

BOUNDARY MAINTENANCE IN UTOPIAN
COMMUNITIES: AN EXPLORATORY
STUDY

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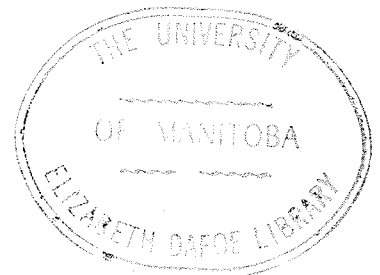


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ABSTRACT

This study was conceived as an empirical investigation into some of the structural factors influential in the process of boundary maintenance in Utopian community social systems. This particular type of community was chosen in the light of its relative neglect in previous studies, and secondly, for its interesting relationship to the problematic concept of 'community' itself. Thus, the present paper was envisaged as a contribution to the ongoing re-examination of 'community' as a concept in sociology; Utopian communities were recognised as a special sub-set of the general category, arguably of an anomalous nature.

In developing a theoretical framework, the PAS model of Charles Loomis was adopted since it provided a useful synthetic approach to social systems which had been little utilized in the past. In particular, it dealt directly with the classical dichotomies of the Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft type in which the concept of community is rooted, and suggested 'boundary maintenance' and 'systemic linkage' as important processes distinguishing between various kinds of phenomena. The concept of boundary maintenance was taken as the main focus of the study and was subjected to further scrutiny by extracting from Loomis' exposition and the illustrations which he provided a set of propositions, which followed some of the current proposals for the formalization of theory. This yielded a list of nine propositions, from which a smaller number were selected for testing. A tripartite distinction was drawn for heuristic

purposes between the various possible levels of boundary maintenance, allowing concentration on those propositions pertinent to only one of these levels, the social structural.

A selection of eighteen cases drawn from the nineteenth century United States was studied, comprising a very varied population on which to test comparative hypotheses. In selecting cases for study, restrictions were imposed by the amount of verifiable information provided. A selection criterion of at least two independent sources of information was utilized in order to facilitate cross-checking of data; a variety of sources were used, ranging from contemporary accounts to detailed historical investigations. Since the method of data collection was, in effect, a simplified form of content analysis, the operational definitions of the selected variables constituted to a large extent rules for the extraction of data.

Empirical findings on the whole tended to disconfirm the predictions derived from Loomis' model, and it was possible to formulate an alternative causal model. There was found to be a theoretical under-estimation of the role played by economic variables, coupled with an over-emphasis upon social homogeneity or consensus. Recommendations for future research centred upon the need to develop macrosociological analyses of such master processes as boundary maintenance and systemic linkage.

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen a vigorous revival of interest in the topic of Utopian social design, both as a feature of intellectual debate and as a more general cultural phenomenon, best exemplified by a new willingness to engage in collectivistic experimentation. One commentator recently felt able to affirm that ". . . Utopia is the most real of all real possibilities!" (1) In so doing, he was reflecting a strong contemporary interest.

Traditionally, this subject has fallen within the domain of social and political philosophy, and has been of relatively little moment for sociologists. Writers from Plato to Fourier have attempted to set down the ground-conditions for the operation of an ideal society, often working against a background of widespread conflict and social dissolution, for which they were essentially offering definitive solutions. In this sense, their work is but a special case of political philosophy's more general concern with the adjustment of social units and the principles that should hold between them, that is, its prescriptive endeavour.

Sociology has, on the whole, eschewed any such manifestly prescriptive or normative goals, and so has devoted little time to the consideration of Utopian projects. Such sociology as has been relevant here has in fact stemmed largely from

(1) Marcuse, Herbert, cited by Lasky, M.J. "The Birth of a Metaphor: On the Origins of Utopia and Revolution", Encounter Vol. 34 1970, page 35.

much older disciplines; Karl Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia is an outstanding example. (2) Mannheim's work is unusual in that it allocates to modern sociology the task of supplying a comprehensive programme for the reconstruction of society:

It is also possible that . . . all that we now call history, namely, the unforeseeable, fateful dominance of uncontrolled social forces, will come to an end. (3)

Like Plato before him, Mannheim wished to offer a panacea which would restore stability to the society of his time. Social relationships are to be carefully regulated and human affairs will be beneficially directed by an ascendant stratum of intellectual managers or guardians deemed to be fitted to adjudicate the best interests of society as a whole. Here, the continuity with more normatively-oriented modes of thought is clearly apparent.

The view that sociology may profitably be concerned with the issues of social planning is beginning to be revived. One indicator of this is Wilbert E. Moore's Presidential Address to the American Sociological Association in 1966 (4), in which

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- (2) See Mannheim, Karl, Ideology and Utopia, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1936).
 - (3) Mannheim, Karl, Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, (London: Kegan Paul, 1940), page 193.
 - (4) Moore, W.E., "The Utility of Utopias", American Sociological Review Vol. 31 1966.

he briefly examines the potential role of the sociologist vis-à-vis deliberately organized change and its increasing prevalence in the contemporary world; he advocates a greater attention to the various aspects of purposive human action. More recently, Roland Warren has investigated the possibility of constructing a normative model of the community by utilizing a set of value dimensions whose inter-relationships can be investigated empirically. (5) He suggests that it may eventually be possible to weigh the relative "costs" of realizing one set of goals in a given social arrangement against another. Warren argues that the disposition towards Wertfreiheit on the part of sociologists has militated against such work in the past, and that the weakening of this assumption, together with a general search for greater relevance and the need for such models in social policy formulation, has led to the possibility of sociologists now going ahead in this field.

Following Warren, it is possible to specify four broad types of investigation pertinent to the establishment of pre-scriptive models in sociology for such entities as communities:

- (i) the formulation of abstract theoretical accounts of Utopian social frameworks (e.g. Paul and Percival Goodman's Communitas (6))

(5) Warren, R., "Toward a non-Utopian Normative Model of the Community", American Sociological Review Vol. 35 1970.

(6) Goodman, P. & P., Communitas: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life (New York: Vintage Books, 1960).

- (ii) the study of empirical examples of intentional communities, "attempts to enact rather than merely to conceive Utopias. Such attempts arise typically as an effort to construct a society which institutes an alternative set of values to those of the contemporary society." (7)
- (iii) community planning projects.
- (iv) prescriptive accounts of the nature of community. Often this takes the form of sociological nostalgia for the values entailed by earlier social forms.

The present paper will fall within the second of these four broad areas, although, in the discussion of a theoretical framework, it will touch on issues relevant to the fourth category as well. Utopian experiments may be conceived as attempts to realize the values and perceived advantages of a specific type of collectivity, the community. To engage in their study is at once to investigate the nature and applicability of this concept. Hence, the sociology of community will serve as a point of departure from which to derive useful propositions which may be subjected to empirical test.

In particular, it is proposed to examine a cluster of Utopian experiments drawn from nineteenth century American historical sources in order to examine the notion of boundary maintenance, which is held by some writers to be an important social process in those collectivities distinguished as com-

(7) Warren, op. cit. page 219.

munities. This will involve studying the inter-relationships between a set of selected variables according to an explicit theoretical rationale. In so doing, an attempt will be made to situate experiments of this type within the sociology of community proper, by utilizing theory put forward in this area in order to see if the explanatory propositions developed are capable of extension to more anomalous phenomena. It is contended that Utopian experiments are rarely seen as a sub-category of the genus "community", and that the adoption of such a perspective might prove fruitful in explicating this more general concept which is sometimes taken to be problematic. The discussion of a theoretical framework will seek both to justify this approach and to set out the hypotheses for the study. Given the previous neglect of this type of phenomenon, the present paper will be conceived as being essentially exploratory in nature.

CHAPTER I

THEORYReview of the Literature

It will be appropriate here to review some of the relevant sociological treatments of the phenomena under study. These have in fact been few in number, and nearly always confined to casual or incidental illustration, rather than thoroughgoing analysis. On the whole, it would be true to say that the relatively fertile source of case studies which the nineteenth century American communitarian movement provides has received little attention from sociologists.

Historically, the communitarian movement bears an interesting relationship to the emergence of sociology as an established discipline. This connection resides in certain widespread ideological currents of the time, particularly the focus on the theme of community, which will be dealt with in greater detail at a later point. Lewis Feuer attempts to chart some of the features of this relationship in his article "The Influence of the American Communist Colonies on Engels and Marx" (8); here he points out that ". . . curiously, socialist colonizers such as the Brook Farmers felt like Marx and Engels that they were, above all, the exponents of 'social science'". . ., and goes on to note that the first use of the term "social science" in America was in the publications of some of the

(8) Feuer, Lewis, "The Influence of the American Communist Colonies on Engels and Marx", Western Political Quarterly Vol. 19 1966.

Fourierists. The main theme of his article is, however, that these experiments provided the only specific empirical referents to which Marx and Engels ever alluded in dealing with the shape of the future society. The impetus here seemed to come mainly from Engels, but this phase of Marxist thought was of brief duration. Beginning with The German Ideology, this theme was abandoned; The Communist Manifesto in particular is especially critical of communitarian social action:

Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action, historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones, and the gradual, spontaneous class-organization of the proletariat to an organization of society especially contrived by these inventors. (9)

Here, albeit in embryonic form, we already have a tentative theoretical statement as to the nature and significance of the communitarian enterprise, containing all the elements necessary for an account of its rise and decline.

As noted above, the participants in these experiments were often prepared to justify or legitimate their endeavours by an appeal to the canons of social science. The survey compiled and edited by the Perfectionist leader John Humphrey Noyes (10),

(9) Marx, K. and Engels, F., The Communist Manifesto, quoted in Feuer, L., (ed.) Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, (New York: Anchor Books, 1959) page 37.

(10) Noyes, John Humphrey, History of American Socialisms, (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1870).

for example, is equally a legitimating paradigm (11) and a primitive piece of sociological theorizing. Interestingly, Maren Lockwood Carden's account of the break-up of the Oneida community in its original form (12) relates this process to subtle changes in the central body of beliefs which comprised Perfectionism; one key feature of this was the leader's intellectual movement away from theology towards ". . . the then infant study of social science." (13) Noyes' activist conception of this infant study is well illustrated by his statement that:

We do not believe that cogitation without experiment is the right way to a true social theory. With us induction is first; deduction second; and verification by facts or the logic of events always and everywhere the supreme check on both. (14)

This passage underlines the intimate link between theory and practice which those involved in this type of social experiment felt to hold at that time.

These Utopian communities make a brief appearance in the

(11) On the application of Thomas Kuhn's account of scientific paradigms to ideology, social change and political theory see Sheldon Wolin "Paradigms and Political Theories" in King, P., and Parekh, B.C., (ed.) Politics and Experience: Essays presented to Michael Oakeshott, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

(12) Carden, Maren Lockwood, Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1969).

(13) Ibid, page 89 et. seq.

(14) Noyes, op. cit. page 667.

1937 edition of the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences under the heading "Communitistic Settlements", which provides a rapid, rather schematic factual inventory of the major nineteenth-century experiments in America. Even such a cursory treatment is lacking from the more recent 1968 International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, and the closest entry is that by B.F. Skinner in the second section of "Utopianism", under the title: "the design of experimental communities", which cites Charles Nordhoff's study (15) in the bibliography, although not in the text, and which is concerned with the application of the concepts of negative and positive reinforcement to the analysis of communities, and the felicitous proximity of such ventures to the laboratory experiment in the natural sciences. There is perhaps an echo of Noyes' work in the latter theme.

Thomas O'Dea in his study The Mormons (1957) mentions the American communitarians in passing, but is concerned only to outline the precursors and contemporaries pertinent to his main theme, the organizational structures developed by this particular sect. Rarely in the sociology of religion do these particular Utopian experiments receive more attention than this. Instead, case studies have been taken from related groups which are still in existence. Examples here are John Hostetler's celebrated study Amish Society (1963), the study of the Hutterites in North

(15) Nordhoff, Charles, The Communitistic Societies of the United States, (London: J. Murray, 1875).

America by Hostetler and Huntington (16) and more recently Calvin Redekop's The Old Colony Mennonities (1969). An exception is provided by Werner Stark in the second volume of his Sociology of Religion (1967). Here several of the experiments are used by way of selective illustration, and one in particular, the Oneida community is discussed in full as an example of one of the three postulated outcomes of the conflict between sect and society (i.e. annihilation, withdrawal or adjustment). Yet, unfortunately, the discussion is introduced as something of a light interlude: "the case of the Oneida community, needless to say, was by comparison a comedy rather than a tragedy: it had more farce than force in it." And, in fact, the treatment leaves much to be desired; for example, ". . . a propaganda drive against the nest of free love . . ." which finally resulted in considerable disruptions within the community, its leader being forced to flee the country, is one paragraph later described as showing "democracy at its best", a dubious argument, even when one is explicitly making a comparison with Hitlerian Germany, as does Stark. There is a marked failure to provide a carefully considered analysis of the dynamics of the social processes involved: the tendency is rather to dwell bemusedly upon the picturesque. (17)

(16) Hostetler, J.A., and Huntington, G.E., The Hutterites in North America, (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967).

(17) Stark, Werner, The Sociology of Religion Volume II, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967) pages 235-9.

A much more satisfactory treatment is given in the work of Bryan Wilson, notably in Religious Sects (1970). Wilson has been extremely inventive in his refinement of the concept of the "sect" and has established a useful typological framework which should go a long way in facilitating cross-classification and comparative analysis.

Taking the Troeltschian church/sect dichotomy as his starting point, Wilson identified four main types of sect (18):

- | | |
|---|--|
| tend to
become
institutionalized
sects | (a) the adventist, which is concerned with predicting and preparing for a sudden and drastic change in the world along apocalyptic and millenarian lines e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses. |
| tend to
become
fully
fledged
churches | (b) the introversionist, which rejects prevailing societal goals and posits new ones that call upon a different set of inner resources from the individual e.g. the Quakers. |
| | (c) the conversionist: this seeks to change the world by altering individuals e.g. the Salvation Army |
| | (d) the Gnostic: this accepts prevailing societal goals but seeks new means for achieving them, based on esoteric doctrinal interpretations e.g. Christian Science |

This taxonomy obviously has great relevance for an understanding of the religious variety of Utopian experiment, although one major disadvantage for present purposes is its failure to encompass

(18) Wilson, B.R., "An Analysis of Sect Development" in Wilson, B. R. (ed.) Patterns of Sectarianism, (London: Heinemann, 1967).

those Utopias which are primarily secular in inspiration, such as the Fourierist phalanxes. The only possible inroad would involve a considerable stretching of the definition of the concept of "religion" so that it might cover communism or socialism; the danger here lies in emasculating the concept altogether by evacuating it of all specific meaning.

Wilson is able to fit several cases within his schema: for example, in his review article, "Migrating Sects" in which he compares the careers of the Mormons, Rappites, and Hutterites, Wilson characterizes the Rappites as an introversionist sect which "discouraged would-be joiners". (19) Further, he is able to develop this typology in Religious Sects by singling out "Utopian Sects" as a special sub-category of his more general analysis, and citing the Oneida community as an empirical example. Fruitful though this approach may be, however, it is Wilson himself who suggests the severe limitations inherent in viewing these cases as predominantly religious phenomena, when he remarks in his introduction to Patterns of Sectarianism that sects which have arisen in rural communities ". . . tend to subsume religious organization in community structure, employing religious sanctions merely as boundary-maintaining devices." Hence, there is a ". . . relatively low level of distinctively

(19) Wilson, B.R., "Migrating Sects", British Journal of Sociology Vol. 18, 1967, page 307.

religious organization." (20) Roland Robertson comments on this that ". . . this is not to say that spatially secluded sectarian communities are safe from the problems of maintaining boundaries and the allegiance of their members." (21) These observations have the virtue of directing attention to the wider area of social organization, thus suggesting ways in which the range of phenomena which may properly be considered may be increased. In addition, it is suggested in passing that these forms of social organization may be distinguished by their attention to a specific social process, that of boundary-maintenance.

Another sociological approach which has had occasion to deal with the American communitarians is the study of social movements and collective behaviour. The concern with millennialism provides one link between Utopian aspirations and institutional experimentation; there is a long tradition of literature here including, for example, Norman Cohn's work on European millennial movements in The Pursuit of the Millenium (1957) and the intensive study of cargo cults in Melanesia in such works as Peter Worsley's The Trumpet Shall Sound (1957) or Kenelm Burridge's New Heavens, New Earth (1969). Neil Smelser, in an important theoretical project (22), has attempted to provide a general account of the cumulative nature

(20) Wilson, Patterns of Sectarianism, page 12.

(21) Robertson, R., The Sociological Interpretation of Religion (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970) page 131.

(22) Smelser, N.J., Theory of Collective Behaviour, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962).

of collective behaviour, which attempts to synthesize a wide range of seemingly diverse studies into a coherent analytical framework. The American communitarians appear here as an illustrative example in his later discussion of "the value oriented movement."

Smelser's broad approach has the advantage of allowing a discussion that includes the non-religious Utopian experiment as well as the specifically sectarian forms which are the focus of sociologists of religion. However, Smelser's preoccupation with social movements per se leads him to an under-estimation of the institutionalized aspects of communitarian organization; accordingly he stresses the extreme difficulty of moving beyond the social movement stage. He outlines two main reactions to the difficulties of institutionalization:

The idealists began to feel that the ideals of the movement could not be realized and sooner or later lost hope for the movement. Certain committed individuals or groups in the community began to feel that the practical compromises represented backsliding and degeneration of the movement. This is a typical occasion for secession. (23)

Central to Smelser's argument is a high estimation of the role of values in social affairs, conceiving them to be the primary determinants of human organization. He wishes to subsume the career of these communities under an all-pervasive

(23) Ibid., page 363.

struggle for legitimacy:

all conflicts tend to become value-conflicts, for which solutions short of dissolution and secession are difficult to find. Consider the fate of the communitarian experiments: Most of these were extremely short-lived; furthermore they ended amidst vitriolic conflict over legitimacy . . . In the experiments that persisted the legitimacy of values had been better established than in the communities that did not persist; hence the compromises of institutionalization could be effected without flaring so easily into conflicts over values. (24)

The limitation of Smelser's perspective is that it leads him to neglect those ". . . exigencies of economic management, political regulation, recruitment and education of the young . . ." which he earlier cites as being responsible for the ". . . persistence or lack of persistence. . . " of these ventures. (25) In other words, had Smelser's point of departure been the basic "needs" (or "functional prerequisites" (26)) necessary for the maintenance of any given human society and their satisfaction, he might have arrived at a much more precise account of the variations in persistence of communitarian social structures. While it may well be useful to furnish an explanation of the genesis of these structures in terms of a capacity to

(24) Ibid., pages 363-4.

(25) Ibid., page 361.

(26) See Aberle, D.F., et. al., "Functional Prerequisites of a Society", Ethics, Vol. 60, 1949-50.

mobilize people behind a given set of values, it is clearly one-sided to take this and attempt to extend it in order to account for the solution of all those problems which social organizations typically face. Insofar as he does this, Smelser is confusing genetic questions with questions of maintenance, and is failing to explain their relative success as social institutions rather than as social movements.

The most promising sociological domain from which to approach these phenomena would thus seem to be that of social organization. Yet this area shares with those already critically examined an under-utilization of these data for purposes of sociological study. For example, W.J.H. Sprott's essay on "permanent small groups" (27) uses several communitarian experiments as "representative examples" of "planned communities", and suggests a variety of reasons for their demise: the loss of a charismatic leader and problems of succession; sexuality as a disequilibrating social force; difficulties in continuously upholding doctrinaire religious beliefs; economic problems and, finally, extra-communal disruptive influences. However, though his discussion is useful, it is far too brief (two pages only) to be anything more than suggestive. Sprott's contribution is to propose a social organizational approach which provides the germs of a more exhaustive analysis and helpfully serves to

(27) Sprott, W.J.H., Human Groups, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958).

direct attention towards the sociology of community as an appropriate frame of reference.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter's recent article is noteworthy as the first rigorous attempt at explaining certain features of these experiments, namely their comparative durations, on the basis of which a definition of organizational success is constructed (28). Her major concern is to demonstrate the vertical linkage between the individual as a personality system and the Utopian community as a social system. Commitment as an organizational variable is analyzed into three types: continuance, cohesion and control commitment, and relevant underlying processes are identified, allowing the author to set down a wide variety of commitment-inducing strategies which serve to distinguish Utopian communities of long and short duration. Important though this analysis may be, it creates problems in its yoking together of what sometimes seem to be extremely heterogeneous elements under the same headings; for example, "foreign language spoken" and "families did not share dwelling unit" are both classed under "renunciation mechanisms". Moreover, within the individual sub-categories there are sometimes results which if appropriately manipulated, might significantly weaken the author's case. A notable example of this occurs in Table 9 in the sub-category designated "de-individuating mechanisms" (reproduced below):

(28) Kanter, R.M., "Commitment and Social Organization: A Study of Commitment Mechanisms in Utopian Communities", American Sociological Review, Vol. 33, 1968

Table 1
De-individuating mechanisms (29)

	Successful cases		Unsuccessful cases	
(1) Uniform worn	8/9	89%	5/17	30%
(2) Communal dwellings	3/9	33	14/21	67
(3) Communal dining halls	5/9	56	15/19	79
(4) Same meals eaten by all	3/7	43	4/10	40

Here items (2) and (3), comprising 50% of the category, tell against any rash conclusions as to the role of de-individuating mechanisms in distinguishing the two types of community taken as the dependent variable. This kind of discrepancy is entirely passed over, yet it suggests that attention might profitably be given to other relevant variables. Thus Kanter's work should play an important part in initiating and stimulating further research.

In summary, the preliminary review of the literature has served to identify three distinct sociological approaches to communitarian experiments:

- (i) the sociology of religion
- (ii) the sociology of social movements
- (iii) social organization; in particular the sociology of community.

The first was criticized above all for its lack of engagement

(29) Ibid., page 513.

with those Utopian communities without an essentially religious legitimation, while the second was found to minimize the degree of institutional effectiveness possible in these experiments. The third approach, though valuable in suggesting interesting lines of approach to the researcher, has as yet to be fully utilized. Its merits probably lie in its focus on factors basic to institutional success, such as the provision of an adequate economy, or arrangements for recruiting (i.e. "structural" variables), and in suggesting "community" as an appropriate unit of analysis. Thus it permits the first step in building up a theoretical framework.

The Sociology of Community

The sociology of community is currently subject to a certain amount of confusion; from different sides it is proclaimed as renascent and moribund. Summers, Clark and Seiler in a recent article (30) have argued that ". . . after nearly two decades of dormancy, an interest in communities seems to be reviving." In contrast, Margaret Stacey (31) is ". . . doubtful whether the concept 'community' refers to a useful abstraction . . ." and advocates its replacement by that of "a local social system" with the aim of making ". . . systematic comparison between

(30) Summers, G.F., Clark, J.P., and Seiler, L.H., "The Renewal of Community Sociology", Rural Sociology, Vol. 35, 1970.

(31) Stacey, M., "The Myth of Community Studies", British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 20, 1969.

studies more rigorous." Both articles share a common concern with the need for a substantial re-orientation in the subject. In order to understand this uncertainty, it will be helpful to examine the sources of this concept in the history of sociological thought.

Robert Nisbet in The Sociological Tradition identifies "community" as one of the five unit-ideas which are responsible for the distinctiveness of sociology as a discipline, and examines in detail the place of this concept in the formative work of the founding fathers. For Nisbet, "community" is "the most fundamental and far-reaching of sociology's unit-ideas" (32), central to the writings of Comte, Tonnies, Weber, Durkheim and Simmel. And this is closely related to the context of the development of sociology: the emergence of industrial society in Western Europe, and the stresses and problems which this created.

As sociology gradually grew out of social and political philosophy, its moral themes and value-claims became progressively submerged and less apparent. At its inception, however, these themes were very much to the fore and the sociological preoccupation with community arose from critical evaluations of early capitalist society. Comte, for example, saw the increasing division of labour as a force undermining a social

(32) Nisbet, Robert, The Sociological Tradition, (New York: Basic Books, 1966), page 47.

organization that was based on moral consensus. The image that informs Comte's analysis is that of the moral community, 'the Positivistic society', and he carefully outlines a model of Utopia in which all functions, roles and duties are perfectly aligned and where social behaviour is fully regulated. Nisbet has summed up this vision in the formula: "Positive society for Comte is simply medievalism minus Christianity". (33)

Alvin Gouldner (34) has noted that Durkheim in The Division of Labour was engaged in a polemic against Comte and argues that this led him to frame his analysis of two contrasting forms of solidarity: the mechanical and the organic. The former validates the Comtian conception of a social order founded essentially upon shared moral beliefs, that is the uniformity of the "collective conscience", and has been characteristic of the majority of historical social formations. The dominance of organic solidarity has, however, led to its supercession, for industrialism brings with it its own forms of cohesion via the interdependent network of activities produced by the division of labour. This distinction between different social arrangements and their appropriate modes of solidarity is an important one, and in it lies the genesis of the sociology of community as an independent study in its own right.

(33) Ibid., page 58.

(34) Gouldner, A., introduction to Emile Durkheim's Socialism and St. Simon, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959).

A closely related developmental perspective may be found in the work of Tonnies and Weber. The historical contrast is between two ideal types of social relationships, the concepts of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, the former designating community-centred social forms, the latter more associational types of social organization characterized by increasing individualization, impersonality and differentiation. Nisbet's description of Durkheim's 'mechanical solidarity' conveys the essence of the concept of Gemeinschaft:

Within such a framework, tradition dominates, individualism is totally lacking, and justice is overwhelmingly directed toward the subordination of the individual to the collective conscience. Property is communal, religion is indistinguishable from cult and ritual, and all questions of individual thought and conduct are determined by the will of the community. And ties of kinship, localism, and the sacred give substance to the whole. (35)

This kind of two-fold typology has in fact been widely repeated throughout the history of sociological theory. Thus we have in addition Spencer's theological-military and industrial-peaceable societies, Redfield's folk and urban societies and Becker's sacred and secular societal types. Finally, Tonnies' Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft axis was instrumental in suggesting Talcott Parsons' pattern variables, which provide ideal-typical materials for the analysis of a wide range of social relationships.

The connection with an emergent industrialism noted above is

(35) Nisbet, op. cit., page 84

important for an understanding of the crucial difficulties which have beset the concept of community since the early development of sociological theory. The core of these difficulties has been the problem of citing identifiable characteristics defining the concept itself. Part of this problem has resulted from the impact of historical forces upon Western society, so that the distinctions made by earlier sociologists have been re-cast and rendered more complex. This process was notably grasped by Stein in The Eclipse of the Community (1960), in which he traced the impact of industrialization, urbanization and bureaucratization on the study of communities in America. Much of the content of the original concepts has accordingly come to be reformulated in terms of a contrast between rural and urban types of social organization, although this has been widely criticized. (36) Sjoberg, for example, has counseled that ". . . we must not confuse an analytical distinction with empirical reality . . ." (37) However, in terms of practical research a great deal of the study of

(36) E.g. Steward, C.J., "The Urban-Rural Dichotomy: Concepts and Uses", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 64, 1958; and Dewey, R., "The Rural-Urban Continuum: Real but Relatively Unimportant", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 66, 1960.

(37) See Sjoberg, Gideon, "The Rural-Urban Dimension in Pre-industrial, Transitional and Industrial Societies" in Faris, R.E. (ed.) Handbook of Modern Sociology, page 131.

communities has been carried out by specialists in rural sociology.

This professional specialization has done little to solve definitional problems; in effect, it merely circumvents them. It is notable that Stein, the sociologist most aware of the long-term historical changes at work, nowhere gives a clear definition of the concept of community. Summers, Clark and Seiler propose a continuum of forms of social organization which they derive from Olsen's The Process of Social Organization in order to suggest a way of classifying communities; this is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

The Continuum of Social Organization

Simplex

Multiplex

Small groups	Associations	Communities	Regional	Total
e.g. dyads,	e.g. hospitals		Organiz-	Societies
triads,	unions,		ations.	
nuclear	business			
families,	firms,			
street	schools.			
corner				
gangs.				

Although it is noted that the complexity of social organization is multi-dimensional and continuous, rather than unidimensional and discrete, their approach raises more problems than it solves since the distinguishing characteristics of community are never clearly spelled out. Rather, it is simply claimed that "its uniqueness determines its location in the family of phenomena

we label social organization." (38) That real difficulties are being avoided here can be seen from a comparison with the work of Don Martindale (39). Martindale is prepared to conceptualize community as a "total way of life", and to permit it to extend to the modern nation-state as a result of what he calls "the decline of territory as an organizing principle of the modern community". Obviously, this allows the term "community" so defined to operate at several different levels of Olsen's continuum, since the criterion "a set or system of groups sufficient to solve all of the basic problems of ordinary ways of life" is by no means an exclusive standard. In this confusion as to the specific meaning of the term, it is small wonder that some have been prepared to argue for its abandonment.

George Hillery has perhaps done most systematically to clarify these issues. In one study (40), he examined ninety-four definitions of the term "community", and found that sixty-nine were "in accord that social interaction, area, and a common tie or ties are commonly found in community life". This is in line with Stacey's argument that "there are, broadly,

(38) Summers, Clark and Seiler, op. cit., page 220

(39) Martindale, D., "Community Formation and Destruction" in Zollschan, G.K., and Hirsch, W., (ed.) Explorations in Social Change, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964).

(40) Hillery, Jnr., George A., "Definitions of Community: Areas of Agreement", Rural Sociology Vol. 20, 1955.

those who use 'community' for social relations in a defined geographic area, and those who stress the sense of belonging to a group which 'community' is said to entail". (41) It should be noted that the work of Weber falls essentially into the latter group. (42)

Hillery has recently produced a more comprehensive examination of this area in Communal Organizations: A Study of Local Societies (43) Here his approach is basically inductive, that of letting generalizations arise from the scrutiny of data, in this instance a set of case studies taken from the earlier work of other sociologists; in this he is perhaps a little reminiscent of Stein. He identifies four chief substantive findings:

- (1) One of the most significant variations between types of communal organizations is that between rural and urban ways of life.
- (2) Communal organizations lack any single unifying goal. Of this Hillery notes that it "is a difficult concept to demonstrate, since it is a negative one . . . this concept is an extremely valuable tool for separating communal organizations from other forms of social systems; it has a high taxonomic value". (44)
- (3) 'Structural freewheeling', i.e. "a change in one part of a communal organization does not mean that a mathematically predictable change must occur in

(41) Stacey, op. cit., page 135

(42) See Weber, Max., Economy and Society Vol. 1 (New York: Bedminster Press. 1968).

(43) Hillery Jnr., G.A., Communal Organizations, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

(44) Ibid., page 8.

another part of the system." (45)

- (4) Communal organizations exist on levels, from the family household up.

The main aim of Hillery's work is taxonomic, and he seeks to distinguish communities from non-communal forms via a general typology of human groups by means of a series of precise comparisons. (46) In this way he hopes to suggest theory. Hillery is prepared to jettison the concept "community" in favour of the term "communal organization" in order to avoid the confusions of usage which have dogged the term in the past. His rationale for the new term is that "it connotes a range of specific things. 'Communal' associates the term with a broad collection of related groups, and 'organizations' gives the collection some specificity." (47)

The criterion of absence of specific goals is indeed a difficult one to articulate; there may instead be some utility in bringing goal-centred communities into Hillery's taxonomy as a limiting case. Unless this is done, his stress on the role of contradictory evidence in the process of validation becomes rather an empty device. (48) Utopian experiments may

(45) Ibid., pages 8 - 9.

(46) Hillery's general typology and a discussion of it appear on page 145 et. seq.

(47) Ibid., pages 151-2

(48) See page 23.

be uncomfortable historical exceptions, with their insistence on specific sets of goals, but their rarity itself does not justify their dismissal. It would seem that they merit some consideration in any sociology of community; formulations other than Hillery's have regarded them as archetypal in some respects. This might be said of the work of Loomis. As exceptional cases, they may yet be incorporated into Hillery's typology as a special sub-category; obviously this would necessitate further theoretical work. It is instructive that Hillery considers the Israeli Kibbutz, but seems never to see it as a planned, goal-oriented enterprise, despite his listing of its formal goals. (49) His perspective is revealed in his discussion of the type of communal organization that he calls "vills":

. . . none of them were purposely created to do what they do . . . to promote living and co-operation among a collection of families who reside in a given place. (50)

This failure in his analysis supports Wilbert Moore's critical remark that ". . . the purposive, goal-oriented, future-oriented character of social life has been a bit embarrassing to social analysts. . ." (51)

(49) Ibid., page 173

(50) Ibid., pages 147-8

(51) Moore, op. cit., page 767

Theoretical Framework

It has been suggested that Utopian communities may be conceptualized as goal-oriented structures, and located within the sociology of community proper. This is particularly fitting, since, at the inception of sociology, the notion of community was closely connected with that of Utopia, a fact which is well brought out in this passage by Robert Nisbet:

. . . it is fellowship, neighborhood, community, each in its special way that forms the new pattern of Utopia. What had been the dream of earlier Utopian minds now became actuality -- short-lived, often disillusioning, but actuality nonetheless -- for more than a few in the century. Robert Owen's New Lanark did not, of course, affect the practical lives of many, but its theme was a heralded one. Involving more persons were the religious Utopian communities of the century. Their motivations lay as much in repudiation of economic and political egoism as they did in efforts to regain for Christianity its apostolic or prophetic purity. Communalism, as an ethic, is a powerful force in nineteenth century religion, as it is in many another area. (52)

Thus, in some sense the concept of Utopia may be considered as a close counterpart of that of community. In this particular context it denotes an alternative set of values to those perceived to be embodied in emergent laissez-faire capitalism.

Hillery, in his typology of human groups, suggests that one important way of classifying groups is by their relationship

(52) Nisbet, op.cit., page 52

to specific goals:

. . . accordingly, groups may be viewed as being defined by specific goals, on the one hand, or merely being the result of following other goals To express this distinction in another way, some groups are brought into being merely through the process of human living. (53)

In light of the high degree of purposiveness evidenced by the American communitarians (54), it would seem inappropriate to relegate them to the second category. They were, in fact, highly self-conscious of their aim of establishing and institutionalizing particular total ways of life in which social relationships took on determinate forms subject to social engineering. This might take the form of radical re-organization of the family structure, for example. Social organization was usually predicated on specific goals which defined a conception of the good life, centred around those values which W.H. Armytage has called "the religion of community". (55) That these goals may have a transcendental dimension in many cases does not detract from their specifically secular directives and consequences. This at once suggests that this criterion does not serve to demarcate communities from non-communities as strictly as Hillery would oppose.

(53) Hillery, op. cit., page 146

(54) See Bestor, A.E., Backwoods Utopias, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950), Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

(55) Armytage, W.H., Heavens Below (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), page 130 et. seg.

In the institutionalization of these types of social organization, with their very definite stress on the realization of values at variance with those of the wider society of the time, the maintenance of the distinctive character of the enterprise is at a premium. The kinds of problems involved here have traditionally been conceptualized as problems of 'boundary maintenance' by social systems theorists. In a sense, this is a very important set of problems for such writers, for the process of boundary maintenance is integral to the notion of a social system, which may be said to refer to a special kind of abstraction useful in focusing attention on the regularities exhibited by the various components of a given social structure. Buckley gives a definition which may be taken as a rough indicator of the type of concerns involved in this approach:

The kind of system we are interested in may be described generally as a complex of elements or components directly or indirectly related in a causal network, such that each component is related to at least some others in a more or less stable way within any particular period of time. The components may be relatively simple and stable, or complex and changing; they may vary in only one or two properties or take on many different states The particular kinds of more or less stable interrelationships of components that become established at any time constitute the particular structure of the system at that time, thus achieving a kind of "whole" with some degree of continuity and boundary. (56)

(56) Buckley, Walter, Sociology and Modern Systems Theory (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1967), page 41

Loosely speaking, what is entailed is the idea of society as a "system" of interrelated parts, with a boundary and, also, a tendency to exhibit balance or equilibrium over time. This perspective has become a commonplace recommendation in reviews of the literature of community studies and in attempts to develop systematic approaches to the subject. (57) However, it has not been taken up nearly so often as it has been proposed. (Indeed, by stressing "structural freewheeling" as a feature of communal organizations, Hillery may well be arguing that they are non-systemic entities; but he does not make this clear.)

While this particular theoretical field has been dominated by the work of Talcott Parsons, there have been many other interesting attempts to deal with the same problems by a variety of writers. It is here proposed to adopt a theoretical framework developed by Charles Loomis, his Processually Articulated Structural Model (PAS), which will be subjected to various modifications in the course of the paper. (58) Loomis' model is particularly interesting because it explicitly attempts to develop the notion of boundary maintenance as a "comprehensive

(57) See for example: Summers, Clark and Seiler, op. cit., Stacey, op. cit., Reiss Jnr., A.J., "The Sociological Study of Communities", Rural Sociology, Vol. 24, 1959; Sanders, I., The Community: an introduction to a social system, (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1966), Warren, R.L., The Community in America (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1963).

(58) Loomis, C.P., Social Systems: Essays on their Persistence and Change (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1960).

or master process" in social systems and thus provides a theoretical basis on which to examine an important set of relationships for Utopian communities. A brief outline of the components of Loomis' model will serve to locate the place of this concept within the over-all scheme.

Loomis begins by defining the social system as follows:

(it) is composed of the patterned interaction of members. It is constituted of the interaction of a plurality of individual actors whose relations to each other are mutually oriented through the definition and mediation of a pattern of structured and shared symbols and expectations (59);

and goes on to define nine constitutive elements: belief (knowledge); sentiment; end, goal or objective; norm; status role (position); rank; power; sanction; and facility. These are further articulated to form nine specialized processes which "mesh, stabilize, and alter the relations between the elements through time; they are the tools through which the social system may be understood as a dynamic functioning continuity -- a 'going concern'". They are:

- (1) cognitive mapping and validation which articulate the element belief (knowledge)
- (2) tension management and communication of sentiment which articulate the element sentiment
- (3) goal attaining and concomitant "latent" activity as process which articulate the element -- end, goal or objective

(59) Ibid., page 4.

- (4) evaluation which articulates the element norm
- (5) status-role performance which articulates the element status-role (position)
- (6) evaluation of actors and allocation of status-roles which articulate the element rank
- (7) decision making and its initiation into action which articulate the element power
- (8) application of sanctions which articulates the element sanction
- (9) utilization of facilities which articulates the element facility. (60)

Beyond this, Loomis identifies five "comprehensive or master processes each of which activates many or all of the elements", and among which "boundary maintenance" is located, the others being "communication", "systemic linkage", "social control", "socialization" and "institutionalization". On the whole, Loomis' model probably deserves a little more attention than it has thus far received, since it is conceived as a very far-reaching theoretical synthesis. In his later work, Loomis attempts to show how much of current sociological theorizing converges upon his model, and illustrates this by drawing on the writings of a variety of sociologists, including Howard P. Becker, Kingsley Davis, Homans, Merton, Parsons and Gouldner, and fitting them into the categories which he has developed. (61)

(60) Ibid., pages 6 - 7

(61) Loomis, C.P., and Loomis, Z.K., Modern Social Theories, (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1965).

Loomis' essay "The Division of Labour, the community and society" is instructive for the way in which he relates the concepts of boundary maintenance and systemic linkage to the typologies of earlier sociologists. These two processes are typical of certain aspects of the Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft distinction, and Loomis points out that:

. . . while neither extreme actually exists, Gesellschaft-like groups tend to place a higher evaluation on systemic linkage and a relatively lower evaluation on boundary maintenance than do Gemeinschaft-like groups.

Boundary maintenance is itself defined as:

the process whereby the identity of the social system is preserved and the characteristic interaction pattern maintained,

while the contrasting process, systemic linkage, refers to

the process whereby one or more of the elements of at least two social systems is articulated in such a manner that the two systems in some ways and on some occasions may be viewed as a single unit. (62)

As was noted above, boundary maintenance is a very important problem for Utopian communities to face, and thus Loomis' argument would seem to be especially relevant to an adequate understanding of them. Loomis seeks to give more substance to his assertions by the use of casual illustrations and by means of a case study, his essay on "The Old Order Amish". (63)

(62) Ibid., pages 31 - 2

(63) Ibid., pages 212-248

Although explicitly working in ideal-typical terms, Loomis in effect takes the Amish as an archetype of the Gemeinschaft-like social organizations. As such, it is of great interest to the present study, in that the phenomena he has chosen to examine are very close to the kind of Utopian enterprise attempted by the American communitarians. It may be particularly useful as a source of general propositions relevant to Utopian communities and, thus, valuable in explaining their substantive variation. In passing, it should be noted that Loomis is quite clear in his identification of the specific goals of this community, these being essentially transcended in nature. (64)

Loomis asserts that:

. . . no process is more important in the life of the Amish than boundary maintenance; without hard and fast boundaries of conduct as well as spatial boundaries, their ways would change and their system disintegrate. (65)

He goes on to select from all those elements and processes involved those which are central to the boundary maintenance process. One problem, however, is that he fails to formulate his work in specifically propositional form, largely due to his rather descriptive style of presentation. The advantages of such a codification have been argued by such writers as Hans Zetterberg and George Homans, and most recently by Hubert Blalock, the

(64) "Eternal life is the ultimate goal of the Amish . . . Whether the Amishman attains the goal of eternal life can never be proven or disproven. However, when all Amishmen are motivated toward this goal their unified and varied activity is discernible." Ibid., pages 219-20

(65) Ibid., page 234

ultimate goal of such a practice being precise mathematical formulations of sociological theory. (66) This approach may be seen to bear a close relationship to the location of research problems and verification procedures. As Zetterberg points out, one special virtue is that it allows a strict separation to be made between statements which function as definitions, and those which function as hypotheses. (67) All three writers cited see this process of formalization as an important technique in the progress of the discipline; Blalock so much so that he is prepared to adopt an extremely cavalier stance when dealing with the re-interpretation of "verbal" theory:

. . . one must allow for the possibility that an author's discussion is too vague or ambiguous to permit a definite answer. At this point, one may be tempted to make a thorough search of the author's work to obtain an answer. Such a search may very well prove fruitless, or it may be found that the author has been inconsistent or deliberately ambiguous. At the risk of being accused of professional heresy, I would suggest that in such instances one should forget what the theorist intended . . . and that one insert his own theoretical linkages. (68)

(66) See Zetterberg, H., On Theory and Verification in Sociology (New York: Tressler Press, 1954); Homans, G., "Contemporary Sociological Theory" in Faris, R.E.L., Handbook of Modern Sociology, op. cit.; and Blalock, H., Theory Construction: From Verbal to Mathematical Formulations (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969).

(67) Zetterberg, op. cit., page 25.

(68) Blalock, op.cit., page 29.

Blalock himself never goes quite this far in practice in his utilization of the verbal theories of others, and it is far from clear that, if taken literally, it would bring with it the "pay-offs" he suggests. There is, however, no necessity to endorse this view in order to accept the methodological strategy of formalization as a helpful aid in theory building. It will, thus, eventually be necessary to extricate a series of distinct propositions from Loomis' writings on the master process of boundary maintenance now that attention has been focused on its relevance for the concept of "community" itself. Necessarily, any attempt at systematization will involve a certain amount of distortion of Loomis' original argument. Only the task of generating a set of hypotheses will be undertaken; no attempt will be made at axiomatization, since only a limited part of Loomis' total model is being operationalized. Any attempt to formulate a clear set of axioms from which appropriate derivations could be made would entail a reconstruction of the entire PAS model, and would thus be beyond the scope of this paper. Further, the notion of axiomatization is not itself uncontroversial in sociology; there is as yet no clear agreement as to a specific calculus, other than ordinary deductive reasoning, suitable in linking different orders of propositions. (69) The next step,

(69) A point on which Zetterberg errs rather badly. See Costner, H.L., and Leik, R.K., "Deductions from Axiomatic Theory", American Sociological Review, Vol. 29, 1964.

then, is to proceed to an elaboration of specific propositions drawn from a discussion of Loomis' general position.

In his introduction to the concept, Loomis suggests that there are a wide range of boundary maintaining devices available. Yet, one disadvantage of his treatment of this subject is his failure to give an orderly classification of just what devices may be involved, and at what key points. His discussion, rather, relies on ad hoc enumeration, and there is little effort at providing a complete catalogue comparable to the elaboration of the various elements and processes themselves. Loomis proposes several distinctions, but only by way of illustration; he does not provide systematic theory beyond the positing of the structural concepts of his model. This is a very important weakness in his work.

Loomis' distinctions are first made in terms of the physical and social aspects of boundary maintenance; examples of the former are given as "political boundaries, prison walls, zoning restrictions, or prescribed use or non-use of facilities." Social types of boundary maintenance are exemplified by the life styles of social classes or the preference for endogamy." A further possible sub-division is between those boundary maintaining devices which are spontaneously or unconsciously applied "as in the family display of company manners," and those which are planned and rationally applied "as in the travel restrictions imposed extensively by totalitarian states and less extensively by democratic societies". (70) Here we have the rudiments of a

(70) Loomis, op. cit., page 32

possible typology, but one which needs much greater refinement and extension.

Loomis never uses such a typology as a guideline for his analyses but, instead, follows the path of the selective example. Thus it is sometimes possible for a certain amount of ambiguity to enter into his work; for example, it is sometimes unclear as to whether he is merely giving a pointed illustration or whether he is in fact stating a general proposition. It is in the light of this problem that selections from his work may well do violence to its intended purpose.

On page 31, Loomis states that "the probability of applied boundary maintenance mechanisms increases with the level of solidarity of the social system and with the threat of encroachment." This a priori assertion is obviously of high generality, yet it is possible that it contains two separable propositions, ascribing causal status to levels of solidarity and to various threats to the system under different conditions and under different circumstances. Already in the next sentence Loomis is making a distinction between those threats which are external and those which are internal and suggests that either of these may lead to "an increased evaluation of the process of boundary maintenance and of the activities devoted to it." He then gives an example which suggests that such increased evaluation serves to heighten integration and solidarity. Another possibility is next raised whereby integration and solidarity are independently heightened by affective activity, internal to the

system, exemplified by "ritualistic expression, which reaffirms common norms, sentiments and beliefs", and "is boundary maintaining to the degree that it facilitates system identification and sustains the interaction pattern." (71) It may be argued that the propositions embodied in these statements may be operationalized in several different ways.

Boundary maintenance in the Amish is held to be related to several sources. One of these involves the type of economic activity engaged in:

. . . the sanctified nature of farming permits the maintenance of certain boundaries. No Amishman needs further education; no Amishman needs seek a job in a non-Amish community . . . (72)

This emphasis on the consequences of restricted economic activity contains a point which might profitably be generalized. Hillery cites Sjoberg's stress on the importance of the role of technology as a major factor in causing change in communal organizations and goes on to suggest a counter-argument:

. . . for example, the argument could as easily be made that diffusion spurs technological growth and that therefore increase in accessibility is more important than technological change . . . (73)

This has obvious significance for any examination of boundary maintenance, and raises the possibility of testing propositions concerning the technological variable in conjunction with propositions pertaining to accessibility in its various dimensions,

(71) Ibid., pages 31-2

(72) Ibid., page 234

(73) Hillery, op. cit., pages 195-6

since the unresolved nature of this debate merits attention to both. The "accessibility" factor may initially be conceptualized in terms drawn from Max Weber's theory of community. (74)

Weber uses the terms "open" and "closed" as comparative concepts relevant to two types of social organizations: communities and associations. Definitionally, a relationship is "closed" insofar as participation in it is subjected to limiting conditions. As Nisbet points out:

Whether a relationship is open or closed has nothing to do intrinsically with whether it is communal or associative . . . Closure, in short, may be for traditional, emotional or purely calculative reasons. It is, however, the communal type of relationship that tends most frequently to manifest the social and moral qualities of the closed order. For, once a relationship becomes associative -- that is, the product of volition rather than tradition or kinship -- it becomes difficult to enforce the criteria of closure. (75)

This is closely related to Loomis' general argument and suggests possible sources of variation in social structure responsible for differentials in the stability manifested by a social system of a given form over a period of time. (76)

(74) For an exploratory development of this neglected theory see Neuwirth, G., "Weber's Theory of Community and the Dark Ghetto", British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 20 1969.

(75) Nisbet, op. cit., page 81

(76) c.f. Parson's definition of 'boundary' as ". . . a theoretically and empirically significant difference between structures and processes internal to the system and those external to it exists and tends to be maintained. Insofar as boundaries in this sense do not exist, it is not possible to identify a set of interdependent phenomena as a system; it is merged in some other, more extensive system", Parsons, T., et. al., Theories of Society Vol. 1 (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1961), page 36.

Returning to the discussion of the Amish, it may be noted that Loomis cites several additional mechanisms. One of these pertains to the integration of the community itself: the simplicity of the status-role pattern and the limited number of status-roles (positions) available to the individual is held to "insure against little pyramids of special occupational interests" on the basis of the proposition: "commonly shared status-roles means commonly shared life styles; it maximizes integration and minimizes the splintering of interests." (77)

Several of the other processes cited relate to the more general Weberian emphasis on the denial of participation dealt with above. One feature of this is the reliance on withdrawal, and a refusal to interact in organizations with members of other systems, as boundary maintaining devices. In the Amish, this takes such forms as the practice of endogamy and an opposition to secular education. In addition, several other mechanisms may be briefly mentioned:

- (1) making appearance and speech sufficiently different from others so that none can unknowingly intermingle.
- (2) the cutting down of the various means by which new ideas can be repetitively communicated. (In the case of the Amish prohibitions on the use of electricity, which might bring radio and television, and on the automobile). This has an important technological aspect.

(77) Loomis, op. cit., page 234

- (3) the expulsion from the group of those who deviate in respects considered to be important to group solidarity.

It will readily be seen that Loomis does not develop his account of this aspect of the community social system in any satisfactory schematic way, although he does suggest points at which an examination may be undertaken. A first step in clarification would seem to be to identify the various levels at which the concept of boundary maintenance might be said to operate; in effect to distinguish between its separate dimensions. Three levels are suggested here:

- (1) the ecological
- (2) the cultural
- (3) the social structural

The ecological aspect of boundary maintenance may be taken to deal with the spatial configurations formed through human activities; of particular interest is the way that organization arises and develops from the interaction of population and environment. A good example here might be the patterns of physical segregation or isolation present in the relationship of community social systems to other social systems, such as cities or individual farmsteads. Although there is an emphasis on the study of the forms taken by territorially based social systems, ecologists are quick to point out that more is involved than the simple study of territoriality. Amos Hawley, for example, posits three "fundamental life conditions" which may be investigated in connection with this approach to social organization:

"(1) the interdependence among men (2) the dependence of activities or functions upon various characteristics of land (3) the friction of space" (78). Thus, in Duncan and Schnore's words, the ecological dimension of boundary maintenance may be understood in terms of "the collective adaptation of a population to its environment." (79)

With reference to cultural and social structural aspects of boundary maintenance, it is proposed to draw on the seminal discussion by Kroeber and Parsons of the analytical distinction between the concepts of "culture" and "social system" (80). Accordingly, cultural boundary maintenance will be taken to refer to those patterns of values, ideas and symbols the transmission and creation of which secures the effective preservation of the identity of the community social system, together with its characteristic interaction pattern. Social structural boundary maintenance is concerned with the aforementioned

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- (78) Hawley, A., Human Ecology, (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1950), page 236.
 - (79) Duncan, O.D., and Schnore, L.F., "Cultural, Behavioural and Ecological Perspectives in the Study of Social Organization", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 65, 1959.
 - (80) Kroeber, A.L., and Parsons, T., "The Concepts of Culture and of Social System", American Sociological Review, Vol. 23 1958. A parallel distinction is made by Marion Levy Jnr. in The Structure of Society, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pages 144-8.

interaction pattern, since it broadly designates the social means by and through which beliefs and values are held and given practical realization. This latter focus on the institutional arrangements prevailing within a community and their role in the boundary maintenance process will be the explicit concern of this paper.

Sometimes these distinctions might be said to be implicit in Loomis' work; it is possible to argue in this way for the case of ecological boundary maintenance. For example, in his discussion of "territoriality" Loomis points out that it "is closely related to boundary maintenance". (81) It is interesting to note that prior research has indicated that many of the recorded cases of communitarian experiments were high on the ecological dimension. (82)

General Propositions

At this stage, it may be helpful to give a summary of the general propositions arising out of the discussion so far. Insofar as they relate to community autonomy and the maintenance of the community as a distinct entity in its own right they are extremely pertinent to any study of the careers of Utopian experiments. A preliminary checklist will aid in the next stage of operationalization.

(81) Loomis, op. cit., page 37

(82) See Kanter, op. cit., pages 508-9

- (1) Applied boundary maintenance mechanisms are positively related to the level of solidarity of the community social system.
- (2) Applied boundary maintenance mechanisms are positively related to the threat of encroachment, of both internal and external varieties.
- (3) Affective activity, such as ritual expression, heightens solidarity and hence acts as a boundary maintaining device.
- (4) The lower the diversification of economic activity, the higher the level of boundary maintenance.
- (5) The lower the degree of accessibility, the greater the persistence of the community social system.
- (6) The fewer the status-roles available to the individual, the greater the integration.
- (7) Successful community structures are characterized by distinctions of appearance and speech which aid in boundary maintenance.
- (8) The lower the rate of cultural innovation, the higher the level of boundary maintenance.
- (9) The more rigorous the degree of social control, the higher the level of boundary maintenance.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGYThe Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis, the Utopian community, was formally defined by reference to a quotation from A. E. Bestor:

. . . a small society, voluntarily separated from the world, striving after perfection in its institutions, sharing many things in common, and relying on imitation for the spread of its system . . . (83)

This definition takes in important orientations to collectivism, exclusivism or separateness, and Utopianism with respect to social institutions. The Utopian community was here conceived as a particular sub-set of the general category 'community', and the purpose of the study was seen as an attempt to determine its empirical characteristics. Since the paper sought to supplement the broader re-investigation of this concept initiated by George Hillery, his "minimum formulation of community" derived from his earlier work on areas of agreement amongst sociologists was employed as a frame of reference in which to locate the study.

Sources of Data

Data was collected from a variety of literary sources, which ranged from contemporary documentation to later studies made by professional historians.

Three early general surveys stand out. First, John

(83) Bestor, A.E., op. cit., page 7

Humphrey Noyes' History of American Socialisms; much of the material for this book is based on A. J. Macdonald's unpublished first hand reports of community experiments. Noyes was, of course, the founder of the Oneida community, and this involvement in the communitarian project informs his theoretical perspective, which involves an account of both economic and cultural development. (84) Yet his evolutionary value-orientation (made quite explicit) does not detract from the accuracy of the work to the extent that one might suppose; later historians have offered favourable judgments. (85) Second, Charles Nordhoff's Communitistic Societies of the United States is basically a piece of participant observation, in which the societies dealt with were studied at first hand and the details recorded; a variety of conclusions were drawn inductively from a comparison of the different types with which the author came into contact. His work has been a starting point for the reconstructions of many later historians, and is accredited as being accurate for the greater part. The third and most comprehensive of these surveys is W. A. Hinds' American Communities. (86) More factually centred

(84) Noyes, J. H. History of American Socialisms, (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1870).

(85) E.g. Holloway, M., Heavens on Earth, (New York: Library Publishers, 1951): "His judgements are always sound and his conclusions held good. His outlook is wide, his sympathies are generous and his style vigorous." page 233.

(86) Hinds, W.A., American Communities. (Oneida, N.Y.,: Office of the American Socialist, 1878). Hinds was a sometime member of the Oneida community.

than the previous two books, Hinds used three methods of investigation: former histories, information supplied by the communities themselves, and personal impressions of the communities which he visited. These three pieces of writing have often constituted the foundation of later, more scholarly investigation. Other interesting, though less reliable, contemporary sources are W. H. Dixon's New America (1867) and Spiritual Wives (1868), extracts from which are included in some of the later works. There is also a History of the Amana Society dating from this period. (87)

The first important piece of specialist scholarship was comprised by the relevant chapters of Alice Felt Tyler's Freedom's Ferment. (88) This has been followed by a whole group of substantial professional studies. One of the best of these is A. E. Bestor's Backwoods Utopias, which deals in great detail with the phase of communitarian experiments from 1663 to 1829 and seems likely to be definitive; its subtitle indicates its scope: 'the Sectarian and Owenite Phases of Communitarian Socialism in America'. 1950 also saw the publication of The Burned-Over District: the Social and

(87) Perkins, W.R., and Wick, B.L., History of the Amana Society, (Iowa City: State University of Iowa Publications, 1891).

(88) Tyler, A.F., Freedom's Ferment (New York: Harper & Row, 1944).

Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York 1800-1850 by W. R. Cross, which dealt with the north-eastern milieu of communitarianism, relating it to the main social developments of the period. Although focused on a somewhat different set of problems, it contains much that is useful and relevant. (89) In addition, there have been a series of more particular case studies. The History of the Shakers has been dominated by the work of E. D. Andrews whose The People called Shakers is now the standard treatment of the career of this sect from its inception to its decline. (90) In a similar way, the history of the Rappites has been definitively treated by Karl J. R. Arndt, whose long series of journal articles culminated in George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847. (91) More recently several important works have appeared -- J.F.C. Harrison's Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America, which gives much valuable background material, and two books on the Oneida community: Maren Lockwood Carden's Oneida -- Utopian Community to Modern Corporation and Constance Robertson's

(89) Cross, W.R., The Burned-Over District, (New York: Harper & Row, 1950).

(90) Andrews, E.D., The People called Shakers (New York: Dover Books, 1963).

(91) Arndt, K.J.R., George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847, (Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965).

Oneida Community, an Autobiography. (92) These later historical works are scrupulous in their citations, checking of sources and cross-references, and are often helpful in reprinting in quotation material now difficult to obtain elsewhere, such as newspaper accounts of that period and various doctrinal publication. Yet surprisingly, there has been little in the way of comparative analysis, the exception being Mark Holloway's Heavens on Earth: Utopian Communities in America 1680-1880, which can best be described as a popular history, although this is in no way to detract from its considerable scholarly merits. One reason which may be advanced to explain this hiatus is that such a study lies essentially within the domain of sociology.

Population

In order to facilitate comparative analysis, eighteen cases were selected from the historical sources cited above. This population was chosen from a master list of communitarian experiments provided by Bestor (93), since this appeared to be the most complete and best researched source relative to other existing alternatives. (94) This compilation is based on an operational definition of his phenomena of interest, which

(92) Robertson, C., Oneida Community, an autobiography, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1970).

(93) Bestor, op. cit., Appendix, page 231

(94) E.g. Bushee, F.A., "Communitistic Societies in the United States", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 20, 1905.

Bestor sets out in his first chapter, and which refers to the common features of a world-view or belief system:

. . . the idea of employing the small experimented community as a lever to exert upon society the force necessary to produce reform and change. The ends might differ, with economic, religious, ethical and educational purposes mingled in varying proportions. But the means were uniform, consistent, and well-defined. These enterprises constituted a communitarian movement because each made community the heart of its plan . . . (95)

The validity of this perspective is established by appeal to supporting quotations drawn from contemporary documents, thus establishing a tradition relating both religious and secular varieties of Utopian community together.

In selecting cases for study, two criteria were used:

- (1) Temporal cut-off points, in this instance 1780-1860. It was argued that the individual example should be founded within this period, the rationale for this being to attempt to hold the general environment constant, in particular taking out the influence of the widespread industrialization beginning in the 1870's. This latter trend has been summarized by Trow: "The Civil War is the great watershed of American history . . . (it) separates the agrarian society of small farmers and small businessmen of the first half of the nineteenth century from the urbanized industrial society with its salaried employees that followed." (96)

(95) Bestor, op. cit., page 3.

(96) see Trow, Martin, "The Second Transformation of American Secondary Education", International Journal of Comparative Sociology, Vol. 2, 1961.

The earlier limit roughly marks the end of the colonial period.

- (2) Adequacy of information relating to each individual case. This involved selecting those cases upon which a substantial amount of material was available, taking as a minimal standard at least two independent sources, in order that data be as verifiable as was possible.

This latter criterion effectively narrowed down the universe from which cases might be selected, for, of the hundred or so communities of this type which were founded and terminated during this period, relatively few have any extensive recorded history, some being almost completely obscure. However, the time period covered corresponded to the zenith of the communitarian movement; it was at its height during the middle of the nineteenth century. Thus, the selection procedure employed did not involve sampling techniques, since it proved impossible to secure commensurate amounts of information for each case enumerated in Bestor's list. As this did not facilitate generalization to a universe, the total number of cases selected was considered as a complete population. The statistical treatment was therefore essentially descriptive. This point is important with respect to previous research, where caution has not always been observed. Kanter, for example, computed statistical significance tests (97) yet violated one of its central assumptions: the probability sample -- that is, that

(97) Kanter, op. cit., page 504

each case should have a known probability of selection, which probability should be less than unity. Despite her seeming attempts at obtaining 'representativeness', the sample would seem to be largely a function of availability of information. The intention in the present study was to make this difficulty quite explicit at the outset.

One problem involved in the selection process concerned the practical delineation of each individual unit; this has also been recognized by historians. Bestor, discussing difficulties in classification, concludes that "one must often be arbitrary in deciding whether to list a given experiment as one community or several." (98) In general, this difficulty was overcome by following Bestor's own practice, as is witnessed by the adoption of his checklist as a source of data. Bestor disregards the internal divisions of a community if it is confined to a single location, thus making separate geographic location the test of a distinct experiment. This is obviously a good rule of thumb, but the exceptions are important: the Rappites were a single body, but occupied three successive sites. Bestor lists them three times, but this breaks down in the face of his later comment that the 'General Economy' of the Moravians "was for a time applied in most, if not all, the different congregations, but . . . must be treated, in any practicable tabu-

(98) Bestor, op. cit., pages 233-4

lation, as a single experiment." (99) This type of solution was adopted here, thus also replicating Kanter's definition of "a unit utopia": i.e. "identity of organizational structure with some centralized control over successive or simultaneous locations."

(100) This allowed the Shakers to be considered as one case, despite their dispersal into numerous individual settlements. However, in coding the various items associated with this group, responses from the different Shaker communities were initially noted and the modal response examined as a safeguard against unwarranted assertions.

List of Selected Communities

1. The Shakers
2. The Rappites
3. The Amana Society
4. The Separatists of Zoar
5. The Bethel and Aurora Communes
6. The Oneida Community
7. Jerusalem
8. The Hopedale Community
9. The Bishop Hill Colony
10. Modern Times
11. Brook Farm
12. Northampton Association of Education and Industry
13. Nashoba Community
14. Skaneateles Community
15. New Harmony Community
16. Fruitlands
17. North American Phalanx
18. Wisconsin Phalanx

(99) Ibid.

(100) Kanter, op. cit., page 502

Validity and Reliability

The historian's principle of internal consistency was taken as the standard for the validity and reliability of the observations recorded. This was in fact built into the selection procedure. Thus, unless special circumstances arose, noted below, at least two independent sources were used in order to facilitate cross-checking and careful verification of information. As can be seen from Kanter's classification of informants ("central members, such as leaders; peripheral members, such as deviants and aspostates; visitors and first hand observers; and historians") the different perspectives evidenced by the various sources can be balanced against one another so that bias is minimized and no one point of view dominates. (101)

Comparative Methodology

A common criticism of the methodology employed in community research has been that, as Reiss has pointed out ". . . community studies usually are individual case studies which lack data on factors relevant to specific theoretical comparisons . . ." (102) One remedy to this situation is to compare a number of communities across a specific set of variables, in order to discover the sources of communal variation; Reiss has argued that "the conditions of a controlled experiment can be approximated in a comparative

(101) Kanter, op. cit., page 503

(102) Reiss Jnr., A.J., "Some Logical and Methodological Problems in Community Research," Social Forces, Vol. 33, 1954, page 51

community study design." (103) The task was therefore conceived as an investigation into variables responsible for substantive variation within a specific form of community by means of comparative analysis. This procedure was an attempt to offset the limited generalizability of the conclusions. A second part of this rationale stemmed from the desire to replicate Loomis' work on the Amish on a wider scale; for although Loomis has studied other communities, he has tended to consider them in isolation from one another, and in this sense does not contribute to the build-up of a true sociology of community. This is in contrast to the methodology of, for example, Hillery, who has sought to discover distinctive regularities in communities by comparing different studies.

Selection of Propositions

Since the number of propositions extracted from Loomis' writings was large, it was decided to select only a few as hypotheses for the purposes of this study. The rationale for this selection procedure was broadly to separate out those propositions which had received relatively little attention in previous research. Hypotheses (3), (4) and (5) were singled out for testing, these propositions containing variables most germane to the social structural dimension of boundary maintenance isolated above. In addition, they were minimally related to Kanter's research into continuance, cohesion and control as types of commitment.

(103) Ibid.

Main Hypotheses

- (3) Affective activity, such as ritual expression, heightens solidarity and hence acts as a boundary maintaining device.
- (4) The lower the diversification of economic activity, the higher the level of boundary maintenance.
- (5) The lower the degree of accessibility, the greater the persistence of the community social system.

The Dependent Variable

The selected dependent variable was taken as the level of boundary maintenance of a community social system. Following Loomis' definition of boundary maintenance as "the process whereby the identity of the social system is preserved and the characteristic interaction pattern maintained", this variable was operationally defined in terms of the persistence evidenced by a given community social system, that is, its ability to cohere in its intended form without decisive change in its core institutions (the family, the economic and political systems etc.). For example, the metamorphosis of the Oneida community into a joint-stock company may be taken as just such a case of decisive change in the core institutions of a community, particularly since it entailed concomitant changes in other units of the organization, such as the family structure; by virtue of such changes it loses its original character as a Utopian venture. The recording of the life-spans of the individual cases had the advantage of yielding a ratio scale, so that each case could be scored in terms of the number of years that it was in existence.

Two objections may be raised against this. Firstly, it may be contended that arbitrariness may have entered into the process of abstraction involved. The definition employed is therefore seen as ignoring all those subtle and gradual changes which may occur in a community and which bear closely on its problems of identity, and whose point of impact cannot be strictly dated. This would seem to some extent to have been unavoidable; in order to obviate this difficulty wherever possible, arbitrary cut-off points were fully discussed and the criteria invoked in decision-making made quite explicit. Secondly, it may be argued that to take boundary maintenance as a variable rather than as a process itself comprised of relationships between variables is seriously to distort the intent of Loomis' work. There is perhaps some justice in this change. However, in defence it may be said that the relationships examined here are crucial to any consideration of boundary maintenance conceived in this way; for a simple modification may be effected by taking the dependent variable as an index of persistence per se and translating each proposition as a component part of an overall process without radically altering the purpose of the investigation or the nature and significance of the relationships involved.

The Independent Variables

The first independent variable to be considered was affective activity, particularly exemplified for Loomis by ritual expression,

operating via the intervening variable "solidarity". These two variables are, in fact, hard to isolate analytically from one another; for present purposes affective activity was regarded as a sub-set of the variable solidarity, since this seemed to be consistent with Loomis' own work. (104)

In the operationalization of this variable, a generalized index of affective activity was used, based on frequency of group activity, which takes in the whole population of community members and which is directed towards affirmation of common norms. Here was included such items as assemblies and public meetings, in addition to ritual gatherings such as various types of religious services. One initial ambiguity here concerned the possibility of legislative restrictions on some participants in the community, such as minors or women. Attention was thus focused on those activities overtly concerned with the successful running of the community, and which entailed the attendance of at least all adult community members at a single specified time and place (allowing for the possibility of family representatives). Specifications for an appropriate scale could not be usefully developed until the precision of the available data had been accurately ascertained. Provisional guidelines for coding responses were obtained by using the dichotomy "regular" and "irregular" and further sub-dividing each of these into the

(104) See Loomis, op. cit., page 15

dimensions "high" and "low". This was, however, purely a temporary measure.

The second independent variable related to the economic activities carried on by the community social system. Loomis indicates that the variety of occupation is an important determinant of the level of boundary maintenance, but does so in a quite incidental manner. This necessitated providing a nominal definition in this case. The general category "major productive activity" was defined as those forms of economic activity which provide the means of livelihood and sustenance for most members of the community, whether this concerns the production of goods or services, and which involves full-time and regular employment (thus bringing in the notion of occupational continuity and contribution to a total way of life). Thus, agricultural production was considered as a major productive activity, whereas construction was not, since, although this is "one of the most complex forms of non-industrial production" (105), and although it may well be the case that the settlement buildings were constructed entirely by the community members, this activity does not provide full-time or regular employment, but is temporary or sporadic in nature (e.g. repairs and upkeep). The operational concern was with diversification of such activity.

(105) Udy Jnr., S. H., Organization of Work, (New Haven: HRAF Press, 1959), page 20

Diversification was scaled by using dichotomous categories, according to the following criteria:

- (a) those communities engaging in two or less major productive activities,
- and (b) those communities engaging in more than two major productive activities.

This somewhat crude distinction represented an attempt to tap how far a given community had been able to expand its activities beyond subsistence agriculture, which was of central importance in this period, falling before full-scale industrialization got underway, and which, so to speak, usually served as a base-line economic activity. What this does is, in effect, to provide a rationale for the choice of indicators. Since, however, this interpretation was essentially inferential, rather than a property of the scale as such, it was necessary to indicate any exceptions which occurred when making generalizations, such as single-industry communities. The rather ad hoc nature of the categories were both a response to the difficulty of precise measurement of the essentially qualitative data to hand, and an attempt to provide at least a specimen test of the complexity of the community as an economic system. They correspond to differences in the specialized economic activities which are engaged in, and have the advantage of providing a partially-ordered scale, since extension to subtler gradations of rank ordering in either direction is possible. Also, such nominal categories as agriculture, craft and industrial production were avoided; these would have unduly restricted the

range of statistical techniques which might be employed, since they require further conceptual operations before they can be utilized as more than nominal scales.

The third independent variable was accessibility, which was closely related to Weber's concept of closure. He defined this concept operationally in the following terms:

. . . a relationship will . . . be called 'closed' against outsiders so far as, according to its subjective meaning and its binding rules, participation of certain persons is excluded, limited, or subjected to conditions. Whether a relationship is open or closed may be determined traditionally, affectually, or rationally in terms of values or of expediency. (106)

Although this term is clearly a precursor of Loomis' concepts of boundary maintenance and systemic linkage, it may also be taken to suggest certain important sources of variation in the social structure that might be related to a community's ability to persist in its intended form. Thus, an attempt was made to utilize two distinct indices of this accessibility factor. Firstly, negative rules and prohibitions governing interaction with non-members within the community were examined, and a provisional classification system developed. A distinction was made between temporary and permanent prohibitions, the latter referring to a basic community ruling unmodified throughout the duration of the system, while the former was taken as enduring over a briefer period of time than the total history of the community in question. This distinction was further

(106) See Weber, Economy and Society, op. cit., page 43

elaborated on the basis of the presence or absence of each, to yield a fourfold system of classification. Examples of responses pertinent to these categories would be the deliberate provision of separate quarters for visitors, or the temporary closing of all services to the public by the Shakers circa 1838. No distinction was made between formal and informal restrictions, since both kinds of established practices were relevant to the limitations placed on non-members in community life.

The second index of accessibility was derived from Udy's discussion of the role of extra-organizational labour in the productive process. (107) He distinguishes between ". . . those members of a production organization who remain members from the beginning of the process until its completion . . ." and those ". . . persons who become members only in the performance of certain tasks and are not members at other times." The former are termed "autonomous" organizations; the latter "basic-auxiliary" organizations. This simple distinction was utilized as a dimension of accessibility complementary to the first, but having an essentially economic derivation. Hence it was expected to bear an interesting relationship to the variable "diversification".

Tests

In analysing the data obtained, it was proposed to employ

(107) Udy, op. cit., pages 36-44

a variety of statistical techniques, ranging from some simple measures of association (i.e. Yule's Q and Koppa) to the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The rationale for the use of the latter was derived from recent discussions of the compatibility of ordinal data with statistical procedures traditionally thought to be appropriate only to higher levels of measurement. Although all problems of measurement were not finally resolved until after an examination of the data, this strategy proved to be appropriate.

Edgar Borgatta, in "My Student, the Purist: A Lament" (108) argues that the product-moment correlation coefficient is a perfectly acceptable statistic in the case of such 'soft' variables as the various aspects of personality or value, which are not usually considered to satisfy the assumptions of the bivariate normal distribution; in effect, he follows two main lines of attack -- firstly, to propose that such variables may be conceived theoretically as corresponding to normal curves, and secondly, to cast doubt upon the utility of non-parametric or distribution-free statistics. An article by Sanford Labovitz (109) attempts to provide an empirical demonstration of the desirability of treating ordinal variables as if they conform to interval scales by comparing true scoring systems with computer-generated randomly assigned scoring systems. He found

(108) Borgatta, E., "My Student, the Purist: A Lament", Sociological Quarterly, Vol. 9 1968.

(109) Labovitz, S., "The Assignment of Numbers to Rank Order Categories", American Sociological Review, Vol. 35 1970.

the resulting error to be negligible and was able to list considerable advantages to this methodological strategy, most notably the opportunity of using more powerful, sensitive and clearly interpretable statistics, together with a higher degree of versatility in statistical manipulation, in particular partial and multiple correlation and regression. This rationale permitted a salutary departure from the approaches to measurement restrictions outlined in some texts on social statistics. (110)

Mueller, Schuessler and Costner take Yule's Q as a special case of Gamma, in line with their general advocacy of proportional reduction in error interpretations (PRE) in situations where data is at less than the interval level of measurement. (111) The PRE Strategy seeks to provide an interpretation for some measures of association which is analogous to that of the product-moment correlation coefficient, and hence permits an interpretation of similar clarity for cases of ordinal and nominal levels of measurement. (112) It will be plain from the discussion above that such a strategy was regarded as essentially

(110) See Blalock, H.M., *Social Statistics*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960) or Mueller, J., Schuessler, K., & Costner, H., Statistical Reasoning in Sociology, (New York: Houghton Mifflin 1970).

(111) Mueller, Schuessler & Costner, op. cit., page 290

(112) As elaborated by Costner, H., in "Criteria for Measures of Association", American Sociological Review, Vol. 30, 1965.

superfluous in the present paper. Such measures of association were here conceived as useful in exploratory stages of data analysis only, where the researcher's aim is one of familiarization with the data at hand. Accordingly, when the data is presented below they will be immediately followed by, and compared with, product-moment correlations.

CHAPTER III

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

During the operation of collecting data from the literary sources cited above, a number of decisions were made in order to achieve at least some degree of quantification of the material. Examples of typical decisions taken are given in the account presented below; in addition, exceptional or anomalous instances in the data are discussed. Through these decisions it was possible to arrive at a set of measurements in those cases where scales could not be predetermined.

Collection of Data

1. Boundary maintenance

The coding of the dependent variable 'boundary maintenance' was accomplished by firmly establishing the dates of community formation and dissolution. In the case of the former, two lists of founding dates were examined, and inconsistencies checked in accordance with the two source criterion of internal agreement. (113) Discrepancies were resolved in favour of the later list for a variety of reasons. In general, it would seem that the discrepancies between Bestor and Bushee resulted from the latter's confusion of the date of community formation with that of the inception of the various social movements per se. For example, Bushee cites the foundation date of the Rappites' Harmony settlement as 1803, but this is contradicted by several sources

(113) The lists were provided by Bestor and Bushee, Ibid.

(e.g. Holloway, Noyes and Tyler). Wide agreement was obtained that the land in question was not bought until 1804, which also coincided with the migration of the group from Europe. Not until January 1805 did thirty-one families begin clearing the land and start construction work. (114) Dates of dissolution were established by taking Bushee's tabulation as a starting point and examining the accuracy of his list via independent sources. This involved checking through the history given of each community in order to discover dates and circumstances of termination, thus dealing with the types of change constituting community destruction or metamorphosis. Such corrections as proved necessary were the addition of dates where none had previously been provided. The results of this investigation are reported in the table below.

Table 2
Utopian community life-spans

Community	Date of Foundation	Date of Termination	Total (yrs.)
The Shakers	1787	1950	163
The Rappites	1805	1905	100
The Amana Society	1843	1932	89
The Separatists of Zoar	1817	1898	81
Bethel and Aurora	1844	1881	37
Oneida	1848	1881	33
Jerusalem	1788	1820	32
Hopedale Community	1842	1858	16
Bishop Hill Colony	1846	1862	16
Modern Times	1851	1860	9

(114) See Arndt, op. cit., page 71

Brook Farm	1841	1847	6
Northampton Association	1842	1846	4
Nashoba	1826	1828	2
Skaneateles	1843	1846	3
New Harmony	1825	1827	2
Fruitlands	1843	1843	1
North American Phalanx	1843	1856	13
Wisconsin Phalanx	1844	1850	6

In the instance of the Shaker communities, the unit Utopia criterion was followed so that the dating of the communities was geared to the overall path of Shaker communal development. The formation date was taken as that of the first Shaker community at New Lebanon, N.Y. in 1787, which served as the 'Mother-Church' to the other satellites. Similarly, Shaker communities were taken to end at 1950, this date standing at the end of a long series of community terminations throughout this century. There is a certain arbitrariness in taking this cut-off point, since the last dozen Shakers still maintained two communities even in the late 1950's. (115) After 1950, however, it is debatable whether these may be considered to be the same phenomenon; certainly the numbers surviving would be insufficient to support the kind of social organization typically associated with Shaker life. In the light of these considerations, less conservative investigators might plausibly set the date of practical termination even earlier.

2. Affective activity

'Affective activity' was conceptualized in terms of the

(115) Reported in Bryan Wilson's *Religious Sects*, op. cit., page 207.

frequency of general meetings (defined above), whatever ostensible function such a meeting fulfilled. Accordingly, details were sought of those meetings involving the total population or a gathering of the entire membership, since these were seen as important indicators of solidarity in the community. That there may be a merging of functions in this type of meeting is indicated by Noyes in his account of the Oneida community: "the measures relied upon for good government are, first, daily evening meetings, which all are expected to attend. In these meetings, religious, social and business matters are freely discussed" (116); thus, for our purposes, there was no discrimination as to function in the selection of material. On the one hand, the daily discussion meetings at Fruitlands and on the other the highly ritualistic, though often inventive, ceremonies of the Shakers were included in the same category, following Loomis' broad outline. In some instances, there was a problem of choosing between meetings convened for different purposes. The Amana, for example, had a variety of meetings operating, so to speak, at several levels. There were daily administrative meetings of small sections within the community which reported to other groups, such as the foremen's meetings with the council of elders. Above this were weekly religious meetings of the entire village, which were also linked to administrative concerns through the moral and normative dimensions of inspirationist utterances. Beyond

(116) Nordhoff, op.cit., page 289

this still were less regular activities, such as the Lord's Supper festival, the annual elections, and the Untersuchung or yearly confessions. Here, the decision was made to take the weekly meetings as the modal response, since these both satisfied the total population criterion and also served to mediate or co-ordinate between the other meetings held at the different levels by acting as a focal point.

At some points, modifications of the original research design were made; this took the form of violating the two source check criterion in those cases where there were only very limited pieces of information available. Here, the details provided by the most complete source were taken as definitive. This occurred in four cases only: those of Jerusalem, Nashoba, Skaneateles and the Wisconsin Phalanx. The initial categories set up were broken down on the basis of greater acquaintance with the nature of the data. "High" and "low" as discriminators of differences within the categories of "regularity" and "irregularity" were abandoned. In the case of the latter, a single unit "irregular" was set up, due to the difficulty of sustaining any substantial distinction between "high" and "low" degrees of "irregularity". It was maintained that such a distinction could only be upheld where there was clear evidence of many unscheduled meetings taking place, as opposed to very few, and that such evidence is often necessarily ambiguous and subject to omissions. Irregular meetings tend to cluster around crisis points which

are then described to the exclusion of other activities; this problem of record-keeping may have operated in the case of Robert Owen's New Harmony, for example. In the case of the former category, "regularity", the high/low distinction was abolished as more detailed information became available, allowing the production of a more precise rank ordering. A partially-ordered scale, ranging through five values from "irregular" to "daily", was established. These results are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Affective activity (frequency of meetings) in Utopian communities

Community	<u>Frequency of meetings</u>				
	Irregular	Monthly	Fortnightly	Weekly	Daily
Shakers					*
Rappites				*	
Amana Society				*	
Separatists of Zoar				*	
Bethel and Aurora			*		
Oneida					*
Jerusalem	*				
Hopedale Community		*			
Bishop Hill Colony				*	
Modern Times	*				
Brook Farm	*				
Northampton Association				*	
Nashoba	*				
Skaneateles					*
New Harmony	*				
Fruitlands					*
North American Phalanx	*				
Wisconsin Phalanx				*	
Totals	6	1	1	6	4

3. Diversification

In collecting information on 'diversification' a search of the literature was made for those productive activities which, in a broad sense, contributed to the welfare of the whole community, or, at least, had this potential. This involved an explication of the definition originally provided, the purpose of which was to set up criteria for delimiting different forms of economic activity from each other in order to provide a measure of the level of economic development attained. A central question, therefore, concerned how each community arranged for its economic survival as a community. Data was collected on those activities which could, in some sense, be regarded as full-time. For example, agricultural production fulfils this condition since, although comprising different tasks corresponding to the various seasonal requirements, some overall work provision is involved if the enterprise is to be at all successful. Thus it may properly be said to provide regular employment, even though additional workers may be introduced into the work process at certain times, such as harvesting. During the coding procedure, each individual form of productive activity was taken as a complex category including in it the necessary services carried out within the community in order to facilitate its smooth operation; thus blacksmithing and the grinding of grain were, for example, included under agriculture. Similarly, the provision of food and clothing, unless manufactured for a specific market, was taken as a prerequisite

to maintaining a labour force, so that domestic chores did not form a separate productive activity. Hence, one of the main considerations in distinguishing between productive processes during the collection of data was that of production for a specialized market. At a very rudimentary level this can be seen when a distinction is made between production and consumption, since the existence of a surplus indicates that productive capacity has acquired a momentum of its own, raising the possibility of providing for extra-communal needs as a source of livelihood. For example, this was the case with Owen's New Harmony in the manufacture of soap and glue. (117) Something similar seems to have happened at Skaneateles where timber moved from being a strictly communal resource to a full-scale industrial activity. (118) On the other hand, this specialized market need not actually have been successfully attained, since essentially interest focussed on the ability or capacity to diversify, rather than its profitability. The North American Phalanx, for example, was able to organize a few small industries, but these apparently made little contribution to community revenue. (119) Insofar as these activities

(117) See Bestor, op. cit., page 160 et. seq.

(118) Noyes, op. cit., page 168 et. seq.

(119) Noyes, op. cit., pages 463-7

were regularly carried on, however, they contributed to full employment within the community. Where there was an indication that they were processually separate they were treated as distinct productive activities in their own right. This was the general rule followed throughout. A review of the literature on the Shakers showed an extremely wide variety of craft industries and specialized products characterized by great ingenuity. It was accordingly decided to classify them as a highly diversified type of economic system. The results are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Frequency of diversification in Utopian communities

Community	<u>diversification</u>	
	high	low
Shakers	*	
Rappites	*	
Amana Society		*
Separatists of Zoar	*	
Bethel and Aurora		*
Oneida	*	
Jerusalem		*
Hopedale Community		*
Bishop Hill Colony		*
Modern Times		*
Brook Farm	*	
Northampton Association		*
Nashoba		*
Skaneateles		*
New Harmony	*	
Fruitlands		*
North American Phalanx	*	
Wisconsin Phalanx		*
Totals	7	11

4. Accessibility

Udy's autonomous/basic-auxiliary distinction was applied by simply attempting to verify the utilization of outside labour, whether on a full-time or a seasonal basis. Thus the measure in effect corresponded to a presence/absence dichotomy. A central part of the rationale here was that if this kind of extra-communal participation was of any significance at all it would receive some mention in contemporary accounts since it would obviously have important ramifications for the community as a whole; for example, the provision of some system of payment, the possibility of modifications of institutional arrangements etc. It was, however, a weakness of this index that it attempted no assessment of the different strengths of such an input, and hence ignored possible differentials in effect (e.g. relating to size of labour force). The data necessary for such a refinement was lacking. In one case, that of the North American Phalanx, the two source check criterion was violated. In this instance, two sources (Tyler, Holloway) presented highly abbreviated accounts of the community which suggested the autonomous pattern, while a third (Noyes) gave a more extensive account in which three independent contemporary sources cited basic-auxiliary elements as being present in the communal work processes. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequency of accessibility in Utopian communities

Community	accessibility	
	autonomous	basic-auxiliary
Shakers		*
Rappites		*
Amana Society		*
Separatists of Zoar		*
Bethel and Aurora		*
Oneida		*
Jerusalem	*	
Hopedale Community	*	
Bishop Hill Colony	*	
Modern Times	*	
Brook Farm	*	
Northampton Association	*	
Nashoba	*	
Skaneateles	*	
New Harmony	*	
Fruitlands	*	
North American Phalanx		*
Wisconsin Phalanx	*	
Totals	11	7

The second measure of 'accessibility' was found to indicate a very limited source of variation between communities, and hence served as a poor discriminator. The majority of the communities studied evidenced no limitations in their interaction with non-members, there being only one exception, that of the Shakers, who from 1837 to 1844 closed all services to the public during a period of internal disorder apparently caused by "a wild burst of spiritualism". (120) Of the thirteen cases that have clear

(120) See Tyler, op. cit., page 158

reference to visitors, none record any restrictions being operative, and of the remaining four which do not there is no indication that this is in any way due to prohibitions on outsiders being in effect. The breakdown of these cases is given in Table 6.

Table 6

Reference and non-reference to visitors to Utopian communities

Community	Reference to visitors	No reference
Rappites	*	
Amana Society	*	
Separatists of Zoar	*	
Bethel and Aurora	*	
Oneida	*	
Jerusalem	*	
Hopedale Community		*
Bishop Hill Colony		*
Modern Times	*	
Brook Farm	*	
Northampton Association		*
Nashoba	*	
Skaneateles	*	
New Harmony	*	
Fruitlands		*
North American Phalanx	*	
Wisconsin Phalanx	*	
Totals	13	4

Indeed, there are indications of a quite divergent trend. Several communities clearly encouraged stays by non-members of various kinds; for example, Bethel and Aurora, Economy and Zoar kept hotels in order to provide substantial accommodation for guests. This was in some cases as a source of revenue; Aurora's hotel

acted as a summer resort for the residents of the nearby town of Portland. (121) Economy for a time also adopted this policy, but later turned its hotel into an almshouse. (122) Oneida was another community which was prepared to accept the intrusion of large numbers of non-members; Carden notes that "in 1866 about 4,000 people signed the Visitors' Book" (123)

Three factors may be suggested to account for this pattern. Firstly, visitors or non-members may have been seen simply in terms of their possible financial contribution to community life, as discussed above. Secondly, tolerance of the presence of non-members may be understood as the expression of universalistic criteria deriving from religious or other moral values. One example of this, the community as a charitable institution has already been given above; in the case of the Rappites this was derived from religious injunctions. Another source of such tolerance may be located in the rationalistic strains of thought characteristic of the period. Josiah Warren's Modern Times community was based on a classical anarchistic philosophy which presented complete indulgence of all outsiders. (124) Thirdly, since ecological segregation was in many cases a

(121) See Nordhoff, op. cit., page 305.

(122) Nordhoff, page 63 et. seq.

(123) Carden, op. cit., page 81.

(124) See Holloway, op. cit., pages 157-159.

central feature of Utopian communities during this period, particularly in a frontier context, non-members may have posed few real problems. In some ways, this marks the point at which the ecological and the social structural dimensions of boundary maintenance shade into one another.

In the case of the first two factors, it may be noted that in fact they are closely related by rationalistic considerations. Stinchcombe (125), following the work of Weber, has pointed to the role played by "counter-acting traditions" in the formation of organizations which are inimical to older cultural patterns centering on obligations to kin and friends (precisely those traits which are most often linked to the concept of 'community'). These include universalistic standards and the "reliable negotiable instruments" typical of a money economy, both of which facilitate relations between strangers. This stress on rationality, a counterpart of the notion of an intentional community, would seem to define an important non-particularistic aspect of this type of communal organization, and as such is an interesting research finding in itself. It provides a corrective to those conservative theses which see Utopian movements as essentially backward looking in character, reactions to structural strains in the wider society, serving to activate nostalgia for older cultural traditions; and it suggests that they be subject to

(125) Stinchcombe, A., "Social Structure and Organization" in March, J.G., Handbook of Organizations (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965).

qualification. Although the family as an institution per se may, albeit in a reconsidered or modified form, occupy a central place in Utopian communities, the evidence does not suggest that the particularistic criteria often thought to be typical (e.g. ascriptive, kin-based ties) are necessarily adopted in their entirety. In contrast, much of the evidence uncovered might be relevant to a consideration of systemic linkage in these communities (insofar as such features as convergence of ends, or joint group system-building are present).

Finally it may be suggested that further research into the role played by the 'accessibility' factor might profitably focus on the varying standards of qualification for membership of the communities, which have here been ignored, partly due to the difficulty of devising measures which adequately reflect fluctuating membership criteria. Issues which are relevant to this category and which have not been treated in this study concern such features as rules concerning intermarriage between outsiders and community members, which may be argued to be built into the definition of a community member.

Data Analysis

Initial analysis, comprising various sorting procedures, yielded a series of 2×2 cross-tabulations. In the case of two of the variables involved (diversification and accessibility) no modifications of the basic scales were necessary in order to

accomplish this, since the observations had already been coded into dichotomous categories. With the remaining variables, however, (i.e. boundary maintenance and affective activity) a transformation was obtained by collapsing certain categories together in order to establish a single category and by dichotomizing at the median of the distribution. It should be emphasized that this strategy was merely a temporary device to facilitate the computation of some measure of the strength of the relationships involved.

A total of six such tables were set up in all. Of these, three dealt with the strength of relationship between the dependent variable and each of the independent variables, while the remainder dealt with the degree of association between the independent variables themselves. Two different measures of association were calculated in each case: Yule's Q and kappa (which may be given a proportional reduction in error interpretation where variables are dichotomized at the median).

(126)

(126) Koppa's computational formula is

$$q = \frac{(a + d) - (b + c)}{N}$$

where the notation a, b, c, d refers to the frequencies in the table cells moving from upper left to lower right, while N designates the population or sample size.

- (1) Affective activity, such as ritual expression, heightens solidarity and hence acts as a boundary maintaining device.

In the case of the first hypothesis there were positive associations of .43 and .22, indicating support for this proposition. In variable terms, high affective activity seemed to be related to a high boundary maintenance score in these communities.

Table 7

Relationship between boundary maintenance
and affective activity

Affective Activity	Boundary maintenance (persistence in yrs)	
	1 - 13	16 - 163
Low	5	3
High	4	6

Q = .43

q = .22

A correlation coefficient of .41 was obtained suggesting that Loomis' proposition was in this case borne out, although, in terms of its utility in developing a useful prediction equation, it is of only limited value, since the magnitude of r has to be reasonably high before exact prediction becomes possible. This figure also bears out the scores obtained by Yule's Q and Koppa.

- (2) The lower the diversification of economic activity, the higher the level of boundary maintenance.

In the case of the second hypothesis there were again positive

associations of .43 and .22. However, since the postulated relationship between the variables involved was inverse, this did not serve to support the proposition.

Table 8

Relationship between boundary maintenance
and diversification

diversification	Boundary maintenance (persistence in yrs.)	
	1 - 13	16 - 163
Low	6	4
High	3	5

$Q = .43$

$q = .22$

The correlation coefficient obtained in this case was .42, which suggests that, if anything, high levels of diversification are associated with high levels of boundary maintenance, although again the result is less than decisive in predictive terms. This constitutes a reversal of Loomis' proposition and argues for its rejection.

- (3) The lower the degree of accessibility, the greater the persistence of the community social system.

In the case of the third hypothesis there were strong positive associations of .88 and .56. However, since the postulated relationship between the variables involved was again inverse, this did not serve to support the proposition.

Table 9

Relationship between boundary maintenance
and accessibility

accessibility	Boundary maintenance (persistence in yrs.)	
	1 - 13	16 - 163
autonomous	8	3
basic-auxiliary	1	6

$$Q = .88$$

$$q = .56$$

A strikingly high correlation of .72 was obtained, suggesting that this factor constituted the best predictor of boundary maintenance for this group of communal organizations. A check was made for the influence of extreme values on the coefficient in this case by removing two high value observations and recomputing the statistic using an N of 16. A correlation of .73 was obtained suggesting that in this case no distortion was operating. Thus, this proposition was also disconfirmed, since high levels of accessibility, as measured by utilization of extra-communal labour, were found to be associated with high levels of persistence.

Measures of association were also calculated for each of the pairs of independent variables taken apart from the dependent variable. In the case of the variables affective activity

and diversification, negative associations of $-.20$ and $-.11$ were recorded; this suggested that these two factors were not related.

Table 10

Relationship between affective activity
and diversification

diversification	affective activity	
	low	high
low	4	6
high	4	4

$$Q = -.20$$

$$q = -.11$$

This was further borne out by the correlation coefficient obtained in this instance; there was found to be a negative association of $-.03$.

Strong positive associations of $.88$ and $.55$ were discovered for the two variables accessibility and diversification taken together.

Table 11

Relationship between accessibility
and diversification

diversification	accessibility	
	autonomous	basic-auxiliary
low	9	1
high	3	5

$$Q = .88$$

$$q = .55$$

The correlation coefficient was found to bear out the Koppa score of .55, since the result obtained was .53. This suggested the possibility of a close relationship between these factors.

Positive associations of .50 and .22 were found for accessibility and affective activity taken together; this suggested a relationship existing between these two variables.

Table 12

Relationship between accessibility
and affective activity

affective activity	accessibility	
	autonomous	basic-auxiliary
low	6	2
high	5	5

$$Q = .50$$

$$q = .22$$

The correlation coefficient of accessibility and affective activity was also closer to the Koppa value than that of Q, since the result obtained was .33.

It should be noted that the results outlined in Tables 5, 6 and 7 are not themselves entirely unproblematic. They suggest the possibility that multicollinearity may be operating in some instances, and this may entail limitations on the firmness of any conclusions which may be drawn, since high intercorrelations between independent variables may lead to distortions and uncontrollable fluctuations in the statistic. (127) The coefficient of .53 is an obvious candidate here. In addition, the results taken as a whole cast some doubt upon the utility of Gray's Koppa as a measure of association; although in all cases it appeared to reflect accurately the direction of the relationship (i.e. was corroborative with Yule's Q and the product-moment) it relatively understated the magnitude in some instances.

Since the bulk of the analysis consisted of calculating product-moment correlation coefficients for each proposition and each set of independent variables, it was subsequently possible to control for additional variables using partial correlation coefficients. This procedure served to check for spuriousness or the presence of intervening variables.

(127) See Blalock, H.M., Causal Inferences in Non-experimental Research, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), pages 87-94.

As a final step, multiple correlation coefficients were calculated, and an attempt made to outline a causal model depicting the particular role played by each variable in relation to the designated dependent variable.

Taking the first hypothesis asserting a high relationship between affective activity and boundary maintenance, diversification was first held constant, then accessibility, and finally both of these variables in combination. Holding diversification constant caused the resulting coefficient to rise slightly above the value obtained for affective activity and boundary maintenance alone. This is largely explained by the low negative correlation of $-.03$ holding between affective activity and diversification. If accessibility is held constant, however, the correlation is reduced to $.26$, again suggesting the important explanatory role played by this variable. Holding both variables constant lowers the initial correlation to $.31$.

The second hypothesis, dealing with the relationship between diversification and boundary maintenance, was examined according to the same procedures. Holding affective activity constant increased the correlation to $.48$, for reasons similar to those applying in the case of the first hypothesis. However, when accessibility was held constant the correlation almost vanished, reducing to $.07$. This suggests that diversification has a relatively indirect effect upon the dependent variable, and this was corroborated when affective activity and accessi-

bility were controlled together, which gave a coefficient of .15. This complicates the application of the original proposition derived from Loomis by suggesting that its influence can only be adequately assessed in relation to other independent variables and their effect upon the dependent variables. This in turn raises the question of the priority of variables within a general explanatory scheme, which will be taken up again in the discussion of causal models.

The third hypothesis suggested that low levels of accessibility were correlated with high levels of boundary maintenance, although the data failed to confirm this. In controlling for diversification and affective activity individually the relationship established between high levels of accessibility and high levels of boundary maintenance continued to hold true, giving correlations of .65 and .67 respectively. The second-order partial gave a coefficient of .55 underscoring, in marked contrast to Loomis' model, the important part played by this variable in accounting for persistence in those selected communities.

As the final stage in the data analysis a multiple correlation coefficient was calculated in order to establish the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that may be explained by the various independent variables taken in combination. A coefficient of .75 was obtained, thus showing the importance of these variables in accounting for variation in the

designated dependent variable of the model.

The analysis does not on the whole serve to establish the validity of Loomis' model for community social systems, idealtypically conceived. However, insofar as the model has served to identify relevant variables for any analysis of this type of phenomena, it has played an extremely significant role. Confirmation was only obtained in the case of one posited relationship (that of affective activity and boundary maintenance), but this to only a modest degree which was subject to modification when control variables were introduced. Hypotheses (1) and (2) were not confirmed; indeed, quite opposite predictions would seem to be warranted. This may be seen from the correlation matrix provided below, which summarizes the major relationships in tabular form. The possibility is consequently opened up of formulating an alternative explanatory schema which may provide a useful point of departure for future research. This, together with concluding recommendations, will constitute the next task to be taken up.

Table 13
Correlation Matrix

Variables	χ_1	χ_2	χ_3	χ_4
χ_1	—			
χ_2	-.03	—		
χ_3	.33	.53	—	
χ_4	.41	.42	.72	—

χ_1 = affective study

χ_2 = diversification

χ_3 = accessibility

χ_4 = boundary maintenance

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The propositions in this study were derived from Charles Loomis' writings in the area of general sociology in an attempt to explore some of the implications arising out of the application of social systems theory to communities, in particular to a specific sub-set of these: Utopian communities. In operationalizing one segment of Loomis' PAS model, namely the process of boundary maintenance, it was found that while this was a useful exercise for isolating relevant variables, it fared badly as a theoretical framework for predicting precise relationships.

An Alternative Causal Model

The main research finding of this study has been the discovery of a set of relationships associated with the ability of certain Utopian community social systems to maintain themselves over time. One major chain of influence would seem to run from diversification through accessibility to boundary maintenance, the first two variables in this case sharing a common concern with the economic sub-system. This tends to suggest that in the case of these Utopian experiments, organizational success is related to the particular productive system developed; one possible explanation may be that this is further related to the onset of industrialization in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and with this the capitalistic regulations of social relations.

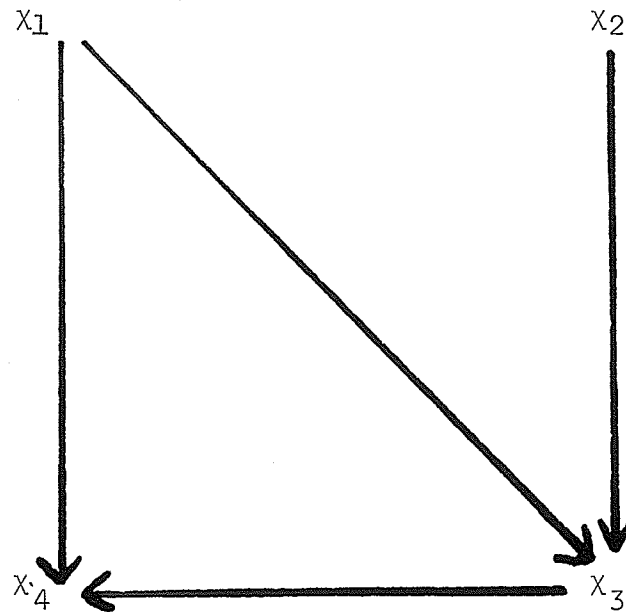
A second chain of influence seems to run from affective activity through accessibility to boundary maintenance, while

affective activity retains some direct impact on the dependent variable. This second chain may refer to the administrative role played by community meetings (such as, for example, organizing labour), while the independent influence of affective activity could perhaps be interpreted as a consensual contribution to communal life. Since the different types of meeting were not distinguished and separately classified (indeed such a separation would have proved impossible in many cases) such an inference must remain entirely speculative. Rather, it suggests possibilities needing further investigation.

These relationships may be formulated as a causal model which may be helpful in orienting future research. This strategy was based on Blalock's discussion of the wide applicability of four-variable causal models using a simplified version of the method developed by H. A. Simon. (128) Blalock puts forward a set of prediction equations so that goodness of fit of any given model can be determined by utilizing the results obtained from zero-order and partial correlations. By following this approach the relationship between the variables was found to approximate most closely the model outlined below:

(128) Blalock, H. M., "Four-Variable Causal Models and Partial Correlations", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 68, 1962.

Figure 2

Alternative Four-Variable
Causal Model

X_1 = affective activity

X_2 = diversification

X_3 = accessibility

X_4 = boundary maintenance

Prediction Equations

$$r_{12} = 0$$

$$r_{24.13} = 0$$

Actual Correlations

$$r_{12} = -.03$$

$$r_{24.13} = .15$$

$$r_{24.3} = .07$$

This model receives further confirmation if a multiple correlation is computed taking the key independent variable, accessibility, as the dependent variable, in order to ascertain

the role played by the other independent variables in explaining variation in it. A correlation of .64 resulted, suggesting that diversification and affective activity play a notable part as background factors to the main relationship between accessibility and the dependent variable.

Implications

Limitations of measurement and of data preclude generalization to a wider population of Utopian communities and demand cautious interpretation. However, the relative failure of Loomis' model deserves some comment; this may be considered in terms of both theory and method.

Firstly, it may be suggested that Loomis seriously under-rates the influence of economic variables as determinants of these systems. His expectation was that, in Durkheimian terms, 'mechanical solidarity' would be most relevant to an explanation of the successful functioning of community life; hence, such features as technological advancement or the influence of outsiders were regarded as disruptive or as change-producing agencies. The evidence obtained in the present study tends to suggest that homogeneity in certain types of community life is not as significant as is sometimes maintained; it might be argued that a pattern of 'organic solidarity' is as important in this type of unit as in larger, more diffuse varieties of social organization. Thus Loomis' reliance on traditional theoretical constructs may perhaps be seen as one source of weakness in his

model.

Secondly, in the realm of methodology Loomis proceeds by developing ideal types in order to link theory to data. The failure to utilize the comparative method has already been noted, and it is possible that this places certain restrictions on Loomis' work. Loomis argues that "(ideal) types as heuristic devices derive their utility in social science more from their capacity to explain empirical reality than for their accuracy in correspondence with such reality." (129) The assumption underlying this statement is that certain types of social system will more or less approximate to a postulated abstract model and that deviation from this "purposive, planned selection, abstraction, combination and accentuation of a set of criteria that have empirical referents and that serve as a basis for comparison" (130) will then constitute a problem of explanation, although essentially a minor one since the a priori links between the "empirical referents" need only be slightly modified rather than invalidated or reversed. It may be, in this case, that such a strategy failed to provide sufficient scope for disconfirmation. (131) Loomis has perhaps suffered as a result

(129) Loomis, op. cit., page 60

(130) Ibid.

(131) Some writers have seen the method as inimical to the elaboration of testable propositions. E.g. Blalock, Theory Construction, op. cit., page 30: ". . . it is my own observation that typology construction, for some reason, does not lend itself to an explicit focus on propositions and their interrelationships."

of this; had he used a straightforward version of the comparative method, focusing on variation across a selected set of variables constitutive of a given form of social system, he might have been much less open to criticism. Instead, he tends to use individual cases as selective examples to round out the ideal types which he proposes.

Limitations of the Study

The present study was essentially devised as an exploratory investigation; as such it was designed to raise more questions than it attempted to answer. Accordingly, the findings should be seen as only a tentative statement of those relationships revealed as being substantively significant so far. The introduction of further sets of variables will undoubtedly modify those presented here, serving to clarify the role of the configuration of factors outlined. Such work will in part be dependent upon the progress of detailed historical studies as sources of data; on the basis of current trends it would seem that studies of this nature will be forthcoming. Some of the possible directions for future research are suggested in the next section.

A second kind of limitation which may be raised by this study lies with the explanatory focus which was adopted; it has sometimes been held that a set of propositions dealing only with structural variables presents a level of analysis which is inappropriate to sociological explanation. Debate

has polarized on the issue of the true focus of determinacy. On the one hand, sociologists such as Durkheim have been concerned to point out that the distinctive subject matter of sociology resides in its capacity to state regularities of collective life in the form of scientific generalizations; on the other, there has been a long tradition of writers who have stressed that the basis of such regularities lies in human decision-making or in individual psychology. (132)

In this paper various levels at which a particular social process may operate have been specified, and attention drawn to the role played by structural variables in this process as it operates in a given set of phenomena. However, no attempt was made at a resolution of the general problem posed above. Two reasons may be given for this. Firstly, as was stated earlier, only a single segment of Loomis' total model has been operationalized; hence the propositions presented here provide what is, at best, a partial explanation -- they are non-explanatory in the strict sense, i.e. they are non-axiomatic, or have not yet been made part of a more general deductive system. Any true explanation would necessarily have to refer back to an axiomatized version of Loomis' theory, of which these propositions would simply be a part. In fact, the basic postulates under-

(132) For a recent summary of this debate and an attempted resolution, see Lukes, S., "Methodological Individualism Reconsidered", British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 19, 1968

lying the theory may well be psychological in nature. Nicholas Timasheff has observed that:

the PASM model strongly emphasizes such psychological processes as knowing, feeling, achieving, and normative behaviour, an emphasis that makes Loomis' work vulnerable to the charge of being concerned as much with psychological as with sociological theory. (133)

But for present purposes, this question need not be tackled; it belongs to a more comprehensive research task. This leads on to the second point.

Any resolution of this issue will be on empirical, not a priori, grounds. This is the central point of Steven Lukes' paper, and it can also be seen from the recent exchange on this question between George Homans and Peter Blau. (134) What Homans and Blau do is to discuss specific empirical propositions with a view, in the one case, to showing that they rely on implicit psychological generalizations, and in the other, that they have explanatory independence. It is important to note here that the question is conceived as being purely empirical: Blau attempts to put forward propositions which are strictly sociological, while Homans tries to show that they have psychological content.

(133) Timasheff, N.S., Sociological Theory, (New York: Random House, 1967, 3rd Edition), pages 260-1

(134) Homans, G.C., and Blau, P.M., "The Relevance of Psychology to the Explanation of Social Phenomena", in Borger, R., and Cioffi, F., (eds.) Explanation in the Behavioural Sciences (Cambridge University Press, 1970).

There is thus no effort to rule sociological explanations out of order on a logical basis. Hence, on closer analysis, it can be seen that Homans, the champion of psychological reductionism, consistently qualifies himself:

. . . my position is that, if for any reason one does wish to explain such sociological givens, if often turns out again that one can do so only with the help of psychological general propositions (emphasis added),

and

. . . we cannot argue effectively in general terms about explanation in social science. We must examine the particular explanations proposed. (135)

The propositions developed in the present paper may or may not be shown to be dependent in the last resort on a set of psychological postulates; this is to be determined via future research -- however this may be, the propositions in this study are not invalid in themselves.

An important criticism which may be levelled at this paper arises out of the related problem of the generality of the variables that would need to be considered in order to furnish an adequate explanation. It may be argued that the kinds of question raised by such concepts as boundary maintenance and systemic linkage can best be settled by a macro-sociological study which in this case would take in an analysis of the American social structure as a whole. Further, when this is

(135) Borger and Cioffi, op. cit., page 342

done it may be seen that, far from varying independently, boundary maintenance and systemic linkage may be reciprocally related. (136) For example, boundary maintenance may itself be facilitated by systemic linkage, where the latter operates in terms of political bargaining with the wider society (for it is this bargaining which allows the community to exist); similarly with many other kinds of 'deviant' sub-groups. Thus, although it may make sense to classify individual relationships or unit acts in terms of boundary maintenance and systemic linkage, they cannot be examined exclusively of one another at the macro-level. (137)

This is very constructive criticism, for it shows how much still needs to be done before a proper understanding of these concepts can be achieved. Such a study was outside the scope of the present paper; however, there are perhaps other tasks which need first to be accomplished before a more comprehensive investigation can be undertaken.

Suggestions for Future Research

This paper has attempted to provide a working definition for the concept of boundary maintenance and then went on to spell

(136) In a discussion of boundary maintenance and systemic linkage in the work of Alvin Gouldner, Loomis says that "the two polarities are not merely two sides of the same coin. They . . . offer independent variations", Loomis & Loomis, Modern Social Theories, op. cit., page 721

(137) This criticism was suggested by Prof. K. W. Taylor.

out its implications in operational terms. Owing to their close relationship, one of the next tasks would seem to be to deal in the same way with systemic linkage; obviously it will need to be measured in an entirely different way from boundary maintenance (nor, indeed, have all the possible ways of operationalizing boundary maintenance been exhausted). Only then would it be possible to begin to bring the two into relation for the purposes of wider studies.

This may well entail a certain amount of conceptual clarification, since one major problem with these terms is that they seem at first sight to have an easy intuitive meaning. Loomis himself is sometimes inconsistent; for example, in a casual remark while discussing systemic linkage he departs from his usual definition of boundary maintenance and states that it "refers to the limits set upon intergroup contact". (138) This is not necessarily compatible with his earlier formulation of the concept.

Three main areas would seem to have the most relevance for future research, particularly as sources of additional variables:

- (1) Clarification of the concepts of boundary maintenance and systemic linkage. This would take the form of discovering more precise ways of operationalizing the former; for example, other indicators, such as the degree of intergroup contact might also be examined - and eventually a variety of different indicators might be factor analysed in order

(138) See Loomis, op. cit., page 32

to locate the underlying empirical dimensions involved. In the case of systemic linkage a working definition still needs to be fixed and its dimensions specified.

- (2) Replication of the study on a wider basis in order to build up more complex sets of propositions (since obviously there will be exceptions and disconfirming instances for the above-mentioned sets of relationships). This might well involve the study of a selection of contemporary Utopian communities for purposes of comparison, investigating as large a number of cases as possible. This would constitute the first step in producing a more general and better-tested theory of the processes involved.
- (3) Following from (1) and (2) it would then be necessary to examine boundary maintenance and systemic linkage in combination. This would make possible a resolution of the problem as to whether systemic linkage and boundary maintenance can indeed be regarded as "apparently opposing processes" capable of "independent variations". Criticisms of the study presented above have suggested that this might be done at the macro-sociological level focusing on the power relationships obtaining in the wider society.

The value of such work, and of the present study, resides in the focus on key processes which telescope significant sets of social relationships in various types of social systems. The operationalization of a particular social institution in terms of a full-scale systems model may often be extremely impractical for research purposes; by delimiting a clear area of study that is restricted to a specific part of a social system, but which nevertheless has important general implications for it, a concept such as boundary maintenance may well be useful in isolating and crystallizing those variables which are central for an understanding of the social system itself.

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