WOMEN AND THE PROFESSIONS: Can What's Preached Be Practiced?

DEBRA RENEE KAUFMAN

I. The Professions: Normative Commitment and Collegial Reinforcement

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT that the industrialization of Western Society has, among other things, been accompanied by a proliferation of professional occupations. This judgment is shared by leading sociologists. W. J. Goode begins one of his articles by flatly stating, "An industrializing society is a professionalizing society" (1960, p. 902). T. Caplow (1954) asserts that virtually all non-routine white collar occupations are in the process of being professionalized to some extent. Numerous articles written over the past few decades attest to this professional trend. For example: Goode's (1961) "The Librarian: From Occupation to Profession?" or B. Barber's (1963) "Is American Business Becoming Professionalized?" or, finally, H. Wilensky's (1964) "The Professionalism of Everyone?" Everett Hughes succinctly defines the professionalizing trend when he declares:

> Professions are more numerous than ever before. Professional people are a larger proportion of the labor force. The professional attitude, or mood, is likewise more widespread; professional status more sought after. These are components of the professional trend, a phenomenon of all the highly industrialized and urban societies; a trend that apparently accompanies industrialization and urbanization irrespective of political ideologies and systems (1965, p. 51).

Ms. Kaufman is presently an assistant professor at Northeastern University in the Sociology and Anthropology Department. She publishes essays and articles in the area of sex roles and the professions. Her most recent research has been on institutional barriers to success for women in academia through a Department of Labor Grant. She is the co-author of the book: *Women's Public and Private Roles: Achievement Through the Life Cycle*. New York: The Free Press (forthcoming).

Although it is common to find agreement about how professionalized we are, it is harder to find consensus about what actually defines a profession. Professions are likened to communities (Goode, 1957), sacred societies (Jackson, 1970), and fraternities (Hughes, 1945). Apparently what differentiates professions from other occupations and also raises their social prestige is that they are organized around problems of universal social concern, "In each case," claims J. Jackson, "professions encompass specialized areas of knowledge which affect all individuals but where only a few can become expert" (1970, p. 7). Jackson believes that professions are organized around areas of social concern possessing something of a mystical or sacred quality which "designates them from the more mundane matters" (1970, p. 7). Consequently, Jackson sees the professional as:

> . . . the high priest of that area of knowledge in which he is acknowledged to be competent. The normative framework of his training assumes that he will engage in activity normally taboo (the cutting up of cadavers by medical students; the drawing of nudes in a life class by the artist; the probing of inner secrets by the psychiatrist; the examination of the body by the doctor). His training thus represents an initiation into mysteries . . . (1970, p. 7).

Initiation into these mysteries represents a long arduous process of which formal academic training is only one small part. For, as Jackson argues, in addition to formal training, there are:

> . . . the elements of socialization and initiation into the wider class ideology of the professional group. Within the framework of increasing specialization, and indoctrination into the professional mystique is a combination of experience, apprenticeship and, most importantly, sets of attitudes appropriate to the different audiences of laymen and other professionals, assistants, and competitors" (1970, p. 9).

Who will enter these holy places rests with the decisions of a professional peer group. What legitimates such powerful authority is, as E. Greenwood claims, the fact that "extensive education in the systematic theory of his discipline imparts to the professional a type of knowledge that highlights the layman's comparative ignorance" (Greenwood, 1966, p. 12). Greenwood notes that the essential difference between non-professional and professional occupations is that the former have customers and the latter clients. What's the difference?

Greenwood suggests that customers are considered fully capable of appraising their own needs, and judging "the potential of the service or of the commodity to satisfy them" (1966, p. 12). Not so with clients: "Here the premise is that, because he lacks the requisite theoretical background, the client cannot diagnose his own needs or discriminate among the range of possibilities for meeting them. Nor is the client considered able to evaluate the caliber of the professional service he receives" (1966, p. 12).

If professions live by the trust of their clients, what forces a profession to abide by this trust? It is commonly assumed that the professions have an internal regulative code which compels ethical behavior on the part of its members. (See Greenwood, 1966; Parsons, 1939). Greenwood divides these internal regulators into the formal written codes, such as the Hippocratic Oath, and informal codes, which although unwritten, exert the strength of formal prescriptions. Greenwood assumes that, "Through its ethical codes the profession's commitment to social welfare becomes a matter of public record, thereby insuring for itself the continued confidence of the community. Without such confidence the profession could not retain its monopoly" (1966, p. 14). Greenwood emphasizes that a professional code, unlike those of other occupations, is " . . . more explicit, systematic, and binding; it certainly possesses more altruistic overtones and is more public-service oriented" (1966, p. 15).

Such is the ideological orientation of the professions. Why does the unwritten code carry the same weight as the formal prescriptions? Why is the professional code perhaps more explicit than non-professional occupations? Why do we assume that professions are indeed more altruistic and public service oriented? Such questions typically are not asked, because by definition, they are not seen as problems.[1] By definition ethical codes are essential to the performance of the professional's job, not only vis-à-vis clients, but most importantly, to colleagues as well. That is, if professions are to maintain their autonomy and the trust of their clients/patients, they must emphasize in practice their normative commitment and its collegial re-enforcement. There is an understanding that the professional is constrained to act within the limits set by the normative expectations of the professional role.

The bulk of sociological research and theory has tended to support this definition of the professions.[2] Primarily it has done so because of the pervasive influence of Talcott Parsons and others who share the theoretical assumptions of the functionalist tradition.[3] According to this model, the following are essential to the professional ethical code. The professional must assume an emotional neutrality toward the client/patient. He/she must provide service to whomever requests it, irrespective of the requesting client's age, income, kinship, politics, race, religion, sex, and social status (Greenwood, 1966). Parsons (1939) calls this element of professional conduct universalism. Most importantly, such universalism must be applied to collegial relationships in order that professionals maintain the trust of their clients (only the most qualified must be allowed to practice). In other words, particularistic considerations must not be allowed to intervene in the presumably impersonal process of recruitment, selection, and advancement with the profession.[4]

II. Background Assumptions: The Functionalist Tradition

Analyses of the professions, like any other aspect of social life, are conditioned by value assumptions which all social scientists bring to their work—what Gouldner would refer to as 'silent partners' in the 'theoretical enterprise.' A. Gouldner names these 'silent partners' background assumptions. He explains:

> Background assumptions come in different sizes, they govern domains of different scope. They are arranged, one might say, like an inverted cone, standing on its point. . . . Being primitive presuppositions about the world and everything in it, they serve to provide the most general of orientations, which enable unfamiliar experiences to be made meaningful. . . . they may involve a disposition to believe that the world is 'really' highly integrated and cohesive . . . or only loosely stranded together and dispersive (1970, pp. 30-31.).

As we have seen, the belief in the integration of norms and values in the general structure of the professions (internal regulative codes) is an assumption basic to the understanding of the occupational world from the functionalist perspective. This belief follows from a general orientation that the social world is relatively well integrated. Indeed, equilibrium, order and

integration are themes generally associated with both Parsons' work and that of functionalists in general.

In the following analysis I hope to make clear how background assumptions within the functionalist model shape theories, and how, in turn, these theories shape perceptions of reality. What is of utmost concern, however, is not that social scientists bring value assumptions to their work, but that these value assumptions emphasize only those aspects of reality which correspond to the theory.[5] Gouldner, for instance, shows how Parsons' vision of the social world is persistently distorted by his habit of linking that vision to its moral codes. Gouldner states that Parsons is neither disturbed nor outraged by observed disparities between reality and morality, for they are ". . . always temporary discrepancies, secondary aberrations, marginal deviations of no consequence in the larger scheme of things" (1970, p. 290).

What is even more significant for Gouldner, however, is that Parsons' ". . . moralistics consistently take the form of piety, of apology for rather than criticism of the status quo" (1970, p. 290). This conservatism is the result of Parsons' highly selective filtration, accomplished only ". . . by absorbing reality into morality, focusing only on those aspects of reality that coincide with morality" (1970, p. 290). Later in his book, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, Gouldner shows how Parsons' fundamental disbelief in the reality of the nonmoral has led to a paradoxical view of human behavior. That is, Parsons' disbelief in nonmoral factors forces him to view behavior from the perspective of what the group values prescribe rather than attending to actual behavior. Consequently, Gouldner concludes, this pressure in Parsons' work to " . . . ignore social regularities that are not generated by moral codes . . . means that regularities that derive largely from the competition for or conflict over scarce goods and information, and which are not normatively prescribed or derived . . . tend to be neglected or seen only as marginal (1970, p. 246).

III. Reconciling What's Practiced with What's Preached

The critical dilemma in Parsonsian thinking and in the functionalist model is that if facts are not facts of everyday life but rather of a theoretical overview (that is, social regularities which deviate from the normative model are simply seen as "erratic departures" or "mere discrepancies"), how then can we

ever falsify the theory? (See Atkinson for same point, 1971, p. 121).[6] The functionalist model assumes that social systems through their own derived mechanisms will correct discrepancies between what is supposed to be (norms) and what is practiced. (See Parsons, 1949; 1967, especially Chapter 7). Here we have gone beyond background assumptions about equilibrium and stability to the underlying assumptions about change. Parsons states the functionalist understanding when he writes: "I believe, that, within the social system, the 'normative' elements are more important for social change than the 'material interests' of constitutive units" (1966, p. 113). Individual variations and deviations from the overall model do not present a problem for those of the functionalist persuasion. As D. Atkinson notes, "Parsons sees the structure of the social system as external to and determining the actor" (1972, p. 17). The effect of Parsons' theorizing is to create a system in which, "the actor's 'choice' is to pursue rationally and normatively his own interests, themselves patterned by the 'social system' " (Atkinson, 1972, p. 17). If the actor should deviate from the normative standards, ". . . then clearly sanctions would operate against him at both a personality and structural level" (Atkinson, 1972, p. 32). In this way, continues Atkinson, the actor would ". . . become aware of his 'true' interests in that position. In a word, he would adjust and step back into line" (1972, p. 32).

Although in different parts of his works Parsons strives to make a case for 'voluntarism' and 'choice' on the part of actors, it is ultimately clear that he gives priority to the 'external constraints' of social systems. (See especially, Parsons, 1949; 1954; 1955; 1967). Therefore, individual variation simply reflects a maladjustment to the overall system. In summarizing Parsons' work Atkinson concludes:

> It is clear that once one has posed this integrated system of connecting unit acts then movement or change in any one area is going to affect other areas . . . It must be noticed that there is a possible bias in this idea, which is not made explicit. If no part of the social system can escape affecting or being affected by another, then . . . the individual actors who are, after all, 'behind' the act, become the 'playthings' of the overall mechanism of adjustment of the 'system' (1972, p. 12).

Ultimately, it is the role that determines action not the actor. In essence, that which is structurally preached will be practiced.

This belief in structural accommodation is at the heart of the functionalist model. What is worrisome is that this implicit confidence in structural accommodation prevents many functionalists from focusing on the social forces which oppose the practice of that which is preached.

Perhaps nowhere is Parsonsian optimism more evident than in his treatment of the professions. The structure of the professions is presumably well suited to its goals. For instance, in order that the professional perform services to patients or clients or to impersonal values like the advancement of science, work roles are defined as functionally specific, universalistic, affectively neutral, and performance or achievement oriented. In other words, professional life, in accord with the cultural norms of an industrialized society, is organized around standards of competence so that people make decisions and are evaluated by impersonal and objective standards.

For instance, "affective neutrality" in the medical profession suggests that the physician "ought" and "is" emotionally neutral and detached from patients. This implies a restraint or check on impulses of emotional expression, and most importantly, the subordination of such needs to objective, rational discipline (Parsons and Shils, 1951, p. 80). However, the pioneering work of such writers as E. Freidson (1970), G. Ritzer (1971), and L. Davidson (1975), suggest that, typically, research in the medical profession has stressed the normative order at the expense of examining everyday behavior. Davidson's research (1975) aimed to determine if the sex of the physician-in-training contributes to systematic differences in the physician's performance reports: "Overall findings indicate that few doctors, men and women alike, were as 'objective or affectively neutral' in their actual behavior toward patients as the professional ideal alleges" (1975, p. 6). Davidson's conclusions, like those of Freidson (1970) and Ritzer (1975), are that we need to know more about the ways in which individuals adhere to normative codes. She, like the others, suggests that the functionalist model has overemphasized a structural analysis at the expense of understanding individual behavior.

As noted earlier, however, individual variations do not present the same problems for Parsons as they do for these writers. Atkinson (1972, p. 32) argues that Parsons typically explains away variations between individual action and "ideal"

behavior by using such concepts as deviance and mal-socialization. Therefore, analyzing individual differences among medical practitioners would not truly strike at the heart of the functionalist scheme. Differences might merely reflect situational discrepancies (See especially Parsons 1935; 1967). In essence, looking to individual variation would be interpreted as operating at the wrong level of analysis.

Since Parsons might treat individual differences as "mere discrepancies" or "errors," a focus on individual variation does not bring under scrutiny the very structure of the professions or Parsons' belief in structural accommodation. Therefore, a more direct critique (taking functionalists at the structural-functional level) would be to search for strains (or logical contradictions) within the structure of the social system itself rather than for discrepancies between actual and prescribed behavior. Rather than assuming that the norms of professionalism operate (and then looking to individual variation in performance) we must rephrase the theoretical question and ask: How, given the structure of the professions, can the norms of universalism operate? That is, if we remain at the structural level of analysis, but rid ourselves of background assumptions about accomodation and integration, do we arrive at the same conclusions about the professions? Using functionalism to criticize functionalism, we might find that what is preached is not and cannot be practiced.

IV. Collegiality: A Double-Edged Concept

For the remainder of the paper I shall argue that the very structure of collegial socialization and control (integral to the organization of the professions) creates conditions which render almost impossible the actual practice of normatively prescribed universalism in collegial relations and judgments. Looking more closely at the social organization of professional life, we find that although writers stress different critical attitudinal measures or structural features important in defining a profession, there is full agreement about the crucial role colleagues play in distinguishing professions from other occupations (M. Weber, 1946; A. Henderson and T. Parsons, 1947; E. Litwak, 1961; W. Kornhauser, 1962; R. Hall, 1967). As Parsons and Platt (1973) readily admit, the collegial mode (associational structure) is characteristic of the professions.

It should be noted that the collegial mode is in direct contrast to the bureaucratic mode of occupational organization. The collegial mode demands an informality not usually associated with the well defined hierarchy of the bureaucracy. Unlike the bureaucratic setting wherein the standards for admission and advancement are clearly stated, standards for entry into the "club" or "sacred society" or "professional community" are not so well articulated. Socialization and initiation into the "wider class ideology of the professional group" (Jackson, 1970, p. 9) demands not only formal training but appropriate attitudes and characteristics as well.

The informal structure or "club-like" context of professional life has received some attention in the literature. Epstein writes: "Interaction in professions, especially in their top echelons, is characterized by a high degree of informality, much of it within an exclusive, club-like context" (1970, p. 968). Hughes notes that the "very word 'profession' implies a certain social and moral solidarity, a strong dependence of one colleague upon the opinions and judgments of others" (1962, p. 124).

Those who bear certain ascriptive statuses (Black, Jewish, Female, etc.) are at an immediate disadvantage. Through no fault of their own they are at fault. Why? As Hughes suggested years ago, ascriptive statuses condition what is considered an "appropriate" set of characteristics in order to be accepted by one's peers as a professional. Hughes (1945) describes these as "auxiliary characteristics." He further presumes that such auxiliary characteristics are "the bases of the colleague group's definition of its common interests, of its informal code, and of selection of those who become the inner fraternity" (1945, p. 355). Hughes's fraternal imagery is apt, for like fraternal societies, the collegial group depends upon "common background, continual association and affinity of interest" (Epstein, 1970, p. 972). Almost by definition women, and other low status groups, are excluded from such associations. In the light of such fraternal imagery the norms of "universalism" and "affective neutrality" grow dimmer and dimmer.

The more informal the setting, the greater the likelihood that ascriptive variables will be focused upon. Caplow explains:

> In a collegial body such as a board of directors, a staff conference, or an administrative committee, the atmosphere of formality and the short duration of contact facilitate cooperation without reference to sex roles. But where the cooperating group is unorganized, where contacts are more or less continuous, and especially where the relations between equals . . . are personalized, we encounter once more the barriers which hinder men and women from free mutual participation (1954, p. 243).

Professions present an inherent contradiction between their collegial structure and the professional norms of "affective neutrality" and "universalism." For example, according to the functionalist model, recruitment and advancement within the professions are governed by general and impersonal rules based on universalistic "standards of excellence." Allegedly, what is of utmost concern is one's skill or competence in a particular field of knowledge. It is presumed that universal standards are used to judge such worth. However, excellence, like any other social fact, does not speak for itself but must be defined and interpreted. As Epstein (1970) suggests, the fine distinctions between good and superior performance require subtle judgments; such judgments are rendered by one's peers. In many ways one's acceptance into and success within the professions are contingent upon one's acceptance into the informal circles. Based on a Hughesian conception of the work world, Epstein accurately details how "common background" and "peer sensitivity" enter into the professional sphere. She notes:

> The professions depend on intense socialization of their members, much of it by immersion in the norms of professional culture even before entry, and later by the professionals' sensitivity to his peers. These controls depend on a strong network cemented by bonds of common background, continual association, and affinity of interests . . . . Not only do contacts with professional colleagues act as a control system, they also provide the wherewithal by which the professional may become equipped to meet the highest standards of professional behavior (1970, p. 972).

If we accept the argument that it is " . . . difficult for someone not equipped with a status-set of appropriate statuses to enter the exclusive society, to participate in its formal interactions, to understand the unstated norms and to be included in the causal exchanges" (Epstein, 1970, p. 969), we can see that what begins as a status-set disadvantage results in a real structural barrier for women professionals. Helen MacGill Hughes argues that the equality due the academic woman within her department is

incompatible with her status as a woman in society at large. She suggests, therefore, that the professional woman may not feel free to engage in the collegial activity of inviting a male colleague for luncheon. She notes:

> Both are uncomfortable when flaunting the cultural expectation that men take the initiative and that women "follow" . . . . for the women colleagues it is hard to decide whether to speak up or shut up. While they may, they report, periodically remind themselves that they must defend their claim to status as colleagues, they do not want to bring upon themselves the epithet, "aggressive" (1973, p. 36).

Presumably, then, persons whose status-sets do not conform, who do not have those important "auxiliary characteristics," create dilemmas for themselves and their role partners. The importance of colleagues cannot be overestimated. The insights of M. S. White, a social psychologist, who studied women scholars at the Radcliffe Institute, reveal how important collegial contacts are for professional identity and self-evaluation. The women interviewed had all been awarded fellowships so that they might continue their professional interests on a part-time basis. The findings suggested that although the opportunity to be intellectually engaged in a project was important to their sense of professional identity and competence, equally important was the access to stimulating colleagues. White concludes that "appraisals of their work by others, coupled with acceptance and recognition by people whose professional opinions were relevant and appropriate, made a significant difference in determining whether a woman felt like a professional, and whether she in turn had a strong sense of commitment to future work" (1971, p. 413). Furthermore, White suggests, "Challenging interaction with other professionals is frequently as necessary to creative work as is the opportunity for solitude and thought" (1971, p. 414).

Acceptance into the collegial arena presents problems not only for women but for their role partners as well. Take, for example, the protegé system. The protegé system is one mechanism whereby one's name and work become known in the upper echelons of one's profession. Epstein (1970), White (1971), and E. Keller (1974) suggest that since the top echelons in most professions are almost entirely male, problems arise in dealing with female protegés. For instance, White claims, "A man may be hesitant about encouraging a woman as a protegé . . . . He may believe that she is less likely to be a good gamble, a risk for him to exert himself for, or that she is financially less dependent upon a job" (1971, p. 414). If she is less likely to receive sponsorship than her male peers, a woman is more likely to be excluded from those crucial arenas wherein professional identity and recognition occur.

By now we can see that collegial contacts are important for more than one's professional identity and acceptance into the profession, but for survival as well. White perceptively refers to the informal survival knowledge the young professional needs as that which is "caught" not "taught." She notes that the aspiring professional ". . . must be knowledgeable about many aspects of institutions, journals, professional meetings, methods of obtaining source materials, and funding grant applications. Knowing how to command these technical and institutional facilities requires numerous skills, many unanticipated by the young student" (1971, p. 414).

If women are excluded from male networks or the "informal brotherhood on which experiences are exchanged, competence built up, and the formal code elaborated" (E. Hughes, 1945, p. 356), then they may remain not only "marginal" but "invisible" when such important professional decisions as selection for promotion, tenure, research grants, co-editorships, summer teaching and departmental privileges are under consideration (H. Hughes, 1973). My own research (D. Kaufman, 1978) suggests that women academicians seem less likely than men to include those of higher rank in their collegial networks, and are more likely than men to claim their colleague-friends as professionally unimportant to their careers. Whether women "choose" or are "forced" it is clear that they are excluded from male networks.

V. Women and the Practice of the Professions

Although a growing body of empirical research has examined barriers to ascent for women—some focusing on overt discrimination, others on the psychological barriers (especially in the motive to avoid success studies)—research has virtually ignored structural barriers (see Kaufman, 1978). Awareness of the often subtle processes whereby women are excluded from important collegial contacts and the rewards of such relationships has become a focus for different writers (Epstein,

1970; White, 1971; R. Kanter, 1975; J. Lorber, 1975). However, that these processes may be inherent in the social organization of professional life has been less explored (a dangerous focus at best, for it questions our professional existence).

The incidence of shunting trained women into ancillary positions and specialties within the world of academe, law, or medicine are impressive enough to make us seriously question whether the problem rests with women's capabilities or with the structural features of the professions. In the section of her book dealing with sex-typing and sex-ranking, Epstein makes explicit what almost every article on the topic since then has confirmed: "No matter what sphere of work women are hired for, or select, like sediment in a wine bottle they seem to settle to the bottom" (1970(b), p. 2). G. W. Lapidus reiterates Epstein's findings when she claims: "The tendency for the proportion of women to decline at successively higher levels of skill, responsibility, status and income is almost universal, even in professions in which women predominate" (1976, p. 120).

The evidence grows more striking as researcher after researcher confirms for each profession the overall statistical picture. Kanter finds that women do not hold positions of power and authority in organizations, especially in American industry. Those few women in management tend to be concentrated in lower paying positions and in less powerful, less prestigious organizations (1975, p. 35). Kanter then concludes that: "The politics and informal networks of management as influenced by its male membership should be further studied" (1975, p. 35). Lorber, after confirming the same pattern in the medical profession, is more explicit. She reaffirms the structural argument when she writes:

> The fault may not lie in their psyches or female roles, but in the system of professional patronage and sponsorship which tracked them out of the prestigious specialities and "inner fraternities" of American medical institutions by not recommending them for the better internships, residences, and hospital staff positions and by not referring patients to them (Lorber, 1975, p. 82).

Although no statistics exist concerning the number of women lawyers who specialize in the lower-ranking specialities of matrimonial, domestic relations, or trust and estate law, Epstein (1970 (b), p. 164) suggests that it is widely believed that the percentage of women is disproportionately high. And lest one

suspect academe to be any different from other professions, A. Seidman suggests that women in academe occupy the lowest rung of the ladder as well. In her article (1976, p. 268) she includes a table which indicates that women as a percentage of all employees for all universities and colleges in the U.S.A. in 1970 ranged accordingly: professors (5.4%), associate professors (10.4%), assistant professors (14.9%), instructors (30.5%).

Using the analysis provided some years ago by C. W. Mills (1974/75, p. 4), we can safely assume that the low number of women in the upper echelons of the professions is not due "merely to the personal situation and character of a scatter of individuals," but is rather the fault of the opportunity system within the professions. The social organization of professional socialization and collegiality may work in opposition to the opening of that system.

VI. Conclusions

The seemingly necessary distinction between the ascriptive and achievement spheres of life are blurred in the case of the professions. Solidarity, communal feeling, and friendship seem an integral part, if not a logical outcome, of the collegial structure. These particular features of collegiality, i.e., commitment and solidarity, seem to undermine the separation of the personal and impersonal orientations so important to Parsons' analysis of the professions. For although the norms of rationality, efficiency, and impersonality clearly suit the bureaucratic mode of occupational organization, they seem far less applicable to the more informal collegial mode characteristic of the professions.

Living by the trust of their clients and patients (because the lay person lacks the expertise to evaluate the caliber of the professional service he/she receives) professionals are given enormous autonomy to recruit, select, and retain colleagues. However, whereas collegiality may provide autonomy to judge professional competence, its very structure may also encourage social dynamics which impede the presumably impersonal process. Herein we see an inherent tension between the structural reality and the functionalist ideal. The process whereby one enters,[7] and perhaps, even more importantly, ascends to the top of one's profession has seldom been

questioned given a Parsonsian treatment of the professions. The understanding of the social world implicit in the functionalist "tradition" argues that social systems will correct discrepancies between that which is supposed to be and that which is (structural accommodation at its prescribed best).

Such an analysis, for instance, focuses only on manifest functions of collegiality, neglecting many of its latent functions, one of which may be to exclude women and minorities from entry into and ascent within the professions. In this paper I have tried to explain empirical deviations from the theoretical overall system (deviance or erratic departures), but rather as action in accord with the structural reality. That Parsons has not addressed this inherent contradiction between the social structure of collegiality and the norms of objectivity is perhaps not unexpected given his background assumptions. But that a corpus of literature on the professions has scarcely dealt with this issue is more troubling. Perhaps we must call upon a functionalist imperative to understand this lack of concern. The belief that the professions operate within the normative model of objectivity and universalism may serve an important function—that of maintaining male privilege.

NOTES

I wish to thank several of my colleagues, Elliott Krause, Sandra Harding and an anonymous reader, for help in revising an earlier draft of this paper.

1. For example, although the potential for abuse of professional power and privilege are acknowledged, Greenwood writes: "Conspicuous, widespread and permanent (abuse) would force the community to revoke the profession's monopoly" (1966, p. 14). But because by definition "every profession has a built-in regulative code which compels ethical behavior on the part of its members" (1966, p. 14), Greenwood does not see this "extreme measure" as normally necessary.
2. Notable exceptions to this tendency are those who have expanded classical definitions of the professions by stressing that power dimensions are as important as normative codes. See especially the work of Elliott Krause, *The Sociology of Occupations* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1971), wherein he points to the capacity any profession has to manipulate the work situation, including the laws governing practice, to its own advantage (1971, p. 78).
3. One caveat is necessary here. By referring to a functionalist tradition I am not implying that there aren't differing schools of functionalist thought or that any one functionalist (most especially not Parsons) is entirely consistent in all of his/her works, but rather that there are themes and assumptions which have been accepted as common to functionalist thought. Merton, a leading functionalist, points to one of these foci when he notes the following common problem: "The tendency to confine sociological observations to the positive contributions of a sociological item to the social or cultural system in which it is implicated" (1968, p. 107).
4. In order to facilitate "universalism," certain structural features must be operative. For instance, the separation of the personal sphere of life from the impersonal sphere of life is the very cornerstone for much of the Weberian and Parsonsian analysis of the occupational world. Weber contends that modern capitalism owes much of its rapid development to the separation of the familial from the occupational, and of the irrational (personal sphere of life) from the rational (impersonal) sphere of life. The Rapoports (1974) refer to Smelser's analysis of this separation. They state: "Initially weaving and associated tasks were performed by family members in the service of family subsistence. As textile production had increasingly to be geared to a cash market and to compete with similar operations elsewhere, problems of efficiency became more salient, which encouraged specialization of function and the selection of specialists according to competence rather than traditional kinship duties and obligations vis-a-vis the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial success came increasingly to depend on assigning specific jobs to the most competent individuals available, regardless of sentimental or familial connections" (1974, p. 92).
5. My argument here is not with the goal of a value-free social science, but rather with its possibility. Perhaps the real utility of such a goal is that it forces us not so much to distinguish among values, background assumptions, and social facts, but rather to make explicit, and bring to the foreground, those value assumptions which inform and interpret social facts. We must make explicit our assumptions about the nature of human behavior and organization. If we do not, we fall into two interrelated misconceptions: 1) the self-deception on the part of the social scientist that he/she has in fact made a distinction between subjective values and objective reality (background assumptions and empirical observations); and 2) that such a distinction, even if it were possible, is maintainable.
6. That is, the point of reference is not the actor but the role (the social-structural level of analysis). In this sense it is not what happens but what "should" happen that is under analysis.
7. An interesting side comment stemming from an anonymous reader of this paper suggested that the old-boy network may now be even more important in hiring since the large numbers of applicants cannot be effectively judged on the admissible universalistic criteria available.

REFERENCES

Atkinson, Dick. *Orthodox Consensus and Radical Alternatives*. Basic Books: New York, 1972.

Barber, B. "Is American Business Becoming Professionalized?" In E. A. Teryakean (ed.), *Sociological Theory, Values and Sociocultural Change*. New York: Free Press, 1963.

Caplow, T. *The Sociology of Work*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954.

Davidson, L. "Sex Roles, Affect, and the Woman Physician: A Study of the Impact of Latent Social Identity Upon the Role of Women and Men Professionals." Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, New York University, 1975.

Epstein, C. "Encountering the Male Establishment: Sex Status Limits on Women's Careers in the Professions." *The American Journal of Sociology* 75 (May, 1970a), pp. 965-82.
Epstein, C. *Woman's Place*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970 (b).
Friedson, E. *Profession of Medicine*. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1970.
Goode, W. J. "Community Within a Community: The Professions." *American Sociological Review* 22 (1957: 195-200).
Goode, W. J. "Encroachment, Charlatonism, and the Emerging Professions: Psychology and Medicine." *American Sociological Review* 25 (1960: 902-14).
Goode, W. J. "The Librarian: From Occupation to Profession?" *The Library Quarterly* 31 (1961: 306-20).
Gouldner, A. *The Coming Crisis of Western Society*. New York: Basic Books, 1970.
Greenwood, E. "Social Work." In H. M. Vollmer and D. L. Mills, *Professionalization*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966.
Hall, Richard. "Components of Professionalism." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, California, 1967.
Henderson, A. and T. Parsons. *Max Weber: The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1947.
Hughes, E. "Dilemmas and Contradiction in Status." *American Journal of Sociology* 50 (1945), pp. 353-59.
Hughes, E. "What Other." In Arnold Rose (ed.), *Behavior and Social Processes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962.
Hughes, E. "Professions." in K. S. Lynn (ed.), *The Professions in America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965.
Hughes, H. "The Status of Women in Sociology 1968-72." Washington, D. C.: The American Sociological Association, 1973.
Jackson, J. A. *Professions and Professionalization*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
Kanter, R. "Women and the Structure of Organizations: Explorations in Theory and Behavior." In M. Millman and R. Kanter (eds.), *Another Voice*. Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Books, 1975.
Kaufman, D. "Associational Ties in Academe: Some Male and Female Differences." *Sex Roles*, IV (1), 1978.
Keller, Evelyn Fox. "Women in Science: An Analysis of a Social Problem," *Harvard Magazine* (October 1974), pp. 14-19.
Kornhauser, William. *Scientists in Industry: Conflict and Accomodation*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1962.
Krause, Elliott. *The Sociology of Occupations*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971.
Lapidus, G. W. "Occupational Segregation and Public Policy: A Comparative Analysis of American and Soviet Patterns." *Signs* 1 (Spring 1976: 119-36).
Litwak, E. "Models of Bureaucracy That Permit Conflict." *American Journal of Sociology* 67 (1961), pp. 177-84.
Lorber, J. "Women and Medical Sociology: Invisible Professionals and Ubiquitous Patients." In M. Millman and R. Kanter (eds.), *Another Voice*. Garden City, N. Y.: Anchor Books, 1975.
Merton, R. *Social Theory and Social Structure* (enlarged edition). New York: Free Press, 1968.
Mills, C. W. "The Sociological Imagination." In Ian Robertson (ed.), *Annual Editions Readings in Sociology*. Guilford, Ct.: Dushkin, 1974/75.
Parsons Talcott, "The Place of Ultimate Values in Sociological Theory." *International Journal of Ethics*, 1935.

Parsons, Talcott. *The Structure of Social Action*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1949.
Parsons, Talcott and E. Shils (eds.), *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951.
Parsons, Talcott. *Essays in Sociological Theory*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1954.
Parsons, Talcott. *The Family, Socialization and Interaction Process*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1955.
Parsons, Talcott. *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966.
Parsons, Talcott. *Sociological Theory and Modern Society*. New York: Free Press, 1967.
Parsons, T. and G. Platt. *The American University*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973.
Rapoport, Rhona and Robert. "Work and Family in Contemporary Society." *American Sociological Review* 30 (June, 1965), pp. 381-94.
Ritzer, G. "Professionalism and the Individual." In Eliot Freidson (ed.), *Professions and Their Prospects*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1974, pp. 19-39.
Seidman, A. "Women Who Work for Wages." In J. Robertson (ed.), *Beyond Intellectual Sexism*. New York: McKay Co., Inc., 1976.
Weber, M. "Bureaucracy." In H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (eds.), *Essays in Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1946.
White, Martha. "Psychological and Social Barriers to Women in Science." *Science* 170 (October, 1970), pp. 413-16.
Wilensky, H. "The Professionalization of Everyone?" *American Journal of Sociology* 70 (1964: 137-58).