants are able to hold a highly favorable self-image. Although all attendants are not satisfied with their work, this exaggerated self image serves to make the job more palatable.

Trice's (1964) study of the nightwatchman also presents evidence that those in low status occupations emphasize a minor, but highly valued, aspect of their work. The nightwatchman is required to circulate around his location in order to be sure that there is no trouble. This, however, tends to be dull and routine since there is rarely anything wrong. To enhance their occupational self-image nightwatchmen chose to focus on several aspects of their job which were regarded by society as very important. For example, almost all of them felt that fire prevention was their most important task despite the fact that there had been no threat of fire at the location studied by Trice for years. They also emphasized the fact that they were management surrogates "representing the company to anyone who came or went in the building" (Trice). This image was held despite the fact that rarely, if ever, did anyone come into the building during the hours that the nightwatchman was on duty. In sum, an occupational self image which emphasizes highly valued aspects of the job makes work in low status occupations more satisfying to the individuals in these occupations.

It is interesting to ponder whether this emphasis on a highly valued aspect of the job is really accepted by individuals in the occupations, or whether it is merely for public consumption. If they truly believe it, they are confronted with an enormous task of self deception. They must hold this belief despite the fact that most of the things they do, and most of the things they are expected to do, contradict the self image. Further, if they do believe in their mythical self image, they will be confronted with much status inconsistency. They feel they have high status while virtually everyone else in the organization has a more objective view of their position. This is exemplified by the individual in the telephone company who said that he couldn't see how operators could classify themselves as white collar workers when their work more closely resembles an assembly line. If the individuals in low status occupations hold a mythical image merely for public relations purposes, they are faced with other problems. They fail to enhance their own job satisfaction if they do not believe in the occupational image they are trying to project. Further, they are unlikely to convince anyone else, if they do not believe it themselves. For a mythical occupational image to be successful, the individuals in the occupation must believe it and they must try to convince others of its validity. However, one must question whether this device can ever be truly successful. How can the incumbent convince himself that his self image is true when he is constantly faced with evidence to the contrary? How can he convince others when they clearly see that the image does not reflect reality? We need only think of the janitors who want us to call them sanitation engineers to realize how unsuccessful are such efforts. The lack of success of at least some mythical occupational images reveals the frustration which must exist in low status occupations. Despite the difficulties inherent in them, mythical occupational images are an important part of the life of those in low status occupations in organization.

Deviant Occupations

The study of deviant occupations has primarily been the province of sociologists interested in deviant behavior. Nevertheless, since many are full-time occupations, it is equally fitting that they be the concern of occupational sociology. In a way, deviant occupations are in a position similar to low status occupations. While those in low status occupations must develop ideologies to deal with their lack of status, individuals in deviant occupations must cope with their deviancy. Deviancy, like being in a low status occupation, is not a desirable characteristic in terms of the American value system. Thus, those in deviant occupations have had to develop an ideology which elevates them in their own minds as well as in the eyes of the public. To accomplish this, individuals in deviant occupations often develop an ideology that they are better or more honest than those in the "straight" world, or that they are providing a vital service to society.

Bryan's (1968) study of the prostitute clearly illustrates both aspects of the ideology of those in deviant occupations. First, Bryan comments on the aspect of the ideology which emphasizes that those in deviant occupations are more honest than those in the "straight" world: "Frequently it is postulated that people, particularly men, are corrupt or easily corruptible, that all social relationships are but a reflection of a 'con,' and that prostitution is simply a more honest or at least no more dishonest act than the everyday behavior of 'squares'" (Bryan:262). Prostitutes also subscribe to the idea that they are "better" than those in the "straight" world: "Not only are 'johns' (the prostitute's customers) basically exploitative,. . .they are easily exploited; hence they are, in some respects, stupid" (Bryan:262).

Jazz musicians, as described by Becker (1963) also share the above ideology. Becker makes it quite clear that jazz musicians consider themselves better than the members of the audience. They believe that only the jazz musician really understands their type of music. But the jazz musician does not stop there: "This attitude is generalized into a feeling that musicians are better than other kinds of

people and accordingly ought not to be subject to the control of outsiders in any branch of life. . . ." (Becker:86). One jazz musician contends: "I'll understand things that squares never will" (Becker:86). Jazz musicians are the only ones who are "hip," while: "The square seems to do everything wrong and is laughable and ludicrous" (Becker:90). There is no evidence that jazz musicians feel themselves more honest than the squares. However, those who choose to play "pure" jazz feel themselves more honest than those who choose to satisfy the audience and play commercial music.

Those in virtually all deviant occupations adopt an ideology which emphasizes the fact that they are providing a vital service to the community. In this, more than any other, they are attempting to cope with the stress resulting from their lowly status in society. They are saying that they are worthy of more lofty status because of the vital functions they perform. This, for example, is a major ideology of the numbers man. Many sociologists, including William Foote Whyte (1967), have written of the functions which the numbers man performs for the community. This point has been made, in particular, about the black community. The widespread playing of the numbers in the ghetto has been explained in terms of its functionality for the black community. The numbers man, therefore, seeks to increase his status by emphasizing the functionality of his position. Similar devices are used by bookies, con-artists, and the like. Prostitutes often subscribe to the notion that they are really serving to maintain family stability. They contend that because a man is dissatisfied with his wife he is likely to turn to a prostitute for satisfaction. Since she can satisfy him, and because she is not a competitor of the wife, she serves to help maintain a rocky marriage. If it were not for her, the man might turn to another woman and seek to divorce his wife (Bryon:1968).

In examining the ideologies of those in deviant occupations, as was the case with straight occupations, their mythical nature is clear. It is undoubtedly true that most straight people are, in many ways, dishonest. But this does not make them less honest than those who make their living by dishonesty. Similarly, those in deviant occupations are not "better" than those in the straight world. They may be better in their area of expertise (e.g. jazz), but this does not make them better in all respects. Finally, deviant occupations undoubtedly provide many functions for the community, but this ignores the many dysfunctions associated with them. The prostitute may serve to sustain a rocky marriage, but it is just as likely that she may destroy that type of marriage. The numbers man may perform functions for a slum community, but what about all of those who have lost much of their money gambling on the numbers? The question here is one of net balance; do the functions outweigh the dysfunctions?

Conclusions

The study of occupational myths has not been of central concern to the occupational sociologist. In fact, the number of studies done with this explicit focus can be counted on one hand. Nevertheless, it offers the researcher an important and fascinating topic. As I have attempted to demonstrate, occupational myths exist at all levels of the occupational structure. Further they tend to develop around areas of stress between the focal occupation and surrounding occupations and organizations. The free professional, contrary to popular opinion, does conflict with his clients. To cope with this conflict, the free professional has developed the myth of professional authority. For the professional employed in a complex organization there is likely to be conflict between the norms of his occupation and those of the employing organization. As a means of dealing with this conflict, the professional in an organization subscribes to the myth of professional autonomy. The manager, in the face of conflicting demands from a number of significant others, has developed the myth of managerial rationality to deal with those whose demands

are not met by his decisions. The staff manager, however, is in a somewhat different situation. He heads departments whose function it is to advise the line. However, the staff manager frequently finds himself in a position where he is making decisions for the line. Because line management would balk were this to be publicized, the staff manager has developed the myth that he is strictly an advisor and all decisions are in the hands of the line. Because of their marginal status, white collar clerical workers have developed a myth that they are of higher status than blue collar workers. However, social changes among both white and blue collar occupations have narrowed the gap and in many cases have made them indistinguishable. Nevertheless, white collar workers continue to subscribe to the myth as evidenced by the fact that they generally refuse to join white collar unions despite the fact that the unions could enhance their status or at least slow down some of the social changes which are threatening them. Therefore, white collar workers refuse to join unions because they associate them with "lower status" blue collar workers. The semi-professions have a similar problem. Because they are not accepted as professionals, semi-professionals have promulgated the myth that they are professionals, or are about to be professionals. Those in low status occupations must cope with the fact that they are something which American society considers to be of high status. The nightwatchman, for example, contends that he is the company representative at night and the psychiatric attendant tells us that his most important task is care of the patient. Finally, individuals in deviant occupations are in the same position as those in low status occupations since they are in occupations which most of society considers undesirable. To cope with this, those in deviant occupations accept the myth that they are better and more honest than those in the straight world. In addition, they contend that they are performing a vital function for society.

In this paper I have sought to demonstrate the ubiquity of myths in a number of different occupational levels. A number of other things need to be done. For one, this type of analysis can be extended to additional occupations within each of the types already discussed. For another it can be extended to a variety of other occupational types. The union president, for example, must deal with members who are dissatisfied with his administration. To deal with disenchanting members, union presidents have developed the myth of union democracy. Disenchanted members are kept in line by the belief that they can change things in the next election. However, for a number of reasons, many of which are discussed by Michels (1962) under the heading of the "iron law of oligarchy," union presidents are almost impossible to dislodge. The point is that many other types of occupations can be analyzed from the perspective of occupational myths. In sum, more occupations need to be examined from the ideological perspective. Further, within each occupation presented here there are more conflicts and, therefore, additional myths which are worthy of study.

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