

# The organization man by william whyte



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Introduction William whyte wrote this book about the people how work in organization while analyzing their behavior in the organization.

Discussing not guest the workers, but also the white-collar people in the usual, clerk sense of the word. These people only work for the organization. They are the ones of our middle class who has left home, spiritually as well as physically, to take the vows of organization life, and it is they who are the mind and soul of our great self-perpetuating institutions. William whyte names them as “ The Organization Man”.

The organization man seeks redemption of his place on earth—a faith that will satisfy him that what he must endure has a deeper meaning than appears on the surface. He needs; in short, something that will do for him what the

Protestant Ethic did once. And slowly, almost imperceptibly, a body of thought has been coalescing that does that. Writer calls it a Social Ethic.

With reason it could be called an organization ethic, or a bureaucratic ethic. By social ethic Whyte means that contemporary body of thought which makes morally legitimate the pressures of society against the individual. Its major propositions are three: a belief in the group as the source of creativity; a belief in “belongingness” as the ultimate need of the individual; and a belief in the application of science to achieve the belongingness. So according to Whyte man exists as a unit of society. Of himself, he is isolated, meaningless; only as he collaborates with others does he become worthwhile, for by sublimating himself in the group, he helps produce a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. There should be, then, no conflict between man and society.

What we think are conflicts are misunderstandings, breakdowns in communication. By applying the methods of science to human relations we can eliminate these obstacles to consensus and create an equilibrium in which society's needs and the needs of the individual are one and the same. In practice, those who most eagerly subscribe to the Social Ethic worry very little over the long-range problems of society. It is not that they don't care but rather that they tend to assume that the ends of organization and morality coincide, and on such matters as social welfare they give their proxy to the organization. Whyte then picks up the organization man in college, follows him through his initial indoctrination in organization life, and explores the impact of the group upon him. While speaking for the

corporation man more than any other, whyte wish to show the universality of the Social Ethic.

In accordance, to the research laboratory and academic life whyte argues that the inclination to the co-operative ideal has had just as important consequences in these areas also. To illustrate further the universality of the Social Ethic, has been discussed in its expression in popular fiction. This book is not a plea for nonconformity. Such pleas have an occasional therapeutic value, but as an abstraction, nonconformity is an empty goal and rebellion against prevailing opinion merely because it is prevailing should no more be praised than acquiescence to it. Indeed, it is often a mask for cowardice, and few are more pathetic than those who flaunt outer differences to expiate their inner surrender. There will be no strictures in this book against “ Mass Man” – a person the author has never met – nor there any strictures against ranch wagons, or television sets, or gray flannel suits.

Writer tries to avoid going to the other extreme and suggest that these uniformities per se are good, but the spectacle of people following current custom for lack of will or imagination to do anything else is hardly a new failing, and further whyte is not convinced that there has been any significant change in this respect except in the nature of the things we conform to. Unless one believes poverty ennobling, it is difficult to see the three-button suit as more of a strait jacket than overalls, or the ranch-type house than old law tenements. Further talking about the organization people who are best able to control their environment rather than be controlled by it, he says that they are well aware that they are not too easily distinguishable from the others in the outward obeisance paid to the good

opinions of others. And that is one of the reasons they do control. And according to William Whyte they are the ones who disarm society. Scientism While elaborating on the ideology of organization man, scientism has also been discussed.

The popular ideology that Whyte describes is highly elastic but it has a remarkable unity however. Most believers in the many sub branches of American organization life were still unaware of the interlocking nature of their separate credos when this book was actually written, and it is partly for this reason they so often feel themselves missionaries in the midst of the unbelieving. Three principal denominators which bind them while each is important in its own right, the first denominator is scientism. This is the practical part of the social ethic, for it is the promise that with the same techniques that have worked in the physical sciences we can eventually create an exact science of man. In one form or another, it has had a long and dismal record of achievement; even its proponents readily admit that the bugs are appalling. But this has not shaken the faith in scientism, for it is essentially a utopian rather than a technical idea.

Further Whyte says that the preamble of the believers is always the same. We are in a terrible fix and it is almost too late. We have applied science to things, and only now have we begun applying it to man himself. When the book was written some of the useful social techniques had been learned; like personality was measurable, obstacles to good group dynamics were spot able, and communication responses were also predictable.

But according to whyte these were merely the beginning; and he said that if only we provide the time and money, before long we can unwrap the whole enigma with a unified science of man. Belongingness “ Boiled down, what they ask for is an environment in which everyone is tightly knit into belongingness with one another”. William whyte further goes on in building the ideology of organization man while having some words about belongingness. At times it almost seems that human relations are a revolutionary tool the organization man is to use against the bosses. Listen to an unreconstructed boss give a speech castigating unreconstructed bosses for not being more enlightened about human relations. And you get the feeling the speech is a subtle form of revenge on the part of the harried underling who wrote it.

For reasons of protocol, organization men publicly extol human relations for the beneficial effects it casts downward, but privately they spend most of their time talking about using it upward. Togetherness The last that whyte discusses while building the ideology of the organization man and says that It is the organization man that more than the worker whom he wishes to serve, who most urgently wants to belong. His quest takes many forms; in this chapter whyte examines the most concrete one: his growing preoccupation with group work. The group that he is trying to immerse himself in is not merely the larger one – the organization, or society itself – but the immediate, physical group as well: the people at the conference table, the workshop, the seminar, the skull session, the after-hours discussion group, the project team.

It is not enough now that he belong; he wants to belong together. One reason that he is so fascinated with group work, of course, is the simple act that there is now so much more of it. Organization life being what it is, out of sheer necessity he must spend most of his working hours in one group or another, and out of self-defense, if not instinct, the committee arts must become reflex with him. But more than necessity is involved. Where the immersion of the individual used to be cause for grumbling and a feeling of independence lost, the organization man of today is now welcoming it. He is not attempting to reverse the trend, and to cut down the deference paid to the group; he is working to increase it, and with the help of some branches of the social sciences he is erecting what is almost a secular religion.

#### Part Two – THE TRAINING OF ORGANIZATION MAN A Generation of

Bureaucrats For the senior who is headed for the corporation it is almost as if it were part of one master scheme. The locale shifts; the training continues, for at the same time that the colleges have been changing their curriculum to suit the corporation, the corporation has responded by setting up its own campuses and classrooms. By now the two have been so well molded that it's difficult to tell where one leaves off and the other begins. The descent, every spring, of the corporations' recruiters has now become a built-in feature of campus life. If the college is large and its placement director is efficient, the processing operation is visibly impressive. Whyte then shares some of his memories of an ordinary day at Purdue's placement center that he was never been able to erase from his mind.

It is probably the largest and most effective placement operation in the country, yet much as in a well-run group clinic, there seemed hardly any

activity. In the main room some students were quietly studying company literature arranged on the tables for them; others were checking the interview timetables to find what recruiter they would see and to which cubicle he was assigned; at the central filing desk college employees were sorting. Except for murmur from the row of cubicles there was little to indicate that scores of young men were, every hour on the half hour, making the decisions that would determine their whole future life. While the trust in organization is very strong among the majority group of college seniors headed for a business career, it is less so with a smaller group who say, at least, that they prefer a small firm. For the few years Whyte has had with different undergraduate groups, to get the discussion rolling he has asked the students to answer several hypothetical questions on the ideal relationship between an individual and the demands of organization. The Practical Curriculum Here Whyte points out the U.

S educational system, which is preparing people badly for the organization society – precisely because it is trying so very hard to do it. My charge rests on the promises that what the organization man needs most from education is the intellectual armor of the fundamental disciplines, it is indeed an age of group action, of specialization, but this is all the more reason the organization man does not need the emphasis of a training geared for modern man. The pressures of organization life will teach him that. But they will not teach him what the schools and colleges can – some kind of foundation, some sense of where we came from, so that he can judge where he is, and where he is going and why. According to William Whyte what he has been getting is more and more a training in the minutiae of the organization



skills, and while it is hardly news that the US inclines to the vocational, the magnitude of the three out of every ten college graduates are now majoring in any thing that could be called a fundamental discipline – in the liberal arts or in the sciences.

There are signs of a counter – movement. Spokesmen for the liberal arts have been making a strong case to the interested public. The foundations have been stimulating studies designed to reinvigorate the humanities. Friends of the liberal arts have been organizing more conferences to get the message across.

Even business men seem to have become alarmed; executives of many of our best – known corporations have been arguing in print and speech that for the corporation's own good, the value of fundamental education needs to be re-stressed. Looking at all these signs, some people hopefully conclude that at last we are now on the verge of a great resurgence in the humanities. Theoretically, a man could major in business and still learn a lot about the humanities. But it would take some doing. To be accredited by the American association of collegiate schools of business, a college must make the student take 40 percent of his work in non-business courses, and as a consequence there is a smattering of liberal arts courses, but as soon as these are dispensed with – and the working of college catalogues these days suggests that dispensed with is the appropriate phrase – there remains only a vestigial trace of any thing connected with the humanities. The University of Denver's college of business administration, to cite one of the more flagrant examples, suggests a variety of specialized curriculum for the student who does not wish to specialize'.

Translated, this means that in his junior year he will take one non- business course. It is called literature and the other arts'. In his senior year he will take the philosophy of life. Business Influence on Education In this chapter writer brings into sharper focus the part business is playing in these educational changes. Business has been only one of many influences, but it is going to become a great deal more important in the years ahead.

Simply by virtue of the changing economics of university financing, the organization man is going to be much more than an alumnus. As overseer of the corporation's fund giving, he is becoming a sort of extra trustee of education. What he thinks about education, whether we agree with it or not, is a matter of some moment. The academic man should never discover himself beholden to business. Between the academic and the business world there must be some conflict of interests and a running fire of criticism is a cross that business can well afford to put up with. As a dominant force in American society, and prime guardian of orthodox thought, business must stir unease from others, and we would have an unhealthy imbalance of power if it had not, and did not still.

Many historians and novelists have been unfair to business, it is true, but it is hard, looking at the way business has managed to thrive, to feel that there was not some logic to the impulse. Would businessmen be better if Babbitt had been less a caricature? Humility may come from within, but an assist from others can help a lot. According to William whyte in the conflict of power the academic person has more advantages than laymen suspect. The businessman is awed by him. Considering the somewhat contemptuous way

businessmen often describe academia, this sounds farfetched, but you'll note that the contempt is expressed at a safe distance.

In actual practice, the businessman is the biggest sucker in the world for the trappings of scholasticism; and while his own hired intellectuals may lose esteem through continued familiarity, he will take an almost childish delight in introducing as professor a Simon-pure visitor from the campus. Even the rawest Ph. D. can command deference in the business world never accorded him on the campus. In the latter he is just another "mister"; in the business world he becomes a "doctor," and the executive is in a quandary as to what simulated rank he should be given. The businessman wants more than power; he wants it rationalized, and so long as the academic withholds the final blessing, he keeps a weapon of considerable power.

Let him look to it zealously. To repeat the point of these paragraphs: the crux of the problem is not the pressure from business, but the posture of the academics. The Pipe Line Before we follow the senior into the corporation's post graduate training schools, we must pause a moment longer on the campus. For it is here, in one important respect, that these new schools are being shaped.

They are a projection of what the senior wants, and more than corporations care to admit, what the senior wants these days has a lot to do with what he gets. Corporation people talk much about the intensive screening by which they have sifted out of the common ruck such a superlative group of recruits for their particular organization. The blunt fact, however, is that these days it is the college senior who dies most of the screening. With more job

vacancies that there are graduates, the attractive senior will usually have some eight or nine offers to choose from.

He does not throw the advantage away. What he wants, above all, is the guarantee of a training program. Almost every recruiter implies to him that he will find security, happiness, and perpetual advancement. Even at that time, when the book was written, corporation had started experimenting with such program many years ago, and while they are dilections of the young men have been a powerful prod, in time many corporations would have made the shift anyway. For the training schools are to simply a sugar-coating, a more attractively packaged indoctrination; they are a manifestation of a deep change in the organization's own view of what kind of man it wishes to achieve. According to whyte there are two divergent conceptions, and the question of which is to become dominant is still at issue.

On the surface the trainee program of most big corporations would seem very much alike. Beneath such new standardized trappings as testing, automatic rating, rotation, and the like, however, is a fundamental difference in policy. One type of program sticks to what has been more or less the historic approach. The young man is hired to do a specific job; his orientation is usually brief in duration, and for many years what subsequent after-hours training he will get will be directed at this particular job. If he proves himself executive material he may be enrolled in management development course, but this is not likely to happen until he is in mid-thirties.

The well-Rounded' Man In the end William Whyte goes on to explain a well rounded person and first examines the model as younger men see him. They are in remarkable agreement on the matter. There are dissenters, precious few that they may be, and no generalization can do justice to all the different shadings in the majority's view. On the fundamental premises of the new model executive, however, the young men who hope to be that vary little, and from company to company, region to region, you hear a litany increasingly standard. It goes something like this: " Be loyal to the company and the company will be loyal to you. After all, if you do a good job for the organization, it is only good sense for the organization to be good to you, because that will be best for every body.

There are a bunch of real people around here. Tell them what you think and they will respect you for it. They don't want a man to fret a stew about his work. It won't happen to me. A man who gets ulcers probably shouldn't be in business anyway". This is more than the wishful thinking normal to youth.

Wishful it may be, but it is founded on a well-articulated premise – and one that not so many years ago would have been regarded by the then young men with considerable skepticism. The premises are, simply, that the goals of the individual and the goals of the organization will work out to be one and the same. The young men have no cynicism about the ' system', and very little skepticism – they don't see it as something to be bucked, but as something to be cooperated with. For the executive of the future, trainees say, the problem of company loyalty shouldn't be a problem at all. Almost every older executive you talk to has some private qualifications about his fealty to the company; in contrast, the average young man cherishes the

idea that his relationship with the organization is to be for keeps. Sometimes he doesn't even concede that the point need ever come to test.

Further whyte says that on the matter of over overwork they are particularly stern. They want to work hard, but not too hard; the good, equable life is paramount and they see no conflict between enjoying it and getting ahead. The usual top executive, they believe, works much too hard, and there are few subjects upon which they will discourse more emphatically than the folly of elders who have a single minded devotion to work. Is it, they ask, really necessary any more? Or, for that matter, moral? From company to company, trainees express the same impatience.

All the great ideas, they explain, have already been discovered and not only in physics and chemistry but in practical fields like engineering. The basic creative work is done, so the man you need – for every kind of job – is a practical, team-player who will do a good shirt-sleeves job. I would sacrifice brilliance, one trainee said, for human understanding every time. And they do, too.

Part Three – THE NEUROSES OF ORGANIZATION MAN The Executive: Non-Well-Rounded Man Listening too long to trainees and personnel men describe the future is likely to unnerve one into assuming that the complete bureaucrat is just about ready to take over. However it is necessary to have a look at another kind of corporation man – the man who is running the corporation. Top executives, of course, can seem just as balanced as the next man, and by the example they set – from the modulation of their voice in the conference room to the ease with which they handle after hours affairs

– they can sometimes appear almost as given to the social ethic as the newcomers. Certainly they are more given to it than the executives, say of thirty years ago – it is, after all, these men who have been in great part responsible for the changes in corporations during the last decade.

According to whyte as long as our organizations remain dynamic – which is, of course, only a hopeful premises – the organization will still be a place in which there is a conflict between the individual as he is and wishes to be, and the role he is called upon to play, this is a perennial conflict, and the sheer effort to exorcize it through adjustment may well intensify it.

The new executives will probably mould themselves much closer to the bureaucratic type and thus seem to mitigate the difference, but they will not find the surcease they are looking for. Unfortunately, the drives that produce the executive neurosis so feared are entwined with the drives that make him productive. In denying this harsh reality, writer says, the well-rounded ideal makes morally illegitimate the tensions how accepted as part of the game, and if the old flexing of the ego was a mixed blessing, so would be the new suppression of it. By executive writer do not mean management men in general; in many respects the two are rather different. He is arbitrarily defining ‘ executive’ as corporation men who are presidents or vice-presidents plus those men in middle management who have so demonstrably gone ahead of their contemporaries as to indicate that they are likely to keep on going. When the executive talks of himself and why he works – a subject of quite compelling interest to him – he speaks about many things.

He speaks often of service to others. It is a genuine feeling on his part, for he does not himself belabor the point, convention rhetoric notwithstanding, he has so little self-doubt on the matter that he is rather bored with the kind of soul-searching questions ( ' Is management a profession? ' ' Is public relations at the crossroads? ' ) that worry the staff. He takes it for granted that management work is one of the most vital functions in the United States – sometimes he talks as if it were the only one. Most executives are not as sheepish. For some reason the question of whether they overwork touches a very sensitive nerve equally jump. Ninety percent of the executives we queried said they didn't work too hard, and when they said it they answered with absolutely not! Of course not! and similar expostulation.

The few executives who did say they worked too hard were described by colleagues as lazy. The Executive Ego The real conflict, that William Whyte argues, is the conflict within work, of all the organization men the true executive is the one who remains most suspicious of the organization. If there is one thing that characterizes him, it is a fierce desire to control his own destiny and, deep down, he resents yielding that control to the organization, no matter how velvety its grip. He does not want to be done right by; he wants to dominate, not be dominated.

But he can't act that way. He must not only accept control, he must accept it as if he liked it. He must smile when he is transferred to a place or a job that isn't the job or place he happens to want. He must appear to enjoy listening sympathetically to points of view not his own. He must be less goal-centered, more employee-centered. It is not enough now that he work hard; he must be a damn good fellow to boot.



And that is the rub. Executives have always had to play a role, but the difference between role and reality is becoming increasingly difficult to resolve. Even executives who would hate to be accused of philosophical thought sense that they are poised midway in a rather perplexing shift of values. They applaud better human relations, permissive management, and the like, yet for them personally these same advances ask them to act out something of a denial of the kind of people they really are.

Further writer says that some of the executive's tensions and frustrations are due to psychoses – his own and other and these are amenable to individual treatment. To a very large degree, however, the tensions of organization life are not personal aberrations to be eliminated by adjustment; they are the inevitable consequence of the collision between the old ethic and the new. The executive is very gregarious when he sees some practical utility to the gregariousness. But if he doesn't see that utility, good fellowship bores him to death. One of the most recurring notes in executives complaints about their work loads is the uselessness of so much of the socializing they have to put up with – whether its is entertaining after hours or human relations during hours.

One rather studious executive, who at the time was bucking for a vice-presidency, put it this way Another index of the difference between executive and trainee lies in the matter of conformity. In an inverse way, how much a man thinks himself a conformist tells a lot about how much spiritual lealty he feels for the organization, and as subjective as this attitude may be there is discernible difference between older and younger men. They younger men are sanguine. They are well aware that organization work

demands a measure of conformity – as a matter of fact, half their energies are devoted to finding out the right pattern to conform to.

But the younger executive likes to explain that conforming is a kind of phase, a purgatory that he must suffer before he emerges into the area where he can do as he damn well pleases. Checkers Finally, the discussion reach to the point where the ambition comes under the discussion – for here is where we see most clearly the collision between the social ethic and the needs of the organization man. So far have been arguing that the older executive is far more suspicious of organization than the professional manager who is the model of the next generation of management. Writer further argues that this is not simply a difference in age but a portent of a long-range shift to the professional manager of men; whyte than supports his charge that the harmony it promises is a delusion.

There are some highly practical forces at work to compel more loyalty. With the great increase in fringe benefits, the development of pension and annuity plans, the individual's self interest bound up more tightly than before in continued service in one organization. With the organization growing more and ever more benevolent, it would seem logical to assume that there are fewer defections these days, and many people have done so. But let guest see some contrary evidence that whyte has discussed.

The corporations' pension and benefit programs do lead to a certain entrapment, but there are counter-forces. For the simple reason that most large organizations have remarkable similar program, this adhesive factor tends to wash out. It is true, of course, that the longer a man stays, the more

equity in the form of company paid annuities and deferred profit sharing he builds up, and he cannot take all this with him. If a man finds a good slot in another corporation the latter will more than make up the difference in the annuity payments and deferred profit sharing the man left behind in the other company. Part Four – THE TESTING OF ORGANIZATION MAN How Good an Organization Man Are You Here William whyte goes into the some detail on one manifestation of the drift: the mass testing of personality. These curious inquisitions into the psyche are becoming a regular feature of organization life and before long, of US life in general.

And these tests are no playthings; scoff as the unbeliever may, if he has ambitions of getting ahead he would do well to develop, or simulate, the master personality matrix the tests best fit. While schools and colleges have been the primary users of such test, industry found that with the growing complexity of certain kinds of jobs, IQ tests were just as valuable as physical aptitude tests in gauging employees. The organization with aptitude tests the organization could only hope to measure the specified, isolated skills a man had, and as far as his subsequent performance was concerned, it could predict the future only if the man was magnificently endowed or abysmally deficient in a particular skill. Aptitude tests, in short, revealed only a small part of a man, and as more and more a group-relations advocates have been saying, it is the whole man the organization wants and not just part of him. Is the man well adjusted? Will he remain well adjusted? A test of potential merit could not tell this; needed was a test of potential loyalty.

Since so many of the tests are standard, in time almost everyone can be followed from childhood on, as, echelon by echelon, he makes his way up the

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ladder of our organization society. The Tests of Conformity Whyte states that the first assumption is the idea that if we can measure minor variations in most human beings we can to a large degree predict what they will do in the future, if the principle of this were true, tests of aptitude – such as vocabulary, or finger dexterity tests – should have long since proved the point, unlike personality tests, they measure what is relatively measurable, and they have been used so long and on so many people that a vast amount of before –and –after documentation is available. Part Five – THE ORGANIZATION SCIENTIST The Fight against Genius Further writer says that the case for more fundamental inquiry has been argued so eloquently by scientists that there is little the layman can contribute in this respect. The parallels between the organization man and the scientist should not be drawn too closely; their functions are not alike and between the managerial outlook and the scientific there is a basic conflict in goals that is not to be smothered by optimism. For the fact is that the parallels are being drawn too closely, and in a profoundly mistaken analogy The Organization is trying to mold the scientist to its own image; indeed, it sees the accomplishment of this metamorphosis as the main task in the management of research.

It may succeed. It is to be expected that industry should spend far less of its time on fundamental research than the universities, and for the same reason it is to be expected that the most outstanding men would tend to stay in the universities. But when all this is said and done, the fact remains that industry has a disproportionately small share of top men. Whyte suggests that while insisting on this definition of well-roundedness, management makes two serious errors. For one thing, it seems to assume that the pool of brilliant

scientists is so large that it can afford to consider only those in the pool who are well-rounded. There is, of course, no such over-supply; even if there were, furthermore, no such pat division could be made.

For brilliance and the kind of well-roundedness management asks are a contradiction in terms. Some brilliant scientists are gregarious, to be sure, and some are not – but gregariousness is incidental to the harmony management is so intent upon. A brilliant scientist can enjoy playing on the company bowling team and still do brilliant and satisfying work. But there is no causal relationship. If the company makes him drop what he wants to do for something he doesn't, he may still enjoy playing on the company softball team, may even lead it to victory in the interurban championships.

But at the same time he is doing it he may be pondering how exactly to word his resignation. Management has tried to adjust the scientist to The Organization rather than The Organization to the scientist. It can do this with the mediocre and still have a harmonious group. It cannot do it with the brilliant; only freedom will make them harmonious. Most corporations sense this, but, unfortunately, the moral they draw from it is something else again.

Further the Whyte analysis that even when companies recognize that they are making a choice between brilliance and mediocrity, it is remarkable how excruciating they find the choice. Several years ago my colleagues and I listened to the management of an electronics company hold a post-mortem on a difficult decision they had just made. According to writer Society would not be the loser if the only effect on management policy were to make the

most brilliant stay in the university. This screening effect, however, is only one consequence of management's policy.

What concerns all of us, just as much as industry, is the fact that management also has a very powerful molding effect on the people it does get. They may not all be geniuses, but many are highly capable men, and in the right climate they could make great contributions. The Bureaucratization of the Scientist Writer turns from the corporation to academia, for here we can more clearly see the root of the problem. If the academic scientist is seduced, it cannot be explained away as Babbitt versus misunderstanding of science. Not can it be blamed on want of talent; there may not be enough quantity, but every man –power survey has shown that so far as quality is concerned science has been attracting the top slice of our youth.

Like his brother in management, the scientist is becoming an organization man. To the contrary, the people in the foundations and the universities are reinforcing these values, and by reinforcing them, further molding the scientists to the organization image, not purposely, no, but this makes it only the worse. Further whyte says as the universities have accepted more research contracts, they have relinquished control over the direction of research. The government sets the tune; committees responsible to it specify the problems, pass on the work, and appoint the personnel. The universities provide the setting and the essential housekeeping services, university scientists still do most of the research, but increasingly the allegiance of many is to the research centre', a quasi-academic institution which draws its heat and light from the university, its directions form elsewhere.

The Foundation and Projectism Here whyte quotes that the bureaucratization can be reversed. For the man who wants to escape the mesh of organization, to ask his own questions, and to ask them for the sheer hell of it, the foundations are the last best hope, alone of our big institutions, they do not have to yield to the pressures of immediacy or the importuning of the balance sheet. They have the money to invigorate individual research and they have the franchise. The job they have assigned themselves is not to support the status quo but to do what others cannot do or are too blind to do. And how have the foundations responded to this challenge? They are not countering the bureaucratization of research; they are intensifying it.

The foundations argue that there are very few people willing and able to do independent work and that all those worthy of support are already taken care of. Assuming for the moment that this is correct, is not a question begged? There is a cause-and – effect relationship in the foundations position. There are now 162 million people in this country, and proportionately there are just as many people with inherent talent, and in absolute number, more. If this talent is growing up in a climate which does not encourage the speculative, independent side of their nature, can the foundations that help shape that climate plead neutrality? Further writer identifies that it is often assumed in the academic world that the best-known people can write their own ticket if and when they want to this is not true. For one thing such men are constantly being approached to head up big projects or become part of one, and it is understandable they cannot resist forever. One well known sociologist recalls how he got entrapped.

Social organization of science has been producing highly competent scientists, but scientists who are trained to work efficiently only in groups and who are not acclimated to individual inquiry. In the end whyte suggests that what we must concern ourselves with are the conditions that are common to all scientists, for the kind of environment which stimulates the creative, for the kind of environment which stimulated the creative side of the average scientists is the same environment in which genius flourishes.

Part Six – THE ORGANIZATION MAN IN FICTION Society as HeroAccording to William whyte the very fact that fiction does tell people what they want to hear, however, does make it a fairly serviceable barometer. Whether fiction leads people or merely reflects them, it is an index of changes in popular belief that might be imperceptible at closer range.

But the general run of current self-improvement books shows a rather sharp divergence from the old tradition. On the surface they do not seem to, and their titles promise the old fare. Essentially, however, what they tell you to do is to adjust to the situation rather than change it. They are full of ambiguities, to be sure, and many still borrow heavily from the mental-power concept of the New Thought movement. But for all this the picture they present is one of an essentially benevolent society, and the peace of mind or the positive thinking extolled is a kind of resignation to it. Fiction heroes and heroines, as we have seen, have been remarkably passive for some time.

It is not enough, however, to show that they are not masters of their own destiny; there now seems to be a growing disposition on the part of writers to go out of their way to show that they cannot be. To what degree one can be is of course a matter for deep debate and many of the best novels of the



last decade have been concerned with the impotence of man against society. So whyte suggests that popular culture is not monolithic in this counseling of resignation, nor is the audience in accepting it. It too is rife with ambiguity, and just as the executive confuses himself by paying homage to mutually incompatible precepts, so the audience still responds to themes directly contrary to the usual fare. For all the ambiguities and cross currents the dominant strain in popular culture does seem to be adjustment to the system. To what degree this is conscious direction on the part of authors is, of course, impossible to determine.

Part Seven – THE NEW SUBURBIA ORGANIZATION MAN AT HOME The Transients Writer turns to organization man at home, and examines him in the communities that have become his dormitories – the great package suburbs that have sprung up outside or cities since the war. They are fascinating institutions in their own right, and here and there. They are communities made in his image. There are other kinds of people there too, and for many a resident the curving super blocks of suburbia are the end of a long road from the city wards to middle-class respectability. But it is the young organization man who is dominant, more than others, it is he who organizes the committees, runs the schools, selects the ministers, fights the developers, makes the speeches, and sets the styles. Organization people live in many other kinds of places, of course, and some of them are in jobs that don't require them to move away from home at all.

But in the new suburbia they are concentrated, and in so pure a state that here they may provide the best indication of the organization life of tomorrow. In suburbia, whyte says, they can express themselves more

clearly that in the organization itself. They are to subordinates or juniors; they are the elders of the new suburbia, and there they are relatively free of the pressures of older traditions and older people that affect them elsewhere. In such propinquity, they bring out in each other – and at times caricature – tendencies that are latent in organization life, and one sees in bold relief what might be almost invisible in more conventional environments. To an older eye, perhaps, what is to be seen through the picture windows is abnormal, but what may be abnormal today is very likely to be normal tomorrow.

The New Root According to William Whyte to find where the mobility of organization life is leading the new package suburbs may be the best place of all to look. For they are not merely great conglomerations of mass housing. They are a new social institution, and while the variations in them are many, wherever one goes – the courts of Park Forest, the patios of Park Merced in San Francisco, Philadelphia's Drexel Brook, the new Levittown, Pennsylvania – there is an unmistakable similarity in the way of life. It is a communal way of life, and the residents are well aware of it.

They are of many minds how to describe it. Sometimes they lean to analogies like the frontier, or the early colonial settlements. Other times they are a little more wry; 'sorority house with kids', a projection of dormitory life into adulthood, or, slightly better, a lay version of army post life. But no matter how sharp the coinages – a womb with a view, Russia, only with money – it is a way of life they find suited to their wants, educated to be more aware of social trends than their forebears, they discuss their situations with considerable sophistication; at times, the way they casually toss out

words like permissive and kid centered it almost seems as if everyone was his own resident sociologist. Writer says that if one wishes to study the next generation of organization men, a pretty good form chart is the record of how the younger ones handle their problems when they are away from their elder.

Because they are jammed into such propinquity with one another in their new suburbia, every thing they do carries a certain degree of exaggeration; the schools are a little more modern than elsewhere, the politics a little more intense, and most certainly the social life is a lot more social, abnormal? Or the portent of a new normality? The values of Park Forest, one gets the feeling, are harbingers of the way it's going to be. Once adjusted to the mobile life, transients say, they find as much stability in the new kind of roots as in the old, geographical ones. If you haven't been moving around before, a development like this makes you unsettled, and army wife explains. These places are not right for people who want to stay for ever. But for people like us, who are already "unsettled", it makes you settled, if you know what I mean.

Further Whyte quotes that if one loses some old friends, there will always be comparable ones to replace them. Furthermore, because the old friends are being exposed to the same kind of environment, you can pick up with them where you left off when you meet again. Even if you're separated by time and space, you know their thinking will be the same says transient. It's the underlying values that count, and they'll stay the same.

Inconspicuous Consumption In defining the good life, according to Whyte, the suburbanites have to get down to cases, and when they do these social pressures can become highly visible. On the one hand, suburbanites have a strong impulse toward egalitarianism' on the other, however, they have an equally strong impulse to upgrade themselves. Somewhere in the middle lies the good life, but like that elusive plateau they seek in the organization, it vanishes as quickly as one finds it. In an environment that seems so homogeneous, one might think there were few distinctions one would have to worry about. To the practiced eye, however, there is much more diversity in the scene than the bystander sees, for the more accustomed one becomes to the homogeneity, the more sensitized is he to the small differences.

The good-life standard is being revised upward so rapidly that planners of suburban shopping centres have had a hard time keeping up with it. If one has to err, their experience suggests, it is safer to overestimate than underestimate – even to aim at the centre is to be unsynchronized with the suburban rhythm. For a future capitalist, Whyte deduced that the organization man displays a remarkable inability to manipulate capital. His handling of debt consolidation is a case in point. The grown popularity of loans for this purpose conjures up a picture of chastened citizens tightening their belts and cannily reducing total interest charges.

The picture is quite misleading. It is true enough, of course, that in taking out one large loan from a bank a person can cut down the interest he has been paying on a variety of purchases from 25 to 30 per cent. Purchasers take out the loan. In actual practice their consolidating is a sort of cheque-kiting

operation by which they can square themselves away for yet another round of commitments. When these are half –way digested, they will be back again.

Whatever expression it may take, the rhythm of budgetism is going to become more compelling. Organization man's suburbia provides only a foretaste. Our whole population is moving toward the more regularized life, and then finally there are the children of suburbia – a generation of organization people for whom the depression is not a father's tale but a grandfather's. no body, as suburbanites sometimes remark, is going back.

The Outgoing Life The effect the web of friendship has on the individual is a problem suburbanites think about a great deal. Like them, writer goes to deal with the good aspects first, the adverse second. But the two are really inseparable and it is this duality I wish to underscore. The social ethics denies it, and there is the problem.

Finding a middle way in the conflicts of interest between the group and oneself has always been difficult, but it has become particularly difficult as people have come to believe there should be ideally, no conflict and the happier the group, the more, not the less, intense is the problem. On the matter of privacy, suburbanites have mixed feelings. Fact one, of course, is that there isn't much privacy. In most small town there is at least enough living rooms to soften the shock of intimate contact, and, besides, there is usually some redoubt to which the individual can withdraw.

Further Whyte says Privacy has become clandestine. Not in solitary and selfish contemplation but in doing things with other people does one fulfill oneself? Nor is it a matter of overriding importance just what it is that one

does with other people; even watching television together – for which purpose, incidentally, several groups have been organized – helps make one more of a real person. However one may view this responsiveness to the group, it is important to acknowledge its moral basis. That friendship in the new suburbia transcends personal characteristics so much is due in part to the increasing homogeneity of American middle-class values.

But it is also due to a very active kind of tolerance, and unless this is recognized one cannot appreciate the true difficulty of the suburbanites' dilemmas. Conclusion Some might summarize the suburban temper in indifferent terms – pragmatism, perhaps, or utilitarianism – and their intonation would depend on their own outlook. But the dominant motif is unmistakable. Not just as something expedient, but as something right, the organization transients have put social usefulness at the core of their beliefs. Adaptation has become more than a necessity; in a life in which every thing changes, it has become almost a constant.

Since William Whyte is using suburbia as a vehicle to bring together many strands, it can be asked if it is fair to generalize from such places to organization man in general. Suburbs like Park Forest are not typical places even as lodging for organization people – and it is obvious that in degree many of the pressures there are peculiar to such places. No matter how staunch an individualist you might be, if you have to live in such close union with others, the sheer instinct of survival, let alone good sense, is likely, at the time, to make you emphasize the extroverted side of your nature. The suburbanites' group mindedness, it could be argued, is merely a passing phase an expedient dictated by necessity and not by any inner impulse.

Writer talks about values and the suburbanites themselves provide evidence that their values are a great deal more than a function of the physical environment. That they respond to the pressure of the court or the tight-knit block is not so significant.

They have to what is significant is how they feel about these pressures – and how, ideally, they think a person should feel about them. If we broaden our view to organization man in general and ask what this climate of thought portends. If ever there was a generation of technicians, theirs is it. No generation has been so well equipped, psychologically as well as technically to cope with the intricacies of vast organization; none has been so well equipped to lead a meaningful community life, and none probably will be so adaptable to the constant shifts in environment that organization life is so increasingly demanding of them. In the better sense of the word, they are becoming the interchangeable of our society and they accept the role with understanding. They are all, as they say, in the same boat.

The writer has been speaking of measures organizations can take. But ultimately any real change will be up to the individual himself, and this is why his education is so central to the problem. For he must look into his discontents with different eye. It has been said that dominance of the group is the wave of the future and that. But this is contemporary-ism at its worst; things are not as they are because there is some good reason they are.

Nor is the reverse true. It may one day prove true, as some prophets argue that we are in a great and dismal tide of history that cannot be reversed, but if we accept the view we will only prove it. What ever kind of future suburbia

may foreshadow, it will show that at least we have the choices to make. The organization man is not in the grip of vast social forces about which it is impossible for him to do any thing; the options are there, and with wisdom and foresight he can turn the future away from the dehumanized collective that so haunts our thoughts. He may not. But he can.

He must fight the organization. Not stupidly, or selfishly, for the defects of individual self regard are no more to be venerated than the defects of cooperation. But fight he must for the demands for his surrender are constant and powerful, and the more he has come to like the life of organization the more difficult does he find it to resist these demands, or even to recognize them. It is wretched, dispiriting advice to hold before him the dream that ideally there need be no conflict between him and society. There always is; there always must be. Ideology cannot wish it away: the peace of mind offered by organization remains surrender and no less so for being offered in benevolence.

That is the problem.