AN EXAMINATION OF IMAGES OF HUMAN NATURE

IN

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

by

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"By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they become very different."
The Analects (Munro, 1969:13)

"Man is that being who is always in search of himself."
(Cassirer, 1973)
PREFACE

My interest in a relationship between an image of human nature and an individual's sociological school of thought developed in the Proseminar course at Marquette University. This paper is the culmination of that interest.

The subject of this thesis is not frequently treated in the writings of sociologists. The subject of images of human nature traditionally has been avoided by sociologists and reserved as the domain of the philosopher; moreover, I have employed analytical techniques generally avoided by philosophers and utilized by sociologists. Against the risk of attack from both scholarly camps, I can at best hope only to contribute to some rapprochement between them. As Peter Winch (1958:103) has stated, "any worthwhile study of society must be philosophical in character, and any worthwhile philosophy be concerned with the nature of human society."

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INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the images of human nature which practicing sociologists utilize as an underpinning for their social thought. The subject is not frequently treated in the writings of sociologists.

Although the subject of images of human nature is not frequently placed under the sociological microscope, one should not conclude that the sociologist deems the topic unimportant. Many sociologists recognize the assumptions that are either implicitly or explicitly made in reference to the nature of man in sociological works. The following are examples of this recognition.

Sturzo (1943:10) states matter of factly that, "There is no lack of sociologists who frankly admit free individual initiative, or at least presuppose it in their works . . . ."

Inkeles (1964:48) suggests that:

While most sociologists make their model of society explicit, their view of man is more often only implicit. Nevertheless, that implicit conception exercises at least as great an influence on their work.

Timasheff (1967:308) briefly but poignantly comments that:

scholars use philosophical premises only as a kind of scaffold, after the removal of which their propositions that are valid on the empiric level remain standing.
Gouldner (1970:485) recognizes the influence of assumptions about the nature of man on a sociological theory:

In a scientific, "value-free" social theory, it is not that the theorist fails to situate his social objects along a good-bad dimension, but only that this assignment, having been conventionally defined as irrelevant to his task, is now defocalized and done covertly rather than being openly accomplished.

Kunkel and Nagasawa (1973:530) present an example of two sociologists, one of whom makes implicit assumptions about man and the other explicit assumptions:

Most sociologists, even those whose work does not center on individuals, must make assumptions about man. These may be implicit and rather vague, as in Parson's description of the actor with a set of expectations, need-dispositions, cognitive orientations, and goal direction (1951:5-23). Or they may be explicit and specific, as in Lenski's propositions that men are motivated by self-interest and tend to be creatures of habit (1966:30-32) ...

While psychologists spend much time developing and validating the components of such models, sociologists usually consider models as given elements and proceed to their primary concern, the analysis of social structure and processes.

And finally, Denisoff, Callahan, and Levine (1974:1) caution the student of sociological theory that, "fundamental assumptions are rarely restated once a science has matured, they tend to be taken for granted."

The problem of assumptions concerning man in sociological endeavors is thus one of individual sociologists making untested or untestable assumptions, implicit or explicit. The reason that such assumptions remain in existence involves the fact that sociology is an empirical science and these assumptions are often difficult if not impossible to measure through empirical means. Concerning this, Moberg (1967:12) states the difficulty:
The emphasis in the sciences upon empirical evidence necessitates a neglect of that which is difficult to observe with the senses as well as a denial on the part of some scientists that unobservable phenomena are real or ontological.

And since these assumptions are difficult to measure or test, sociologists tend to avoid them. However, this does not mean that sociologists can escape the concept of human nature. One need only consider the emphasis placed on images of human nature in the writings of the following authors:

Peter Berger (1963:167) observes that:

Just because the social is such a crucial dimension of man's existence, sociology comes time and again on the fundamental question of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a man in a particular situation.

R. P. Cuzzort (1969:107) comments that,

Any human activity must be grounded, in the final instance, in beliefs which are not, in themselves subject to any form of test. These beliefs we take at face value and endorse them and act on them without critical examination. Often the elements of faith become so thoroughly a part of our intellectual and emotional baggage that we come to believe they are instinctive features of men in general—they are simply human nature.

Joseph H. Fichter (1972:109) argues that,

The urgency of social crises and the demands of social activists are forcing us at this time to reconsider both the presuppositions and the generalizations that social scientists are making about the nature of human beings.

Charles Y. Glock (1972:204) hypothesizes that:

... the organization of social life is importantly related to prevailing imagery about "god" and imagery about man. Such imagery contributes to shaping the form of social organization and to rationalizing it, and it becomes crucial to the maintenance of social solidarity and stability. Moreover, when prevailing ideas about 'god' and the nature of man change, the form of social organization can also be expected to change, sometimes profoundly so.
Buford Junker (1960:142) suggests that:

Scientific advance always presents two sides: a contribution to knowledge that is exchangeable, or communicable, among those who share a body of existing understandings; and a flowering of someone's will to simplify, to render the complex and abstruse more comprehensible, to "make the order of one's thought correspond to the order of things," and, ultimately, to formulate the nature of man and society in terms parsimonious but sufficient to represent their roles in an ordered universe.

Means (1969:76) makes an impassioned plea for recognition of the societal view of the nature of man:

The danger lies in what man thinks he is, for this may shape what he becomes. If the fascist and totalitarian revolutions have taught us nothing else, they should at least suggest that the views of the nature of man, the reigning metaphors of social interpretation, cannot be taken lightly. One must continually cross swords with the dominant views of man, for if these views in any way become rationalizations for the destruction and manipulation of men or for warfare, then they are of the deepest concern to all rational and humane men.

Sturzo (1943:19-20) recognizes the philosophical underpinnings of the various "systems" of thought in sociology:

Just as in philosophy and theology, in law and ethics, there are many systems, so it is in sociology; no science indeed can escape a multiplicity of systems. A sociologist who accepts individual liberty writes differently from one who accepts social determinism; willy-nilly, they appeal to different philosophical systems. A sociologist who accepts the existence of God writes differently from one who is an atheist; both are concerned with theology without knowing it. A Mohammedan or Hindu sociologist has the experience of his own religion and of the environment in which he lives; hence he will present problems otherwise than a Christian and western sociologist, even if he does not go into religious and supernatural questions.

From these quotations we can see that important spokesmen of the sociological community not only contend that the basic question of man's nature is of major significance but also that they tend to agree that the assumptions about man's nature influence various aspects of their
scientific endeavors. In order to impress upon the reader the breadth of this influence let us consider a sampling of statements concerning the influence that the assumptions about man have on the various content areas of the discipline of sociology.

One may argue that sociological theory is greatly influenced by certain basic assumptions about man. In an excellent statement concerning the nature of assumptions underpinning sociological theories, Alvin W. Gouldner (1970:29) writes:

Deliberately formulated social theories, we might say with deliberate oversimplification, contain at least two distinguishable elements. One element is the explicitly formulated assumptions, which may be called "postulations." But they contain a good deal more. They also contain a second set of assumptions that are unpostulated and unlabeled, and these I will term "background assumptions." I call them background assumptions because, on the one hand, they provide the background out of which the postulations in part emerge and, on the other hand, not being expressly formulated, they remain in the background of the theorist's attention.

Later in the same work, Gouldner (1970:31) further elaborates on his concept of background assumptions:

Background assumptions of more limited application, for example, about man and society, are what I shall call "domain assumptions." Domain assumptions are the background assumptions applied only to members of a single domain; they are, in effect, the metaphysics of a domain. Domain assumptions about man and society might include, for example, dispositions to believe that men are rational or irrational; that society is precarious or fundamentally stable; that social problems will correct themselves without planned intervention; that human behavior is unpredictable; that man's true humanity resides in his feelings and sentiments.

A specific case where the assumption underpinning the theory is made explicit appears in the writings of Arnold Toynbee (1973:21) when he editorially states that "the process of civilization is manifestly beating a retreat." According to Toynbee (1973:21), the causes for
this retreat of civilization are two-fold: "The ultimate cause of this moral retrogression is, of course, the sinfulness of human nature, but the immediate cause is the availability of tools for doing the tempting sinful job."

Thus, assumptions concerning images of human nature influence sociological theory; furthermore, these assumptions influence sociological research—even when that research is highly quantitative. Gouldner (1970:50) suggests that:

Every research method makes some assumptions about how information may be secured from people and what may be done with people, or to them, in order to secure it; this, in turn, rests on certain domain assumptions concerning who and what people are.

Alex Inkeles (1964:47) has also commented on this same subject, stating, "It is inevitable that each sociologist should have some conception of the nature of man, and it is highly probable that it will influence his approach to social research."

The fact that the sociologist frequently makes assumptions about the data which he is attempting to understand is a common ingredient in introductory research methods textbooks. Derek L. Phillips (1971:52-53) presents his view with great force:

Whether they admit it or not, sociologists—like all men—view the behavior of themselves and others in terms of certain assumptions about man, about society, and about men in interaction with one another. This means that sociologists will organize their research and their writings in terms of such prior assumptions. It could not, of course, be otherwise. For like those whom he studies and writes about, the sociologist is influenced by his own experiences. Some sociologists undoubtedly will argue that they make no assumptions about man and society, or that their assumptions are supported by empirical evidence. In my view, this is hogwash. Little of what we think we know about the nature of man and society is based on empirical evidence.
Hubert M. Blalock, Jr. (1970:63-64) cautions the student of sociological research as follows:

A theoretical explanation will inevitably contain assumptions, some of which are inherently untestable, whereas others cannot be tested in terms of the particular data at hand. These assumptions plus the facts become the guides the scientist follows, and the assumptions are always fallible and subject to modification. The development of a science consists of substituting increasingly realistic and more useful assumptions, so that the resulting theoretical explanation accounts for an increasing variety of facts and yields more and more precise predictions that can be tested in terms of the data.

Hans Peter Dreitzel (1970:xiii) cites a major contention of Aaron V. Cicourel when he writes:

Aaron V. Cicourel has demonstrated in his writings that the established methodology in sociological research takes for granted what actually should be seen as the chief problem of sociological research: the existence of cultural patterns of interpretation, which are shared by the researcher and his object, by experts and laymen alike.

Richard L. Means (1969:161) examines the impact of a philosophy of man on a particular theory of a sociologist as he conducts his research:

Social science research on mass communications will depend ultimately upon the social scientist's theory of values. If, in his heart of hearts, he begins with the assumption of man as machine, the basic questions he must ask about television as a cultural medium are confined to technical points, limited in intent. If his image of man is of man's intrinsic value, his evaluation of the social impact of television may be radically different.

Robert W. Friedrichs (1970:152) states that even the statistician makes assumptions about human nature:

When he chooses to drop his data into parametric rather than distribution-free statistical models (or vice-versa), he has made a pre-judgement about the nature of human nature that will inevitably carry with it a measure of metaphysical baggage.
Means (1969:35) points out the influence that values have in the study of social problems:

Social problems involve a study of the values that shape and determine social action, the consequences of these values for both individuals and society, and the various endemic contradictions, ambiguities, and incompatibilities existing in various value commitments.

One can also find that assumptions influence the study of social stratification. Melvin Tumin (1967:107) argues:

Ultimately, the argument for stratification, which appeals to the requirements for survival notion, rests upon premises regarding human motivation. These premises, usually left unstated, maintain that one can't get people to do unequally difficult or unequally skilled tasks without distributing evaluations and rewards unequally. The unequal compensation serves as the motivating force.

In their critique of Karl Marx's theories of social stratification, Lopreato and Hazelrigg (1972:40-41) rely upon their assumptions concerning an image of human nature:

The most monumental error in Marx's thought is his failure to accept the fact--so well recognized by established religion, for instance--that man is by nature a fallible and "sinful" animal. And he is likely to be that, whatever the form and content of his community. Human nature is much less easily changed than social structure.

The fact that one's sociological perspective is contingent upon an "image" or "philosophy" of man seems to be well recognized among contemporary sociologists. Once a topic for discussion only among leading sociologists, this fact has now also filtered down from more erudite sociological writings and infiltrated the writings of sociologists who direct their work at a less knowledgeable audience. Such introductory sociology textbooks as McNall (1971:22-25), Perry and Seidler (1972:15-25), Tumin (1973:395-412), Wright, Weiss, and Unkovic (1975:64-67 discuss the sociologist's image and philosophy of man.
Definition of Human Nature

While many authors discuss the concept of human nature, few define it precisely. However, there are several noteworthy exceptions to this generalization. Dennis Wrong (1963:300) states that human nature is fundamentally:

A set of assumptions about motives, mental and emotional capacities, and psychic mechanisms which are universal as descriptive of all men living in human societies, primitive or civilized, ancient or modern.

In his discussion of the epistemological presuppositions of natural law, Dennis S. Mileti (1973:1) presents a short but concise definition of human nature:

All theories of natural law presuppose common universalistic principles. Human nature—as an integrated set of traits possessed in common by every individual—is seen as essential to one's being.

Melvin M. Tumin (1973:399-403) presents seven definitional versions of human nature, several of which are mutually exclusive:

1. Human nature consists of whatever man seems biologically compelled or directed to do or become. Here the reference is usually to a range of so-called instincts. The fundamental characteristic of this definition is the so-called biological drive or 'direction' behind the behaviors. In some sense, too, man presumably shares at least some of these behaviors with other animals.

2. Closely allied is a more narrow definition of human nature as 'undesirable' behavior patterns that every society has to restrain if it is to survive.

3. Recognizing that all societies restrain men from some forms of behavior, some observers use human nature to refer to what men would do if they were not otherwise restrained.

4. Another version of human nature describes so-called universals in human behavior, whether biologically shaped or otherwise. Thus all men, or at least all societies, have some form of religion, family life, and political organization, and some people in all societies create or respond to aesthetic objects. These 'universals' are then said to constitute human nature.
5. Sometimes human nature is said to mean whatever can be considered 'fundamental to man,' or 'what man is really like at bottom,' or 'what man is essentially.' These rather mysterious terms refer off and on to various categories of behavior previously indicated under other conceptions of human nature.

6. Sometimes human nature refers to what most men seem to prefer to other things, within the range of normal and acceptable alternatives, such as preferring some kinds of foods to others, or security to adventure, or habitual behaviors to innovative behavior.

7. Human nature refers to behaviors that only relatively few people engage in, under conditions of very special exaltation or training. 'Reaching a feeling of unity' with God is one such behavior. Some speak of the most exalted moments as the essence of humanness, of man never being so human as under these conditions, as though somehow the further the behavior is from what most men do and feel, the more human it is.

Furthermore, not only is there disagreement among sociologists over what constitutes human nature, there is also disagreement as to whether human nature is constructed by the social system or the individual.

Erving Goffman (1955:231) argues that human nature is not the product of the individual:

If persons have a universal human nature, they themselves are not to be looked to for an explanation of it. . . . Universal human nature is not a very human thing. By acquiring it, the person becomes a kind of construct, built up not from inner psychic propensities but from moral rules that are impressed upon him from without.

However, there is sharp disagreement between Goffman's view on the sociological construction of the nature of man and that of Berger and Luckmann. Berger and Luckmann (1967:49) argue that:

. . . there is no human nature in the sense of biologically fixed substratum determining the variability of sociocultural formations. There is only human nature in the sense of anthropological constants (for example, world-openness and plasticity of instinctual structure) that delimit and permit man's sociocultural formations and is relative to their numerous variations. While it is possible to say that man has a nature, it is more significant to say that man constructs his own nature, or more simply, that man produces himself.
Later in their essay Berger and Luckmann (1967:183) write:

Man is biologically predestined to construct and to inhabit a world with others. This world becomes for him the dominant and definitive reality. Its limits are set by nature, but once constructed, this world acts back upon nature. In the dialectic between nature and the socially constructed world the human organism itself is transformed. In this same dialectic man produces reality and thereby produces himself.

However, whether or not man has no definitive human nature does not prevent some sociologists from assuming that certain common characteristics of man can be defined as human nature. ¹ The following will be a brief presentation of images of man as reflected in both sociological and non-sociological literature.

Images of Man

There exists a broad range of conceptualizations concerning the nature of man. R. P. Cuzzort (1969:92) gives a good example of this breadth:

Man's attempts to account for himself have ranged from the charmingly bizarre religious conceptions of the medieval Cathars, who believed men were fallen angels wrapped in garments of flesh, to the icy speculations of modern behaviorists who view man, along with all other creatures, as a delicate response mechanism.

Eric Fromm (1973:219) presents another such sampling when he suggests that historically, "man was defined as a rational being, as a social animal, an animal that can make tools (Homo faber), or a symbol-making animal."

In order to demonstrate this broad diversity in conceptions of human nature, let us turn to some images of man and his nature which

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¹ One view of human nature in sociological circles is that since the range of sociocultural formations for human behavior is unlimited, there is no such thing as human nature.
exist in both sociological and non-sociological literature.

Non-Sociological Conceptions of Man

Alex Inkeles (1964:48-49) has surveyed the humanistic, psychodynamic, and Hobbesian View of man. According to Inkeles (1964:48-49):

Among humanists, the most popular view of man stresses his uniqueness, his diversity, the constant change in his mood and perspective, as in Montaigne's remark that man is 'a marvelous, vain, fickle, and unstable subject, on whom it is hard to form any certain and uniform judgement.'

In contrast to what he feels to be the humanists' unstable conception of man, Inkeles (1964:49) claims that the psychoanalyst holds a view of man as a weakly restrained animal:

While psychoanalysis does not emphasize man's ever changing, evanescent quality, it hardly would nominate the social impulse as the tendency most regularly manifested in human behavior. Rather, it sees man as dominated by deep-seated biological drives, by vocarious instinctual appetites, which are constantly clamoring for satisfaction. This conception puts man over against society. It considers him as only a weakly restrained animal whose basic primitive nature may at any moment break through in socially disruptive behavior.

Inkeles (1964:49) also summarizes the Hobbesian view of man in the following manner:

In this scheme it is not instinctual sexual energy but social drives of a self-centered sort, which dominate man. He seeks to secure for himself or for his group, as much wealth, power, and prestige as he possibly can, and cares for no man except as he may be either a necessary condition for, or source of, those personal satisfactions which drive every man. The picture of the world which emerges is one dominated by force and fraud, in which every man is enemy to every other man. In this view only the power of the state prevents the war of each against all and all against each.

Erich Fromm (1964:10-11) places the questions of the nature of man in a historical-religious perspective:

Is man basically evil and corrupt, or is he basically good and perfectable? The Old Testament does not take the
position of man's fundamental corruption. Adam and Eve's disobedience to God are not called sin; no where is there a hint that this disobedience has corrupted man. On the contrary, the disobedience is the condition for man's self-awareness, for his capacity to choose, and thus in the last analysis this first act of disobedience is man's first step toward freedom. . . . The Old Testament view is that man must choose between good and evil, blessing and curse, life and death.

In referring to later Christian development, Fromm (1964:11-12) relates the following conception of man:

The Christian development was different. In the course of the development of the Christian Church, Adam's disobedience was conceived as sin. In fact, as a sin so severe that it corrupted his nature and with it that of all his descendants, and thus man by his own effort could never rid himself of the corruption.

William L. Kolb (1961:11-15) contends that there are four central elements in the Judaic-Christian image of man:

1) The concept of human freedom or the conditioned will.
2) Certain universal conditions of man's situation and the needs that are generated thereby (i.e., meaningless).
3) The double-orientation of man to the non-empirical and other men.
4) An orientation to the reason and finiteness of man.

Although the conceptions of man presented above hardly begin to cover the range of important images of man contained in the literature, they will serve as a basis against which various sociological conceptions of man may be compared.

Sociological Conceptions of Man

Marion J. Levy, Jr. (1963:10) has said it is not possible to speak of an "ontologically correct definition" of human nature in a scientific sense, since it is a non-testable concept. However, this problem does not prevent social scientists from taking a position on the nature of man.
Richard L. Means (1969:78) states this belief well:

One central concept in any systematic social science is some general view of the nature of man. What is the nature of man's psyche? How is man related to society? How does man act on his fellow men? How does he shape and determine his society and culture? There are many different answers to these questions. Yet social science, like most human endeavor, tends to take one reigning metaphor, and makes it the absolute monarch of social interpretation.

Since there is no agreement among sociologists concerning what is the basic nature of man, it would seem a great deal of confusion would exist in sociology concerning this subject. The manner in which the sociologist goes about resolving this definitional and conceptual problem has been commented upon by John Dollard (1949:271): "The sociologist turns in vain to the psychologist for a significant conception of human nature and failing to get it, he projects his cultural pattern analysis back on the individual and tries to make out with this device."

It is possible to distinguish between the general conception of the nature of man as portrayed in sociological literature as found in the writings of particular sociologists. The variety of usages of the concept "nature of man" encountered in sociological literature is evident in the set of usages presented below. Although these usages obviously do not comprise the total or final statement of any author cited, it is hoped they do generally characterize the various authors' views. Further, the views listed below are not intended to be representative of those of all members on the sociological community. Let us first examine the general sociological conceptions of man.

Alex Inkeles (1964:50-51) contends that there are three essential elements in the sociological conception of man:

Man's 'original nature' is seen largely in neutral terms, as neither good nor bad. It is, rather, a poten-
tial for development, and the extent to which the potential is realized depends on the time and society into which a man is born and on his distinctive place in it. If it does not treat him as a 'tabula rasa,' modern sociology, nevertheless, regards man as a flexible form which can be given all manner of content. . . .

In his external life, in relations with his fellow, man is seen as social man. Locked into a network of social relationships, dependent on others for support and cooperation, eager to earn their good will and approbation, he responds to external pressures which again push him to act mainly in accord with the norms and standards characteristic of society in his time and place. . . .

Finally, the sociologists' conception of human nature leads them to believe that to change man we must first change social conditions, rather than the reverse. . . . While holding that man's anti-social and self centered impulses can either be restrained or channeled to serve the public good, they acknowledge that in the process man must inevitably suffer some important restraints on the free and untrammeled expression of his impulses.

These three elements bear a strong resemblance to the image of man that Dennis Wrong (1961:183-192) has defined as the "oversocialized conception" of man in sociology.

Richard L. Means (1969:3) comments that, in attempting to explain a problem in our society, most theories can be divided into two classes—both based upon assumptions concerning man:

Those that stress social and physical conditions outside the individual, and those that emphasize psychological, subjective, or individual factors. Traditionally, most theories have had a tendency to explain a problem in terms of one specific cause.

Later in the same work, Means (1969:156) argues that two basic images of man prevail in modern Western society:

The image of man as 'machine' and the image of man as 'persona.'

Man understood as machine is more subtle and complex than the metaphor suggests, but primarily the notion is that man is only what he produces. His existence is known by external qualities only, by his movements, by his building and tearing down. The image of man as persona, on the other hand, is always one of mystery. The assumption is that man's external activities, while important, are also a partial exterior presentation of an interior reality that has value. Behind the ever changing
mask there is a quality, a process of life, which is valued by others. Life, then, is also a struggle to remove the mask, to penetrate to the value of the person as such.

Reinhard Bendix (1951:30) presents the problem of the sociological conception of man in the form of a paradox:

Two contradictory views of the nature of man are asserted simultaneously. On the one hand, we are told that it is possible to know and understand more and more about the nature of man and society, for man to use this increasing body of knowledge and theory to improve his condition, to reduce unhappiness and poverty, and to increase the joy and fullness of life. On the other hand, modern social science teaches us to regard man as a creature of his drives, habits and social roles, in whose behavior reason and choice play no decisive part. Accordingly, man's efforts to acquire knowledge about himself and society, and to use such knowledge, are beset with insuperable obstacles; men are regarded as unable to achieve objective knowledge or to be guided by it.

Eric Fromm (1973:219-220) suggests that evolutionary thought once had an impact upon sociological conceptions of man; this is true because "Once man came to be seen as developing in the process of evolution, the idea of a substance which is contained in his essence seemed untenable." Ostensibly, since evolutionary thought is no longer a dominant school of thought, one might think the question of man's nature may be considered moot. However, this is not necessarily the case. Modern sociological schools of thought continue to make assumptions concerning the nature of man.

For example, Norman K. Denzin (1969:922-934) provides us with a brief sketch of some of the assumptions of the symbolic interactionist school of thought concerning the nature of man:

1) Human beings are symbol manipulators. Sometimes they routinely and self-consciously manipulate symbols, and they give their orientation toward other objects and people a specific character.
2) The basic objective of all interaction is the self, which is formed by the process of interaction. Since interaction is continuous, certain dimensions of the self are continually changing. To the extent that social symbols are consensually defined through routine interaction, there will be a routine dimension to the self. Certain aspects of interaction are consciously manipulated, and there will be a part of the self that is more "creative" and subject to change.

Ralf Dahrendorf (1963:161-162) presents his view of the assumptive differences between conflict and consensus schools of thought on the nature of man. In the conflict school the existence of a social system depends on the coercion of some of its members by the others. In the consensus school, individual members of the social system are governed by a consensus of values among the members.

Not only are there vast differences between the assumptions concerning the nature of man among the various schools of sociological thought, but there have also been vast differences among various prominent social theorists within the history of sociology. It seems logical that every sociologist should bring to his study of the discipline of sociology a set of metaphysical assumptions on the nature of man which will have a definite bearing upon the direction, emphasis, scope, methodology, and analysis of his sociological enterprise. However, there seem to be almost as many sets of assumptions as there are various prominent sociologists. What follows is not intended to be the last word on particular theorists' ideas concerning the nature of man; rather it is hoped the selected comments will not only adequately characterize the image of man held by any particular theorist but also serve to illustrate the existence and diversity of the individual sociologists' images of
human nature in the historical development of the discipline of sociology.

Lester Ward (1841-1913)

Ward's image of the nature of man becomes apparent in his comments on the process of evolution. An ardent advocate of social telesis, he thus felt man could modify, defeat, or hasten the processes of nature. Bogardus (1960:307) states:

Ward protested against the teaching that natural forces are operating only as elements in the all-powerful evolutionary process. He pointed out that man is distinguished by the development of his psychical nature, i.e., of his foresight and reason. He demonstrated that by this development man is able to master and regulate the operation of the blind evolutionary forces.

Ward believed that man developed from an "antisocial and completely egoistic" being to a being of "altruism." According to Bogardus (1960:308-309), Ward defined his terms as follows:

"Egoism is the feeling which demands for self an increase of enjoyment and diminuation of discomfort. Altruism is that which demands these results for others."

Ward believed in an ultimate triumph of humanitarian sentiments, which would sweep away the present barriers of language, national pride, and natural uncongeniality. This process would unite all nations in one vast aggregate with a single political organization.

William Graham Sumner (1840-1910)

Timasheff (1967:69) gives a clue to Sumner's view of man:

Men must respond to social laws as they respond to physical laws. These laws are to be learned and obeyed. . . . The basic law was, for Sumner, the law of evolution, a spontaneous, unilinear, and irreversible process which cannot be changed by social effort. Evolution is pushed ahead by the struggle for existence, a contest pitting man against nature and man against man with no one to be blamed for the hardships men impose on one another.

It becomes apparent that Sumner's evolutionary views did not allow for
Ward's social telesis. Although Ward and Sumner believed in the concept of evolution, it appears they can be differentiated by their views of the nature of man.

Sumner (1906:16) discussed life conditions, a struggle for existence, and competition of life—which are best explained in his own words:

The struggle for existence must be carried on under life conditions and in connection with the competition of life. The life conditions consist in variable elements of the environment, the supply of materials necessary to support life, the difficulty of exploiting them, the state of the arts, and the circumstances of physiography, climate, meteorology, etc., which favor life or the contrary. The struggle for existence is a process in which an individual and nature are the parties. . . . In the competition of life the parties are men and other organisms. The men strive with each other, or with the flora and fauna with which they are associated.

Later in his essay, Sumner (1906:18) wrote, "There are four great motives of human action which come into play when some number of human beings are in juxtaposition under the same life conditions. These are hunger, sex, passion, vanity, and fear (of ghosts and spirits)." From these views on man's nature, Opler (1964:507) has noted that, "Sumner subordinates the intellectual to the practical and behavioral."

Maurice R. Davie (1963:14) points out that Sumner's view of the nature of man was not entirely pessimistic. He quotes Sumner's view that,

It would be an error, however, to suppose that all nature is a chaos of warfare and competition. Combination and cooperation are so fundamentally necessary that even low life forms are found in symbiosis for mutual dependence and assistance.

Sumner (Davie, 1963:15) refers to this combination as antagonistic cooperation:

It consists in the combination of two persons or groups to satisfy a great common interest while minor antagonisms of interest which exist between them are suppressed.
Sorokin (1966:301) gives us additional insight into Sumner's view of man when he attributes the following statement to Sumner: "The first task of life is to live; men begin with acts, not thoughts." Sumner's statement plays down the rational side of man. According to Calvin J. Larson (1973:83), Sumner believed that, ". . . man was by nature, if anything, a self-centered creature whose actions were largely the effect of nonintellectual forces." As Opler (1964:509) has observed, ". . . Sumner considers it fatuous to expect independence and freedom in individual decisions, for a man is but the reflection and register of the cultural forces that have played upon him."

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

Durkheim (1950:141) wrote, "Sociology does not need to choose between the great hypotheses which divide metaphysicians. It needs to embrace free will no more than determinism." Although Durkheim stated he was not concerned with the nature of man as such, it is possible to find in his writings a precise conception of his view. Even though Durkheim stated that sociology need not choose a view of the nature of man, he himself made a choice, took a position of the metaphysical question, and allowed this conception to influence his sociology.

Coser (1971:132) has written on a segment of Durkheim's image of the nature of man: "To Durkheim, men were creatures whose desires were unlimited. Unlike other animals, they are not satiated when their biological needs are fulfilled." This statement by Coser seems to summarize what Durkheim (1960:450-451) himself wrote: "The more one has, the more one wants, since satisfactions received only stimulate instead of filling needs." On this basis it follows that the natural insatiability of the human animal is held in check primarily by external
societal control.

J. G. Peristiany (150:8) states that,

The Durkheimian individual is a homo duplex, both I and We. This is a polarity, not an antithesis, which is deeply rooted in his conception of society and of its moving forces.

This concept of homo duplex is echoed by Coser (1971:136) as a:

Body, desire, and appetite and also as socialized personality. But man was specifically human only in the latter capacity, and he became fully human only in and through society.

Society is seen by Durkheim as exercising constraint over the natural insatiability of the individual. Barnes and Becker (1952:831) address themselves to this issue of constraint as Durkheim saw it:

Durkheim uses the term (constraint) in at least two senses. First, the group coerces the individual and forces him to obey legal and moral rules by the fear of sanctions to be applied by the police, courts, and public opinion respectively. Second, the culture determines what ethical ideals and what conceptual formulations the individual will have and hence indirectly how he will act.

To the model of the Durkheimian man, as constructed by Coser and by Barnes and Becker, Peristiany (1953:30-31) felt compelled to add another dimension:

This introduction would miss its mark if it failed to convince that the Durkheimian individual is not a puppet in the hands of a robot society. Society limits the possibilities of action—it does not determine each individual action. It provides through differentiation, creative synthesis and the birth of ideals a scale of values, and therefore, a choice between various possibilities.

Having viewed Durkheim's model of man, we can turn to the views of his contemporary, Max Weber.

Max Weber (1864-1920)

Max Weber held views which were at the opposite end of a continuum
from those of his contemporary, Durkheim.

Bogardus (1960: 480) gives us the first insight into Weber's image of the nature of man: "Weber wrestled with the concept of personal liberty." Weber's answer to the question of personal liberty differed greatly from that of his contemporaries. Reinhard Bendix (1962: 474) has also addressed himself to this issue:

Yet against the Marxist or Social Darwinist tendency to search for social or biological determinants, Weber maintained that ideas and individual behavior also possess an irreducible dimension that must be understood in its own right.

Later in his essay, Bendix (1962: 474-475) adds another dimension to the nature of man as seen by Weber:

... Weber emphasized that action in society also has an individual dimension, that it can make sense to the individual irrespective of his interactions with others.

Timasheff (1967: 175) expands this subjective element of the Weberian individual, noting that "Behavior devoid of subjective meaning belongs to the periphery of sociological study." Irving M. Zeitlin (1968: 115) wrote:

Segments of reality become significant to us because of their value relevance; and only that portion of reality is significant to us which is related to our values. . . .

Emory Bogardus (1960: 482) has summed up the scheme of human behavior as conceived by Weber:

Human behavior is determined by the interplay of two sets of factors. One of these emanates from within the individual's storehouse of motives and attitudes. The other set of causal factors are the non-human ones that are involved in the particular social situation. A person's behavior under such conditions takes on a meaning, then, in relation to a third set of factors, namely, the goals which he has adopted. His reaction in his various social situations are performed in relation to those far-flung 'ideal types' of his.
In summary, the Weberian individual attaches subjective meaning to behavior. This meaning is found in the individual—not in the society.

Talcott Parsons (1902– )

Talcott Parsons, states his views on the nature of man and the concept of sociology rather implicitly, and his ideas are further obscured by his abstruse style. It is thus possible that one might misinterpret Parson's views in attempting to explain them.

We may begin the construction of the Parsonian individual with Timasheff's (1967:239) notion that the theory of social action is held to be based on a means-end scheme of voluntaristic behavior. Martindale (1960:485) points out that:

The action system of the individual has two basic aspects; gratificational and orientational. The gratificational is called by Parsons 'cathetic,' the orientational is called 'cognitive.' That is, human action is thought by Parsons to display both desires and ideas."

Thus, Parsonian individuals are motivated by a tendency for optimum gratification of needs which control the motivational orientation.

When individuals are motivated by a tendency of optimum gratification of needs, a problem of "order" arises. Edward Devereux (1961:11-12) states that Parsons addressed himself to this problem:

For order, as he saw it, could not be a resultant either of rational self-interest or of externally imposed sanctions alone, but must rest on a core of institutionalized common values.

According to Parsons (1937:768), individuals are integrated with reference to a common value system which is "manifested in the legitimacy of institutional norms, in the common ultimate ends of action, in ritual and in various modes of expression." The concept of institutions thus plays an essential role in the Parsonian scheme. As Parsons (1951:150)
wrote: "Institutionalization must be regarded as the fundamental integrative mechanism of social systems."

Sorokin (1966:410) and Timasheff (1967:239) have characterized Parsons' theory as voluntaristic; Edward Devereux (1961:13) explains the rationale behind this label:

Action is meaningful, he (Parsons) reasoned, only if preceded by a functionally relevant process of orientation, and this is possible only if some freedom exists to choose among alternative courses. If you are to have any theory of action at all, it must thus necessarily make room for an element of voluntarism.

However, for a more complete analysis of the Parsonian image of man, we must turn to Max Black (1961:271-274), who has attempted to collect the general hypotheses about individuals and social behavior whose truth Parsons has assumed sufficiently well established. These views are listed as follows:

1) All human action is directed toward goals

2) All human action is relational, in the sense of being a function of the actor's innate needs, . . . his acquired orientations, and the particular situation in which he finds himself.

3) All human response to stimuli has two distinct dimensions—it is simultaneously cognitive and cathetic.

4) All human action involves selection between alternative orientations and responses.

5) Selection (or evaluation) involves the use of standards.

6) All interaction between actors involves complimentarity of expectation, in the sense "that the action of each is oriented to the expectations of the other."

7) Orientations and actions are organized in systems.

With this model of the Parsonian individual constructed, we will
now consider our final social theorist.

Herbert Blumer (1900–

Blumer is the only sociologist discussed within this paper who has explicitly stated he belongs to the school which is contingent upon an image of the nature of man. Blumer (1969:12) wrote:

Symbolic interactionism recognizes that human beings must have a makeup that fits the nature of social interaction. The human being is seen as an organism that not only responds to others on the non-symbolic level but as one that makes indications to others and interprets their indications. He can do this... only by virtue of possessing a 'self.' Nothing esoteric is meant by this expression. It means merely that a human being can be an object of his own action.

Blumer clearly recognizes that the image of man held by symbolic interaction is different from that of other schools of thought in sociology.

Later in his essay, Blumer (1969:13-14) wrote:

We have, then, a picture of the human being as an organism that interacts with itself through a social process of making indications to itself. This is a radically different view of the human being from that which dominates contemporary social and psychological science. The dominant prevailing view sees the human being as a complex organization of the organism.

Blumer (1969:14) gives us a further clue to the nature of man as seen by the symbolic interactionist:

Instead of being merely an organism that responds to the play of factors on or through it, the human being is seen as an organism that has to deal with what it notes. It meets what it so notes by engaging in a process of self-indication in which it makes an object of what it notes, gives it a meaning, and uses the meaning as the basis for directing its action.

According to the symbolic interactionist, the individual man is not simply responding to stimuli but is an acting individual. As Blumer (1969:16) concisely states:

An acting organism is an organism that has to mold
a line of action on the basis of what it takes into account instead of merely releasing a response to the play of some factor on its organization.

Blumer has thus drawn us a clear picture of his view of the nature of man.

Conclusion

The term "human nature" appears often in the sociological vocabulary, but there appears to be little agreement of what constitutes its proper meaning and application. Comparisons of the various definitions and usages of the concept "human nature" by sociological theorists leads one to a feeling of confusion more than of conceptual clarity. There appears to be significant dissension regarding what constitutes human nature and what role the concept plays in sociology.

Even a cursory review of sociological literature reveals numerous social scientists calling for the study of sociological assumptions concerning man's nature. Reinhard Bendix (1951:31) especially stresses this:

Do the social scientists propose to increase the role of reason in everyman's guidance of his own destiny and human affairs generally? Or do they propose to expand the knowledge possessed by an elite as to the manipulation and control of the mass of the unreasonable. One view of man's nature would logically lead us to take the first course; the other would require us to take the second. No more important task faces the social sciences today than to determine by which "image of man" they are to be led.

C. Wright Mills (1959:143) writes:

The problems of our time—which now include the problem of man's very nature—cannot be stated adequately without consistent practice of the view that history is the shank of social study, and recognition of the need to develop further a psychology of man that is sociologically grounded and historically relevant.

George Lundberg's (1961:15) general call for sociologists to utilize the scientific method includes, "man's thoughts, feelings, and 'spiritual'
characteristics."

Richard L. Means (1969:257) has also addressed himself to this topic:

"Once we realize that the decisions concerning the nature of the self, nature, time, other minds, and society, are the basic evaluations, we can study these scientifically."

Alvin Gouldner has written extensively on this subject. Stating the case in general, Gouldner (1970:25) posits:

"The sociologists' task today is not only to see people as they see themselves, not to see themselves as others see them; it is also to see themselves as they see other people. What is needed is a new and heightened self-awareness among sociologists, which would lead them to ask the same kinds of questions about themselves as they do about taxicab drivers or doctors, and to answer them in the same ways."

Later in his same work, Gouldner (1970:31–32) presents his case specifically:

"What I am saying, then is that the work of sociologists, as of others, is influenced by a subtheoretical set of beliefs, for that is what background assumptions are; beliefs about all members of symbolically constituted domains. I am not saying that the work of sociologists should be influenced by background assumptions; this is a problem for methodological moralists. Nor am I saying that sociology logically requires and necessarily rests upon background assumptions; this is a problem for philosophers of science. What I am saying is that sociologists do use and are influenced by background assumptions; this is an empirical matter that sociologists themselves can study and confirm."

The essential points here are that there are a variety of such values and beliefs about the nature of man among sociologists and that sociologists' values and beliefs—particularly their values and beliefs concerning an image of the nature of man—are valid areas of investigation, since these values and beliefs influence their sociological conceptualizations and endeavors."
CHAPTER II

THE STUDY

The above discussion of the role that an image of human nature plays in sociology forces one to conclude that there is no consensus among sociologists concerning what constitutes human nature, but that many sociologists make reference to such a concept and argue that the concept influences a broad range of sociological endeavors. Almost always, these statements are made without empirical evidence to substantiate this claim. What little evidence is given to support such a contention is often at the inferential or intuitive level. This study was therefore undertaken as an attempt to lend some empirical evidence to the above mentioned inferential and intuitive "knowledge" we have concerning the influence and impact of images of human nature on the discipline of sociology. Specifically the areas explored in this thesis include:

1) The background experiences of sociologists (i.e., a person's religious beliefs and the happiness of his childhood) and their influence in shaping a person's philosophy of human nature (i.e., whether he

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1 This statement is primarily intended to refer to trends in American sociology with the notable exception of American radical sociology. European sociology, particularly the sociology of Karl Marx, has long been interested in an image of human nature. For a further examination of this topic, see T.B. Bottomore, Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology & Social Philosophy and J. David Colfax and Jack L. Roach (eds.), Radical Sociology.
perceives man's nature to be basically good or evil).

2) Whether a person's image of human nature influences his choice of a particular theoretical perspective in sociology.

3) Whether a person's theoretical perspective influences his attitude toward the radical perspective in the discipline of sociology.

The diagram below presents a possible interpretation of the relationships which are to be investigated. It is assumed that certain background experiences of individuals are relevant for the formation of the individual's image of the nature of man. This image of man's nature then becomes significant when that individual chooses a theoretical perspective in sociology. Subsequently, this choice of theoretical perspective influences a sociologist's attitudes toward the radical perspective in sociology.

**The Instrument**

The instrument used to collect data for the study was a questionnaire (see Appendix A) comprised of four basic components:

1) Demographic Data and Respondent's Background. This component asked questions concerning sex, age, current academic rank, level of education, year degree completed (items 1-5); social class of family during childhood (item 67); current social class, political sentiment, happiness of childhood, and religious preference (items 70-73).

The general thrust of the scale is upon the interpersonal aspects of human nature. The author (Wrightsman, 1964:743-751) conceptualized philosophies of human nature as possessing six bi-polar components: Trustworthiness vs. Untrustworthiness; Altruism vs. Selfishness; Strength-of Will-and-Rationality vs. Lack of Will Power-and-Irrationality; Independence vs. Conformity; Simplicity vs. Complexity; and Similarity (among people) vs. Variability (among people). After two item analyses of the items written to measure each component, a final form of the PHN scale included fourteen Likert-type items on each of the six bi-polar components. The subscales are reported to have adequate internal consistency and strong consistency over time.\(^3\)

Only the first four dimensions, which may be pooled to give a general Favorableness-Unfavorableness score ranging between +168 and -168, were included in the questionnaire. As Wrightsman (1964:747) suggests:

The use of a summary score for these four scales ... seems defensible as a measure of general evaluative orientation toward human nature, which may see man as good, as evil, or as neither.

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\(^3\) For further information regarding the construction of these scales and their intercorrelations, reliabilities, and validities, the reader should refer to Wrightsman's (1974) work, Assumptions About Human Nature, especially Chapter 4. To obtain a copy of an extensive annotated bibliography of prior research using the PHN scale, the reader may contact Lawrence S. Wrightsman Jr. at George Peabody College for Teachers.
III. Theoretical Perspective: Three items (items 68, 69, and 74) were utilized to identify the theoretical perspective of the responding sociologist. Item 68 listed eight prominent sociologists and asked the respondents to indicate the one person whose theoretical perspective most closely matched their own. Item 69 listed six commonly cited theoretical schools of thought plus one category for an eclectic perspective and one category for "other" theoretical orientation. Item 74 was an open-ended question asking respondents to provide a name or term for their own theoretical sociological perspective.

IV. Radical Sociology: A Likert-type scale of four items (items 15, 27, 36, 52) was used to measure commitments to the "radical" perspective in the discipline. Scores range from a +12 to -12 with a positive score indicating a general agreement with statements often attributed to radical sociologists.

The Sample

A sample of 241 teaching sociologists was taken from the Fall, 1972 issue of the Wisconsin Sociologist (1972:144-148). The only requirement for inclusion on the list was that the individual listed be a member of the faculty of the school reporting. This sample was comprised of sociologists from all colleges and universities in Wisconsin, with the exception of the faculty at Marquette University, who were omitted because they were aware of the study being undertaken. Since the schools differ in size and religious affiliation, there is no reason to believe that the teaching sociologists of the State of Wisconsin differ substantially in relevant characteristics from those in the total population of all teaching sociologists. Thus, it was assumed that this listing of sociologists constitutes a representative sample of all teaching
sociologists in the United States.

A questionnaire (Appendix A) was mailed to each individual in the sample and a follow-up postcard (Appendix B) was mailed later to 146 persons who did not respond within two weeks. This effort yielded six additional questionnaires, bringing the total number of questionnaires to 105. Of this 105, a total of six questionnaires were unusable because of insufficient responses to questions. Thus, the total sample consists of 99 of the 241 potential respondents—a forty-one percent response rate.

A response rate of 41% is certainly less than ideal, but it is not unusual. In a recent study of the journal-reading behavior of faculty and graduate students from eight leading departments of sociology in the United States, David E. Payne (1974:69) cites a return rate from a ten percent random sample of only 26 percent.

As A. N. Oppenheim (1966:34) has commented:

For respondents who have no special interest in the subject matter of the questionnaire, figures of 50 percent to 60 percent are typical; even in studies of interested groups, 90 percent is seldom exceeded. The important point about these poor response rates is not the reduced size of the sample, which could easily be overcome by sending out more questionnaires, but the possibility of bias. This is because almost invariably the returns are not representative of the original sample drawn; nonresponse is not a random process; it has its own determinants, which vary from survey to survey. We cannot overcome this problem entirely, but we can partly prevent it by sending out several suitably worded reminders and partly allow for it by ascertaining the nature of the bias.

The significance of Oppenheim's remarks is that the low response rate of 40 percent to 60 percent is suggestive of the general population. One must recall that a sample of teaching sociologists is not at all representative of the general population. Arguments could be made for either a higher or a lower response rate of sociologists. One could cite the fact that since the sample is comprised of sociologists, they know of
the importance of a high response rate in sociological investigations and may be more likely than the general population to respond to a questionnaire. Conversely, it could be argued that since the sample is comprised of teaching sociologists who are pressed for time, one may expect a lower response rate than that of the general population. However, the purpose of this paper is not to investigate the response rate of sociologists to questionnaires; thus, no conclusions in this regard will be offered.
CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

The sample was comprised of seventy-three males and twenty-six females. The majority of the sample (57 of 99) was under forty years of age. Thirty-nine persons reported the academic rank of associate professor or full professor. Seventy-six persons reported their present level of education to be either a Ph.D. or all requirements for the Ph.D. but dissertation.

Respondents were also asked to indicate their religious preference. Table 1 summarizes the responses for religious preference.

TABLE 1.--Religious preferences of 97 Wisconsin teaching sociologists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>97</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 In all analyses persons who gave no answer to a particular question are omitted, so totals in most instances are less than 99.

2 Specific "other" responses (frequencies in Parentheses): Agnostic but Jewish (1), Atheist (1), Catholic with strong Agnostic tendencies (1), Greek Orthodox (2), Humanist (1), Mormon (2), Quaker (1) and Unitarian (3).
The largest category was that of "None" (N=20) followed by "Roman Catholic" (N=18) and "Agnostic" (N=12).

Respondents were also asked to estimate their own political sentiments by checking a box along a continuum from one (conservative) to eight (liberal). Table 2 presents the responses to this question. Eighty-two percent of the sample place themselves in the three most liberal categories. This data supports C. Wright Mills (1959:79) comment that, "Many, I should say most, social scientists in America today are easily or uneasily liberal."

Alvin W. Gouldner's (1970:59) more recent work provides a possible explanation of Mill's comment:

The tension between the sociologist's personal reality of success and his occupationally-induced awareness of societal failure often finds its resolution in political liberalism, for this is an ideology that allows him to seek remedies for the failures of society without challenging its essential premises.

The claim by Mills and the possible explanation by Gouldner appear to be well supported by even a cursory inspection of Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Sentiment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background Experiences and Philosophy of Man

One specific topic investigated in the study was the question of whether or not various background experiences of sociologists influenced their current philosophy or image of man's nature. Information on various background factors was collected and analyzed with reference to the Philosophies of Human Nature (PHN) Scale developed by Wrightsman (1964:743-751), scores for which range from +168 to -168. The background information collected included sex, age, current academic rank, present level of education, and last year in which the respondent was a full-time student working toward a degree (items 1-5); social class membership (item 70); political sentiment (item 71); happiness of childhood (item 72); and religious preference (item 73). The data were analyzed by means of a one-way analysis of variance (Blalock, 1960:242-253).

Analysis of the PHN Scale by sex showed no significant difference ($\bar{X}$ for 73 males = .137; $\bar{X}$ for 26 females = 1.50; $\bar{X}$ for total sample = .495). In general, the sample had a "neutral" view of man--i.e., it interpreted man as neither basically good nor evil. When the data were analyzed by age, similar results occurred. The overall mean difference between highest and lowest scores on the PHN scale was less than one. Analyses of scores by academic rank, present level of education, and last year in which respondent was a full-time student working toward a degree revealed slightly more variation in PHN score; however, none of the differences was statistically significant using either a one-way analysis of variance or a T-test (Blalock, 1960:144-149).

An examination of PHN score by childhood social class proved to be more fruitful. Only four persons classified their childhood social class as upper so these persons were collapsed into the category with middle
class respondents. Only three persons classified their childhood social class as lower-lower, so these persons were categorized with the upper-lower class respondents. An examination of the data in Table 3 shows a significant difference between the perceptions of persons whose childhood was spent in the middle class compared to those persons whose childhood was spent in the lower class. Persons from a lower social class background reflected a more negative view of man.

It is interesting that the above noted relationship between image of man and social class background still holds when the data are analyzed by current social class. Only six persons indicated upper class membership so these respondents were categorized with the upper-middle class respondents. Only one person indicated lower class membership so this respondent was categorized with the lower-middle class respondents. Table 4 presents the resulting data from this analysis. It seems that

### TABLE 3.--Childhood social class differences on PHN scale of 94 Wisconsin sociologists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childhood Social Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>31.10</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>P&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Class</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-13.39</td>
<td>45.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4.--Current social class differences on PHN scale of 93 Wisconsin sociologists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Social Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>T-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Middle Class</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>33.18</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>P&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Middle Class</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-22.13</td>
<td>37.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
persons who classify themselves as upper-middle class are more likely to have a favorable image of the nature of man than a person who considers himself to be a member of the lower-middle class.

PHN scores were also analyzed by political sentiment and perceived childhood happiness; however, no trends or statistically significant differences were revealed.

Small numbers in most of the categories under religious preference prevented a complete analysis of PHN score for each category. To circumvent this statistical problem, a general category of "Protestant" was formed by collapsing the categories of Baptist (N=1), Lutheran (N=6), Methodist (N=4), Presbyterian (N=5), and "other protestant" (N=10). The resulting categories of Protestant (N=26), Roman Catholic (N=18), and None (N=20) were then analyzed on PHN score using a one-way analysis of variance statistical test. This effort produced a statistically significant difference among the groups as shown in Table 5. In general,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Preference</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>F-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.15</td>
<td>40.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td>31.49</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>P &lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-14.15</td>
<td>31.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roman Catholics and Protestants had a positive view of the nature of man and those respondents who indicated no religious preference had a negative view of the nature of man.

In sum, the background factors which yielded significant differences on the PHN scale were the respondent's perceptions of childhood and current social class. A statistically significant difference among Roman
Catholics, Protestants, and those persons reporting no religious preference was found when the data were analyzed by religious preference.

Philosophy of Man and Theoretical Perspective in Sociology

The main focus of this thesis centers on whether or not there is empirical evidence enabling one to differentiate among the various theoretical schools of thought in sociology on the basis of differing images of man. Previous discussion presented citations from many authors asserting—without empirical evidence—the validity of this contention. The purpose of this thesis, therefore is to empirically test these assertions.

Perhaps the clearest and most concise statement of what influences a sociologist's perspective has been made by Alvin Gouldner (1970:29):

Background assumptions also influence the social career of a theory, influencing the responses of those to whom it is communicated. For, in some part, theories are accepted or rejected because of the background assumptions embedded in them. In particular, a social theory is more likely to be accepted by those who share the theory's background assumptions and find them agreeable.

Three questions (items 68, 69, and 74) were included in the questionnaire in order that the respondent's theoretical perspective in sociology could be ascertained. Item 68 listed eight prominent sociologists and asked the respondents to indicate the one person whose theoretical perspective most closely matched their own. Responses to this item and mean score on PHN scale are presented in Table 6. One-way analysis of variance showed no statistically significant difference among the means of these groups. The small numbers in most categories and large standard deviations of mean PHN scores explain this lack of significance. Table 6 reveals that both conflict theorists, Ralf
TABLE 6.--Frequency distribution and mean PHN score of 95 Wisconsin sociologists responses to questionnaire item 68

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective Similar to:</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean PHN Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ralf Dahrendorf</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-11.22</td>
<td>49.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold Garfinkel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-26.50</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erving Goffman</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>32.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Homans</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>11.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karl Marx</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-11.83</td>
<td>35.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Herbert Mead</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-2.87</td>
<td>24.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert K. Merton</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>37.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talcott Parsons</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.20</td>
<td>15.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these; specify:</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>39.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Standard deviations were not computed for categories with less than five respondents.

Dahrendorf and Karl Marx, have a mean PHN score with a high negative value that is not exceeded by any other group with more than two members.

Item 69 listed six commonly cited theoretical schools of thought plus one category for an eclectic perspective and one category for "other" theoretical orientation. Responses to this question and mean PHN scores are presented in Table 7. One-way analysis of variance showed no statistically significant difference between the means of these groups. An examination of the table shows that the conflict school of thought tends to have a negative view of man, while the eclectic and functional school of thought tends to be more positive. However, T-tests on the differences of these means were not statistically significant.

Specific responses (frequencies in parentheses): Peter Berger (2), Robert Bierstedt (1), Edgar R. Borgatta (1), Combination of Karl Marx and George Herbert Mead (1), Otis Dudley Duncan (3), Emile Durkheim (2), Charles Hampton-Turner (1), Gerhard Lenski (1), Abraham Maslow (1), Methodological (1), C. Wright Mills (2), Philip Selznick (1), Albion Small (1), Pitirim Sorokin (2), Max Weber (3), and Florian Znaniecki (1).
TABLE 7.--Frequency distribution and mean PHN score of 96 Wisconsin sociologist's responses to questionnaire item 69.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Orientation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean PHN Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-8.67</td>
<td>35.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnomethodological</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-52.00</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-13.40</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionalism</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>32.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>33.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My perspective is eclectic</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>32.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify:</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-11.00</td>
<td>42.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Standard deviations were not computed for categories with five or less respondents.

Questionnaire item 74 was an open-ended question asking respondents to provide a name or term for their own theoretical sociological perspective. Responses were coded in the same manner as the responses to item 69. Data from this question and the mean scores on the PHN scale are presented in Table 8. The largest category was "other," and examination of the individual responses in this category did not reveal any particular school of thought with more than three responses. Again, one can see that the conflict school of thought tends to have a negative view. One-way analysis of variance showed no statistically significant difference between the means of these groups.

3Other responses: Combination of Conflict and Evolutionary; Dialectical; Evolution; Historical, Political, Economic, and Social Relational; Human Ecology; Humanistic; Marxist; Methodological; Phenomenological; Rationalistic; Social Structural, and Synthetic.
TABLE 8.--Frequency distribution and mean PHN score of 85 Wisconsin sociologists' responses to questionnaire item 69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Orientation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean PHN Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-7.25</td>
<td>44.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnomethodological</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-52.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-22.50</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionalism</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-1.20</td>
<td>28.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-0.83</td>
<td>33.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eclectic</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.35</td>
<td>26.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-2.88</td>
<td>41.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Standard deviations were not computed for categories with less than five respondents.

The data was also analyzed by grouping respondents who consistently chose the same theoretical perspective on at least two of the three items used to identify theoretical perspective. This grouping was done by inspecting each questionnaire and examining the respondent's choice of response to questionnaire items 68, 69, and 74, and grouping those respondents who chose the same school of thought at least twice in the three opportunities and those who were consistent in all three choices of theoretical perspective. Thus, persons who responded to question 68 by circling either Ralf Dahrendorf or Karl Marx and who responded to question 69 and 74 by circling the conflict school of thought were defined as being consistently a conflict theorist in their theoretical perspective. Persons who responded to question 68 by circling either Robert K. Merton or Talcott Parsons and who responded to question 69 and 74 with the functionalist perspective were defined as a consistent

Other responses (frequencies in parentheses): Behaviorism (2), Critical (1), Ecological (1), Ecosystem (1), Evolutionary (1), Exchange Structuralism (1), Feminism (1), Historical Systems (1), Humanistic (2), Materialism (1), Phenomenological (2), Philosophical Ecology (1), Practical (1), Radical (2), Realism (1), Scientific (1), Social Behaviorism (1), Social Existentialism (1), Societal Complexity Theory (1), and Weberian (1).
functionalist theorist. Similarly, persons who responded to question 68 by circling George Herbert Mead and who responded to questions 69 and 74 with the symbolic interactionist approach, would be consistently responding as a symbolic interactionist theorist. The results of this effort produced the data shown in Table 9. In the case of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Orientation</th>
<th>Level of Consistency</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean PHN Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-19.80</td>
<td>40.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionalism</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>26.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>31.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>33.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-3.60</td>
<td>24.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

++Indicates respondent chose this theoretical perspective at least twice.
+++Indicates respondent chose this theoretical perspective all three times.

with at least two consistent responses in the conflict perspective, this effort yielded five respondents with a mean PHN score of -19.8, while there was only one respondent who consistently chose the conflict perspective on each of the three opportunities to do so. Examining the mean PHN scores of the thirteen respondents with at least two consistent responses in the functionalist perspective produced a mean of -0.17, while the four respondents who consistently chose the functionalist perspective on all three opportunities had a mean PHN score of 6.00.
In the case of the symbolic interactionist perspective, 18 persons with at least two consistent responses in that category had a mean PHN score of \(-0.17\) while the ten respondents with three consistent responses in the symbolic interactionist perspective had a mean PHN score of \(-3.60\). A one-way analysis of variance statistical test was applied to the means of these resultant PHN scores by theoretical perspective and failed to reach the .05 level of significance. Individual T-tests on differences of mean PHN scores also failed to reach the .05 level of significance.

In summary, one can see that individual responses and groupings by consistency of responses to these three questions did not reveal any statistically significant differences among the groups. This lack of significance may be due to a relatively small sample (which caused small frequencies in most categories), and to large standard deviations of mean PHN scores. In general, though, the conflict school of thought tended to have the most negative scores on the PHN scale. From an examination of the responses to the three questionnaire items on theoretical perspective, it is not possible to support an hypothesis that these differing theoretical orientations may be differentiated on the basis of a positive or negative image of man's nature.

Radical Sociology Orientation

The final area investigated was the influence a person's background and theoretical orientation had on his or her attitude toward statements concerning topics of interest to radical sociology. A Likert-type scale of four items was used to measure individual sociologist's attitude toward the radical perspective in the discipline of sociology.\(^5\)

\(^5\)Items 15, 27, 36, 52.
Scores range from a +12 to a -12, with a positive score indicating a general agreement with statements often attributed to radical sociologists. Radical sociology scores were analyzed according to background characteristics and theoretical orientation in sociology.

Background Characteristics and Attitude Toward Radical Sociology

The mean score on the radical sociology scale for the entire sample was .03, indicating neither a general agreement nor disagreement with the statements on radical sociology. The background characteristics of sex, current academic rank, present level of education, last year in which respondent was a full-time student, childhood social class, childhood happiness, and religious preference were not significant in differentiating among the scores on the radical sociology scale. However, age was a significant factor. It was hypothesized that an inverse relationship would exist between age and attitude toward radical sociology, and this hypothesis was upheld. Table 10 presents the data. While a one-way analysis of variance statistical test did not yield the .05 level of significance for all age categories, differences between the means of the 21-30 age group and 51-60 age group were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean Radical Sociology Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>5.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-1.13</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 or over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-2.67</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Standard deviations were not computed for categories with five or less respondents.
statistically significant ($T = 2.14, P < .05$) the .05 level when examined with a T-test. One may conclude that younger sociologists are more likely to have a favorable attitude toward the radical perspective in the discipline of sociology.

It was expected that scores on the Radical Sociology Scale could be differentiated by the respondent's scores on the political sentiment item. If the radical sociology scale is a valid measurement, then one should encounter increasingly positive scores as one moves up the scale from conservative to liberal on the political sentiment item. Table 11 presents the data from a one-way analysis of variance. The means on the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 11.--Mean radical sociology scale scores by political sentiment for 93 Wisconsin sociologists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $F=2.782; P < .01$

*Standard deviations were not computed for categories with five or less respondents.

radical sociology scale are in the predicted direction and significantly different from one another ($F=2.782; P < .01$). One may conclude that the person who classifies himself as liberal on the political sentiment item will be more likely to have a favorable attitude toward the radical element of the discipline of sociology than one whose political orientation is conservative.
Scores on the radical sociology scale were analyzed according to the three items (68, 69, and 74) on the questionnaire used to measure theoretical orientation. Item 68 listed eight prominent sociologists and asked the respondents to indicate the one person whose theoretical perspective most closely matched their own. Responses to this item and mean score on radical sociology scale are presented in Table 12. One-way analysis of variance revealed no statistically significant difference of means among these

TABLE 12.--Frequency distribution and mean radical sociology score of 71 Wisconsin sociologists' responses to question 68

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective similar to</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean Radical Sociology Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ralf Dahrendorf</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold Garfinkel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-3.00</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erving Goffman</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Homans</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-1.40</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karl Marx</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Herbert Mead</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-1.07</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert K. Merton</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-1.75</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talcott Parsons</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Standard deviations were not computed for categories with five or less respondents.

Subsequently, T-tests were employed to examine individual pairs of means. The results of a T-test on the difference of the mean scores on the radical sociology scale for the conflict theorist Ralf Dahrendorf and the functionalist theorist Robert K. Merton, show that the means of the two groups are significantly different (T=3.12, P .01) from one another.

Another statistically significant difference is found when comparisons are made between the means of respondents whose perspective was similar to Karl Marx and the means of persons who reported a perspective similar to Robert K. Merton. Again, one finds a significant
difference \((T=2.16, \ P<.05)\) between the mean score on the radical sociology scale for the conflict theorist Karl Marx and the functional theorist Robert K. Merton. In general, respondents reporting similar perspectives to conflict theorists Dahrendorf and Marx have positive scores indicating slightly favorable attitudes toward radical sociology, while respondents with perspectives similar to functionalist Robert K. Merton have negative scores indicating slightly unfavorable attitudes toward radical sociology.

Item 69 listed six commonly cited theoretical schools of thought, a category for an eclectic perspective, and a category for "other" theoretical orientation. Table 13 reports the responses and mean score on the radical sociology scale. The data analysis with a one-way analysis of variance proved not to be significant at the .05 level.

Simple inspection of Table 13 suggests that persons with a symbolic interactionist, eclectic, or "other" perspective tend to have neutral attitudes toward radical sociology. Inspection of the table also suggests that persons with a conflict perspective tend to have a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Orientation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean Radical Sociology Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnomethodological</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionalism</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-2.13</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My perspective is eclectic</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mean Radical Sociology Score not computed for categories with five or less respondents.
favorable view of radical sociology, whereas persons with a functionalist perspective tend to have a negative view of radical sociology. This apparent difference between the means of persons with conflict and functionalist perspectives was subsequently examined by means of a T-test. This examination reveals a statistically significant difference ($T=3.44, P < .002$) between the means of the respondents with a conflict and functionalist theoretical orientation.

The last item on the questionnaire used to measure theoretical orientation was item 74, an open-ended question asking respondents to provide a name or term for their theoretical sociological perspective. Responses to this item were coded in the same manner as the responses to question 69. Data from this question and mean scores on the Radical Sociology Scale are presented in Table 14. An analysis of variance

TABLE 14.--Frequency distribution and mean radical sociology score of 85 Wisconsin sociologists' responses to item 74.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Orientation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Mean Radical Sociology Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>3.16</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6.39</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.17</td>
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*Mean Radical Sociology Score not computed for categories with five or less respondents

statistical test of the differences of these means showed they did not reach the .05 level of significance. Again, one notices that most means in the sample are clustered around the zero point on the radical sociology scale, thus indicating a neutral attitude toward radical
sociology. The two notable exceptions are the conflict and functional theoretical orientation. Using a T-test, a statistically significant difference (T=4.18, P < .001) was found between the means of these two groups. It seems that persons with a conflict theoretical orientation are more likely to have a more favorable attitude toward radical sociology than persons with a functionalist perspective.

In summary, one can see that an examination of mean differences on all three measurements of theoretical orientation in sociology did not reveal significant differences among the means of these groups. Some categories were too small to be subjected to valid statistical analysis. However, there was a consistent difference between the means of the conflict and functionalist theoretical perspective at the .05 level of significance or beyond. On each measurement, persons with views similar either to the conflict theorist or the conflict school of thought had a more positive attitude toward radical sociology than did those who held views similar to either a functionalist theorist or the functionalist school of thought.

One of the best known functionalist theorists has been Talcott Parsons. C. Wright Mills (1959:48-49), in one of his best known works, The Sociological Imagination, makes reference to the conservative thinking of Talcott Parsons. A more recent work (Gouldner, 1970: 195-197) has also noted the conservative style of thought not only of Talcott Parsons but of functional theorists in general.

However, the views of these two authors are in conflict with the views of Hagedorn and Labovitz (1973:24-25) who argue:

There does not seem to be a clear connection between the more traditional substantive orientations and being a radical or a black sociologist. These sociologists, consequently, may be structuralists, social action theorists, behavioral interactionists, or a combination of the three.
Those who consider themselves radical or black sociologists are more concerned with the usage of sociological knowledge than with the nature of sociology.

Be that as it may, the data from this study are supportive of the views of Mills and Gouldner.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has demonstrated that there are significant differences on the Philosophies of Human Nature (PHN) Scale by the respondents' perceptions of their childhood and current social class. Also, significant differences were found on the PHN Scale when the data were analyzed by religious preference among Roman Catholics, Protestants, and those persons reporting no religious preference.

When the respondents' views of human nature were analyzed by theoretical perspective in sociology, no statistically significant differences were found among the various schools of thought. In general, though, the conflict school of thought tended to have the most negative score on the PHN scale. The limitation of a small size causing small frequencies in most categories presents a methodological problem.

However, small sample size was not the only methodological problem encountered in this research. Most respondents indicated some difficulty in answering particular attitude statements from the PHN scale. These difficulties centered around two particular themes. One difficult area for some respondents was in the questionnaire instructions which asked them to respond to attitude statements about human behavior with their personal beliefs, rather than with their sociological knowledge. Four respondents wrote notes to the effect that their personal beliefs were influenced by their sociological knowledge.
and one may reasonably assume that others also encountered this same difficulty without noting it on their questionnaire. In fact, some respondents went to the effort to footnote sociological works to justify their responses to particular attitude statements. Thus, a PHN score may not be a valid measure of an individual's image of human nature but rather a measure of how a sociologist with a particular theoretical orientation would respond to statements about human behavior. For instance, the negative scores on the PHN scale for the conflict theoretical position may be more indicative of a theoretical orientation which emphasizes an external locus of control of man's behavior than a negative image of man's nature.

The second difficulty with the PHN scale may be due to the vague generalities (i.e., "Most people . . .; The average person . . .") in which the attitude statements are phrased. Sociologists, perhaps even more so than the general public, are sensitive to various behavioral contingencies (i.e., position in the social class structure) which operate when they attempt to assess a generality about human behavior. As it is written, the PHN scale does not make allowances for the fact that various patterns of behavior are, at least partially, contingent upon an individual's position in the social structure. Therefore, the items on the PHN scale may be especially difficult for sociologists to answer.

An analysis of the data on the Radical Sociology Scale revealed an inverse relationship between age and attitude toward radical sociology. Examination of mean differences of attitude toward radical sociology on all three measurements of theoretical orientation showed that, in general, persons with a conflict perspective have a moderately
favorable attitude toward radical sociology, while persons with a functionalist perspective have a moderately negative attitude toward radical sociology.

But where does this leave us? We have found a plethora of citations suggesting the various ways in which an image of human nature influences various endeavors of the sociological enterprise; however, empirical evidence to support such contentions is almost non-existent.

Two needs, then, become apparent. The first is the need for more research on the subject of the philosophy of human nature. This research should be orientated toward an examination of some of the philosophical assumptions made about man in sociological research and sociological theory. As C. Wright Mills (1959:165) has stated in this regard:

All classic social scientists have been concerned with the salient characteristics of their time--and the problem of how history is being made within it; with 'the nature of human nature' . . . . In our immediate times, however, many social scientists have not [been concerned with the problem of human nature]. Yet it is precisely now, in the second half of the twentieth century, that these concerns become urgent as issues, persistent as trouble, and vital for the cultural orientation of our human studies.

The second need is for each individual sociologist to examine his own assumptions concerning the nature of man. As Dennis Wrong (1961:193) has concluded, "If our assumptions are left implicit, we will presuppose a view of man that is tailor-made to our special needs. . . ."

One may reasonably conclude that discussion about various images of man's nature will continue for years to come.
Dear Wisconsin Sociologist,

I am calling upon you as a fellow sociologist to complete the following questionnaire. As you are well aware, your response to this request is of paramount importance. I realize that your time is extremely valuable and the instrument has been made as brief as possible in order to conserve your time.

1. Sex: (Circle one number) 1. Male; 2. Female
2. What was your age at your last birthday? (Circle one number) 1. 21-30; 2. 31-40; 3. 41-50; 4. 51-60; 5. 61 or over
3. What is your current academic rank? (Circle one) 1. Special Instructor or Lecturer; 2. Instructor; 3. Assistant Professor; 4. Associate Professor; 5. Full Professor; 6. Other: ______________________
4. What is your present level of education? (Circle one) 1. Ph.D; 2. All requirements for Ph.D. but dissertation; 3. M.A. (or M.S.) plus 30 or more hours; 4. M.A. or M.S.; 5. B.A. or B.S.; 6. Other: ______________________
5. What was the last year in which you were a full-time student working toward a degree? ______________________

6. The next section of this questionnaire is a series of attitude statements. You are asked to respond with your personal belief about each particular statement rather than with opinions based on sociological evidence. (Most statements represent a commonly held opinion, and there are no right or wrong answers.)

Read each statement, decide if you agree or disagree and the strength of your belief, then circle the appropriate letter(s) in front of the statement.

 If you strongly agree - circle SA
 If you agree - circle A
 If you tend to agree - circle TA
 If you tend to disagree - circle TD
 If you disagree - circle D
 If you strongly disagree - circle SD

SA A TA TD D SD 6. Great successes in life, like great artists and inventors, are usually motivated by forces they are unaware of.

SA A TA TD D SD 7. Most students will tell the instructor when he has made a mistake in adding up their score, even if he had given them more points than they deserved.

SA A TA TD D SD 8. Most people will change the opinion they express as a result of an onslaught of criticism, even though they don't change the way they feel.

SA A TA TD D SD 9. Most people try to apply the Golden Rule even in today's complex society.
10. Our success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our own control.

11. If you give the average person a job to do and leave him to do it, he will finish it successfully.

12. Nowadays many people won't make a move until they find out what other people think.

13. Most people do not hesitate to go out of their way to help someone in trouble.

14. Attempts to understand ourselves are usually futile.

15. Sociologists involved in academic teaching should also involve themselves actively in the struggle to ameliorate social problems.

16. People usually tell the truth, even when they know they would be better off lying.

17. The important thing in being successful nowadays is not how hard you work, but how well you fit in with the crowd.

18. Most people will act as "Good Samaritans" if given the opportunity.

19. There's little one can do to alter his fate in life.

20. Most students do not cheat when taking an exam.

21. The typical student will cheat on a test when everybody else does, even though he has a set of ethical standards.

22. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is a motto most people follow.

23. Most people have little influence over the things that happen to them.

24. Most people are basically honest.

25. It's a rare person who will go against the crowd.

26. The typical person is sincerely concerned about the problems of others.

27. The university as an institution should be devoted to free inquiry but should not be utilized politically to bring about social change.

28. Most people have an unrealistically favorable view of their own capabilities.

29. If you act in good faith with people, almost all of them will reciprocate with fairness toward you.

30. Most people have to rely on someone else to make their important decisions for them.

31. Most people with a fallout shelter would let their neighbors stay in it during a nuclear attack.

32. Most people vote for a political candidate on the basis of unimportant characteristics such as his appearance or name, rather than because of his stand on the issues.

33. Most people lead clean, decent lives.

34. The average person will rarely express his opinion in a group when he sees the others disagree with him.

35. Most people would stop and help a person whose car is disabled.

36. Sociologists should address themselves to the task of criticizing dominant institutions and developing new conceptions of society.

37. If a person tries hard enough, he will usually reach his goals in life.

38. People claim they have ethical standards regarding honesty and morality, but few people stick to them when the chips are down.

39. Most people have the courage of their convictions.
A TA TD D SD 40. The average person is conceited.

A TA TD D SD 41. The average person has an accurate understanding of the reasons for his behavior.

A TA TD D SD 42. If you want people to do a job right, you should explain things to them in great detail and supervise them closely.

A TA TD D SD 43. Most people can make their own decisions, uninfluenced by public opinion.

A TA TD D SD 44. It's only a rare person who would risk his own life and limb to help someone else.

A TA TD D SD 45. If people try hard enough, wars can be prevented in the future.

A TA TD D SD 46. If most people could get into a movie without paying and be sure they were not seen, they would do it.

A TA TD D SD 47. It is achievement, rather than popularity with others, that gets you ahead nowadays.

A TA TD D SD 48. It's pathetic to see an unselfish person in today's world because so many people take advantage of him.

A TA TD D SD 49. Man's nature is basically good.

A TA TD D SD 50. The average person is largely the master of his own fate.

A TA TD D SD 51. Most people are not really honest for a desirable reason; they're afraid of getting caught.

A TA TD D SD 52. The sociology department in many universities operates as an elaborate service station for the people who have wealth and power in American society.

A TA TD D SD 53. The average person will stick to his opinion if he thinks he's right, even if others disagree.

A TA TD D SD 54. People pretend to care more about one another than they really do.

A TA TD D SD 55. In a local or national election, most people select a candidate rationally and logically.

A TA TD D SD 56. Most people would tell a lie if they could gain by it.

A TA TD D SD 57. If a student does not believe in cheating, he will avoid it even if he sees many others doing it.

A TA TD D SD 58. Most people inwardly dislike putting themselves out to help other people.

A TA TD D SD 59. Most persons have a lot of control over what happens to them in life.

A TA TD D SD 60. Most people would cheat on their income tax, if they had a chance.

A TA TD D SD 61. The person with novel ideas is respected in our society.

A TA TD D SD 62. Most people exaggerate their troubles in order to get sympathy.

A TA TD D SD 63. Most people have a good idea of what their strengths and weaknesses are.

A TA TD D SD 64. Nowadays people commit a lot of crimes and sins that no one else ever hears about.

A TA TD D SD 65. Most people will speak out for what they believe in.

A TA TD D SD 66. People are usually cut for their own good.

7. Looking back on your childhood, what would you consider the social class of your family? (Circle one) 1. Upper Upper; 2. Lower Upper; 3. Upper Middle; 4. Lower Middle; 5. Upper Lower; 6. Lower Lower
68. The following is a list of persons who are generally well known academically within the discipline of sociology. You may be acquainted with some of all of these. Indicate as best you can, the one person whose perspective most closely matches your own. (Circle one)
1. Ralf Dahrendorf
2. Harold Garfinkel
3. Erving Goffman
4. George Homans
5. Karl Marx
6. George Herbert Mead
7. Robert K. Merton
8. Talcott Parsons
9. None of these; specify: 

69. In the history of sociological theory, there has been a multiplicity of orientations. Some of these are listed below. Indicate the one perspective that most closely approximates your theoretical orientation. (Circle one)
1. Conflict
2. Dramaturgical
3. Ethnomethodological
4. Exchange
5. Functionalism
6. Symbolic Interactionism
7. My perspective is eclectic
8. Other, please specify: 

70. Please indicate your current position in the social class structure. (Circle one)
1. Upper Upper;
2. Lower Upper;
3. Upper Middle;
4. Lower Middle;
5. Upper Lower;
6. Lower Lower

71. Estimate your own political sentiment by placing a check in the appropriate box on the continuum below.

<table>
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<td></td>
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<td>Liberal</td>
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72. Taking all things together, how would you rate your childhood? (Circle one)
1. Very unhappy
2. Unhappy
3. Not too happy
4. Just about average
5. A little happier than average
6. Very happy
7. Extremely happy

73. Please indicate your religious preference. (Circle one)
1. Roman Catholic
2. Baptist
3. Lutheran
4. Methodist
5. Presbyterian
6. Other Protestant, please specify: 
7. Jewish
8. Agnostic
9. None
10. Other: 

74. If you had to provide a name or term for the particular theoretical perspective you personally take in Sociology, what name would you give it? 

Thank you very much for your cooperation. Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope at your earliest convenience.
May 17, 1973

Dear Wisconsin Sociologist:

If you have not already returned your Survey of Wisconsin Sociologists questionnaire, please do so at your earliest convenience.

If your questionnaire has been lost or misplaced, please notify me by returning this postcard, and you will be sent a replacement by return mail.

Some respondents have expressed an interest in my identity and purpose. I am currently on leave from the faculty at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, while writing my thesis at Marquette University.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Budde
Dept. of Sociology and Anth.
Marquette University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233
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