

Two Classes and One Vision?

Managers' and Workers' Attitudes Toward Workplace Democracy

ED COLLOM

University of Southern Maine

Workplace democracy has been advocated by labor as a means of worker empowerment and by management as an effort to improve productivity and quality. This article seeks to clarify this contradictory support through an analysis of American managers' and workers' attitudes. Class ideology and class experience are tested as factors that underlie attitudes toward three different forms of workplace democracy. Ordinary least squares regression and path analysis are employed in an analysis of national survey data from 1991. Class location is found to be a weak predictor, whereas class experience is a strong determinant. The findings indicate that American workers want more control once they get some influence over workplace decision making, highlighting a paradox behind the often narrow goals of managers. Implications are discussed vis-à-vis the labor movement and contemporary corporate participation programs.

Keywords: *workplace democracy; worker participation; social class; political attitudes; class consciousness*

Workplace democracy, the idea that workers should have a voice at their jobs, has been advocated in the United States by both labor and management. There exists an ongoing debate as to whether workplace democracy is an appropriate strategy to empower workers and the labor movement or whether it is simply a managerial tool used to weaken workers through

Author's Note: *Direct correspondence to Ed Collom, Department of Sociology, 96 Falmouth Street, P.O. Box 9300, University of Southern Maine, Portland, ME 04104-9300 (collom@usm.maine.edu). I thank Edna Bonacich, Rusty Russell, Bob Hanneman, Work and Occupations Editor Dan Cornfield, and "Reviewer B" for their valuable feedback. This research was supported by the University of California Institute for Labor and Employment. An early version of this article was presented at the 2000 meeting of the American Sociological Association in Washington, DC. The data and codebook were provided by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.*

WORK AND OCCUPATIONS, Vol. 30 No. 1, February 2003 62-96

DOI: 10.1177/0730888402239327

© 2003 Sage Publications

complacency.¹ Surprisingly, there has been no empirical attempt to investigate this cross-class support—a phenomenon identified in the literature as a central contradiction (see Drago, 1997; Heckscher, 1980; Roca & Retour, 1981; Rothschild, 2000; Schiller, 1991). This paradox has recently been heightened with the emergence of “flexible” workplaces whose decentralized governance structures do empower some workers (see Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, & Kalleberg, 2000; Harvey, 1989; Vallas, 1999).

In this article, national survey data are employed to examine U.S. managers’ and workers’ attitudes toward workplace democracy. Is there substantial cross-class support? Do managers and workers support different forms of workplace democracy? Although workplace democracy is clearly a class issue, it is expected that class location alone will be insufficient to determine the nature of these attitudes. The investigation of the class-related political ideology or “stratification beliefs” (Kluegel & Smith, 1981) and the class experiences underlying attitudes toward workplace democracy should help to clarify such support. Do class orientations, acceptance or rejection of the “dominant ideology,” or beliefs about occupational pay equity underlie attitudes toward workplace democracy? Are union members, people with strike experience, or those who currently experience some worker influence over decisions within their workplaces more supportive?

To begin, the cross-class support for workplace democracy is summarized and the concept itself is clarified by distinguishing between worker participation in decision making and worker control.² Next, hypotheses regarding the relationship of class location, class ideology, and class experience to attitudes toward workplace democracy are generated. The following data analysis identifies the bases of such attitudes and ultimately clarifies the literature’s contention that both workers and managers support workplace democracy. This empirical study makes an important contribution by untangling the various interests behind a controversial subject—one whose relevance has increased with the globalization of the economy (Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992; Collom, 2001; Howard, 2000).

THE DUAL ROOTS OF WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY

An extensive international literature exists on workplace democracy and its related concepts (i.e., economic democracy, employee involvement, codetermination, industrial democracy, self-management, worker control, worker participation, etc.).³ As a whole, the literature is extremely heterogeneous and contradictory. This disparity is rooted in the varied conceptions of

“workplace democracy” and the varied advocates with differing interests and intentions (Greenberg, 1975; Heckscher, 1980; Roca & Retour, 1981; Strauss, 1992). Schiller (1991) identifies the “dual roots” of the concept:

Efforts to extend worker participation and control in Western Europe and North America are rooted in historical experience. Although such efforts have taken many forms in the past, they have generally arisen from one of two sources. The first is economic in nature and related to the question of how to structure efficient and competitive economic enterprises. The second is political and has its origin in the revolutionary currents of the nineteenth-century labor movement. (p. 109)

Thus, the idea of workplace democracy originates from the ideology and movements of the political left. For labor, workplace democracy has been seen as a means to empower workers and transcend alienation (Greenberg, 1975; Mandel, 1971), as a way to strengthen unions and enhance their attractiveness to the unorganized (Heckscher, 1996; Kochan, Katz, & Mower, 1984), as a democratic right whose experience may “spill over” and encourage greater political participation (Pateman, 1970; Street, 1983), and even as the first step toward a self-governing democratic socialism as the participatory experience will escalate workers’ desire to want control over the entire economy (Edwards, 1979; Greenberg, 1986).

By the late 19th century, many U.S. labor unions (including the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor [AFL], and the Industrial Workers of the World [IWW]) were ideologically committed to worker control (Ivancic & Logue, 1991; King & van de Vall, 1978; Montgomery, 1993). Unions’ commitment resurged in the 1930s with the new Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) (Drago, 1997) as well as in the late 1960s with the United Auto Workers’ ideas surrounding the “quality of worklife” (Bluestone & Bluestone, 1992). More recently, the AFL-CIO have been strong advocates of workplace democracy.⁴ This includes a landmark 1994 statement by the Committee on the Evolution of Work (AFL-CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work, 1994; see also Nissen, 1997), the formation of the Center for Workplace Democracy in 1996 (AFL-CIO, 1997), and the AFL-CIO’s (1996) mission statement:

We will transform the role of the union from an organization that focuses on a member’s contract to one that gives workers a say in all the decisions that affect our working lives—from capital investments, to the quality of our products and services, to how we organize our work.

U.S. employers and managers became seriously interested in workplace democracy in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Rothschild & Russell, 1986). International competition and the declining economic performance of U.S. firms forced corporations to consider alternatives to the traditional top-down control structures (Appelbaum & Batt, 1994; Lawler, 1986). Workplace democracy has been seen as a means to foster employee commitment to the firm and reduce turnover (Derber & Schwartz, 1983; Halaby & Weakliem, 1989), as a way to channel workers' valuable knowledge toward increased productivity and efficiency (Edwards, 1979; Heckscher, 1980), as a means of reducing "slack" and eliminating unnecessary supervisors and bureaucrats (Barker, 1993; Rothschild, 2000), as a way to transform adversarial labor-management relations (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Fairris, 1997), and finally, as an intentional tactic to inhibit labor organizing, weaken unions, and reduce worker solidarity (Fantasia, Clawson, & Graham, 1988; Grenier, 1988; Rundle, 1998). In the end, the bottom line of all the corporate support is to increase profits and competitiveness (Parker & Slaughter, 1994).

U.S. corporations, inspired by the successes of their Japanese counterparts, began experimenting with quality circles—weekly worker problem-solving sessions focusing on improving quality—in the early 1970s (Lawler, 1986). By the 1980s, employers were experimenting with more meaningful forms of employee participation. These efforts "seek to increase the responsibility and judgment exercised by workers every day on their jobs" (Russell, 1988, pp. 379). "Autonomous work groups" or "teams" are rooted in the Swedish sociotechnical systems approach and are arguably the most advanced form of contemporary U.S. worker participation (Appelbaum & Batt, 1994; Strauss, 1992). The most recent corporate initiatives include Total Quality Management (TQM) and High-Performance Work Systems (HPWSs). TQM embraces the earlier ideas of teamwork and "can be broadly defined as a multifaceted management technique for enhancing productivity through improving product quality and reorganizing the production process" (Rothschild & Ollilainen, 1999, p. 590). HPWSs involve incentive systems and skilled front-line workers participating in substantive decisions (Appelbaum et al., 2000).

All these corporate strategies have been referred to vaguely as "worker participation in decision making." These programs are currently quite widespread in corporate America. Data collected in 1992 and 1997 indicate that around 10% to 20% of private sector (nonagricultural) employees are members of work teams (Osterman, 1994, 2000).⁵ The percentage of firms using quality circles and TQM programs more than doubled during this 5-year period, surpassing the prevalence of self-directed teams.

**CLARIFYING AN AMBIGUOUS CONCEPT:
WORKER PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING**

Whereas both labor and management have argued for “worker participation,” they clearly have different intentions and participation can vary tremendously. A critical issue for examining worker participation is the *breadth* of the issues over which workers have influence. Many different typologies of decision breadth exist. Some authors focus on the content of the decisions (see Bernstein, 1976; Shuchman, 1957; Stephens, 1980). Alternatively, others categorize the decision areas. The International Labour Office (1981) identifies four classes of decisions: technical or production related, employment and personnel issues, economic and financial policy, and general policy decisions relating to the very existence and structure of the firm (see also Industrial Democracy in Europe International Research Group [IDEIRG], 1981; Jain, 1980).

The *depth* of workers’ influence over workplace decisions is also central to determining the nature of participation (Cotton, Vollrath, Froggatt, Lengnick-Hall, & Jennings, 1988; Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Levine & Tyson, 1990). The intensity of worker participation can be seen as a continuum on which workers are not involved at all in decision making; given information about certain forthcoming issues; granted the right to give opinions; given “voice” as their opinions are formally taken into account; given equal voice in decision making; and ultimately, given majority say and decision making independent of “management” (Heller, 1991; IDEIRG, 1981). It is worth distinguishing the latter “majority say” form from the other types of participation. In these circumstances, workers have control over decisions. Thus, it is fruitful to juxtapose worker control and worker participation. Worker control is a qualitatively different form of participation as workers have greater power than managers (Bernstein, 1976; Strauss, 1992). It concerns workers’ ability to “determine unilaterally the outcomes of a decision-making process” (Witte, 1980, p. 2). The current study is unique as both managers’ and workers’ attitudes toward these different forms of workplace democracy are explored.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Most of the U.S. empirical research on workplace democracy takes three forms, focusing on the macro, the meso, and the micro: documenting the prevalence of “democratic” work regimes, assessing the efficiency and productivity of worker-owned and/or worker-managed firms, and studying the job satisfaction and other attitudes of employees in democratic workplaces.

This review of previous research focuses only on studies concerning Americans' attitudes toward workplace democracy. This area of research has received the least empirical attention, yet perhaps contains the most profound implications.

Overall, there is little previous research on attitudes toward workplace democracy. The research that does exist has limitations with respect to data and/or methods. As argued in earlier case studies (Hammer & Stern, 1980; Long, 1982), it is particularly important to distinguish between how people feel about workers' participation in decision making versus how much personal influence individuals desire. Although some research has been conducted on individualistic participation (see Freeman & Rogers, 1999; Lawler, Renwick, & Bullock, 1981), workplace democracy is a collective vision that requires interaction among workers (Cohen-Rosenthal, 1981; Gunn, 1984). Therefore, this review focuses only on the comparable previous research—those studies examining attitudes toward worker participation or worker control.

This comparability criterion eliminates an important recent work related to the subject. Freeman and Rogers (1999) reported findings from their 1994 Worker Representation and Participation Survey, which was a national sample of 2,408 employees who were not part of upper management and were working in private companies or nonprofit organizations with 25 or more employees. Unfortunately, the design of the survey had several limitations. First, the majority of questions asked respondents if they individually wanted more influence over their jobs rather than asking them if they supported workers' collectively having more say. Second, many of the items lacked specificity by asking general questions about the existence of and attitudes toward "employee involvement" programs. Corporate programs vary tremendously in their substance, and such distinctions were missed in this survey. Finally, by excluding business owners and "upper management" (a subjective, respondent-determined distinction), Freeman and Rogers missed the opportunity to perform cross-class analyses.

The single question in the Freeman and Rogers (1999) survey that is most relevant to the present project was reported by the Princeton Survey Research Associates (1994, pp. 20-21) who conducted the survey. Respondents were asked if their place of work was "using things like self-directed work teams, total quality management, quality circles, or other employee involvement programs." Those who did not answer "yes" were asked if they would like to have such a program at their own work. Reported cross-tabulations indicate that 54% of the lower level managers who were included in the survey wanted such a program compared to 60% of the nonmanagers. A total of 66.6% of those working in organizations with 1,000 or more employees were

TABLE 1: Summary of Previous Research on Determinants of Favorable Attitudes Toward Workplace Democracy

<i>Population/ Year Data Collected</i>	<i>(a) National Workers 1994</i>	<i>(b) Milwaukee Adults 1987</i>	<i>(c) National Workers 1977</i>	<i>(d) Indianapolis Workers 1976</i>	<i>(e) National Adults 1975</i>
Determinant					
Gender (women)		+	+	+	+
Age (younger)		+	+	+	+
Class (nonmanager)	+				+
Union membership		≠	+	+	≠
Size of work organization	+		+	≠	
Occupation (blue-collar)	≠	≠		+	
Race (people of color)		≠	+	≠	≠
5% of income from stocks		+			-
Education		≠	≠	≠	
Income		≠	≠		≠

SOURCES: (a) = Princeton Survey Research Association (1994); (b) = Drago and Heywood (1989); (c) = Fenwick and Olson (1986); (d) = Haas (1980); (e) = Zipp, Luebke, and Landerman (1984).

NOTE: + = positive relationship; - = negative relationship; ≠ = no relationship; (blank) = not considered in study.

interested compared to only 50% of those in organizations of 25-99 employees. Occupation (blue-collar vs. clerical/sales vs. professional/managerial) had no substantial effect on these attitudes. Unfortunately, this potentially important study and survey are of limited relevance here. Even this one question is too vague and conjures up the respondents' views about specific corporate programs and not worker participation in decision making per se.

Table 1 summarizes the determinants of favorable attitudes toward workplace democracy found in the five relevant previous studies (only those determinants considered in at least two of the studies are identified). The measures of participation and control employed in these studies vary considerably, but there are some consistent findings. Most notably, women and younger people were invariably more supportive and education and income were consistently found nonsignificant. Two of the studies found that class counts: Managers are less supportive than workers. Union membership and organizational size were each significant predictors in two of the studies. Occupation and race were significant predictors in one of the studies and stock ownership had inconsistent results in the two analyses in which it appeared.

The disparities in the measurement of support for workplace democracy in the previous research is troublesome. The current project is a clear advance over the previous research in several respects. First, none of the previous

studies focused on this puzzle of cross-class support (and many of these data sets would not permit it because their populations include only workers). This study also employs rigorous multivariate methods whereas several of the earlier efforts relied on simple bivariate comparisons. Finally, the data employed here are superior as they contain many items that tap into multiple forms of workplace democracy, the universe is national and includes all Americans in the population, and they were collected more recently than four of the five previous efforts.

HYPOTHESES

CLASS LOCATION

Workplace democracy is primarily an issue of class—it transforms the relations in production (see Burawoy, 1985). As demonstrated earlier, workplace democracy has been similarly advocated by different classes who have opposing class interests. Although their interests have different roots, managers and workers ostensibly exhibit similar attitudinal preferences.

Hypothesis 1: It is expected that there will be cross-class support for workplace democracy—the attitudes of managers and workers should not differ significantly.

CLASS IDEOLOGY

Because workplace democracy has been advocated by both labor and management, it is necessary to further specify the bases of its support. Following Kluegel and Smith (1981), three types of stratification beliefs—class, opportunity, and the distributive process—are identified and considered here.

Beliefs about social inequality are potentially *consequential* [italics added] for a range of behaviors and attitudes . . . [and] as a property of society should influence (a) beliefs about the desirability and necessity of social change, and (b) perceptions of what kind of social change (if any) is needed. (Kluegel & Smith, 1981, pp. 48-49)

Class orientations will be examined first. One's ideology concerning labor and capital should be a useful proxy to understand their underlying interests in workplace democracy. In discussing the populist legacy of American politics, Clement and Myles (1994) developed a framework of class politics. Engaging a simple dichotomy, they explored "class orientations" by

considering whether or not people are pro-labor and/or pro-business. The combination of these two criteria results in four attitudinal configurations. There are those who are both pro-labor and pro-business (corporatists), those who are pro-labor and anti-business (leftists), those who are anti-labor and pro-business (conservatives), and those who are anti-labor and anti-business (populists).

Independent of one's class location, conservatives are expected to be the least supportive of workplace democracy. On the surface, it appears to overly empower labor. Corporatists should have a moderate degree of support as they may see too much democracy as threatening management. Populists and leftists are expected to be the most supportive of workplace democracy. Participation resonates with populism (Clement & Myles, 1994), and leftists are assumed to be pro-worker.

Hypothesis 2: Leftists and populists are expected to be the most supportive of workplace democracy. Corporatists should be moderately supportive, whereas conservatives are expected to be the least supportive.

Another form of stratification beliefs surrounds the "dominant ideology" thesis (Huber & Form, 1973; Kluegel & Smith, 1986). The dominant ideology in America explains the social stratification system in terms of individuals. Opportunities are viewed as widespread and inequality is seen as resulting largely from personal initiative and not any systemic problems. Whether people accept this individualistic argument, blame the system itself, or believe inequality is a combination of both factors is an important form of class politics whose implications for workplace democracy should be explored.

People who blame the system can be expected to be the most supportive. Substantive workplace democracy challenges capitalist relations in production and should appeal to those who see the system itself as the problem. Individualists are likely to be the least supportive of workplace democracy as they may question workers' abilities. Also, this is a collectivist strategy in which workers as a whole are empowered.

Hypothesis 3: System blamers are expected to be the most supportive of workplace democracy, whereas individualists are expected to be the least supportive. Those who believe that individuals and the system are both responsible or are neither responsible for inequality hold "mixed" feelings and should occupy the middle ground, being moderately supportive.

The last type of class ideology to be explored here deals with distributive justice. Pay equity is the most common indicator. Heeding Kluegel and

Smith's (1981) call, Form (1985) found a relationship between beliefs about occupational pay equity and other class-based attitudes. Moreover, Della Fave's (1980) theory of legitimation implies that those who are critical of pay inequity (a form of institutionalized inequality) will perceive the resource distribution structures themselves (in this case, the workplace) as illegitimate. He noted that such delegitimation of stratification is a necessary precondition for the attainment of worker control.

People who feel that there is too much income inequality generally argue that higher paying occupations are overrewarded and that lower paying occupations are underrewarded. Such "income egalitarians" are likely to be very supportive of workplace democracy. The implication is that these people believe in the abilities of others (and themselves) and are likely to be critical of the hierarchy within traditional firms. On the other hand, some people feel that higher paying occupations deserve more compensation than they currently receive and that lower paying occupations deserve less. These differential compensation advocates are expected to be the least supportive of workplace democracy as they embrace inequality and are likely to believe that those with lower paying jobs are inept. People who feel that higher and lower paying occupations earn too much and those who feel that both earn too little are likely to be moderately supportive of workplace democracy. That is, they favor neither exacerbating nor ameliorating pay inequality.

Hypothesis 4: Income egalitarians are expected to be the most supportive of workplace democracy and those who advocate differential compensation are expected to be the least supportive. People who do not want to increase or decrease pay inequality should be moderately supportive of workplace democracy.

CLASS EXPERIENCE

In addition to class ideology, class experience is another proxy that will be useful in identifying workplace democracy advocates. Those who experience class practices that benefit workers are likely to be the most conscious of class relations (Wright, 1997). Union membership is a major source of differentiation within the working class. Unions are an important source of class consciousness and union members are consistently more class conscious than nonmembers (Form, 1985; Leggett, 1968). As Freeman and Medoff (1984) explained, union members are also consistently less satisfied with their working conditions. Rather than translating into exit options, such dissatisfaction leads to the expression of discontent and actions to improve working conditions.

Hypothesis 5: Union members are expected to be more supportive of workplace democracy than are nonmembers.

Another important indicator of class experience is strike participation. The conditions surrounding and the experience of striking lead to increased class awareness (Leggett, 1968). Strikers see collective action as the only effective resolution and “occasionally, this consciousness has approached a belief that workers can and should take over the direction of production and society” (Brecher, 1997, p. 291). Haas (1980) explicitly links such class experience to attitudes toward workplace democracy: “As with union membership, participation in strikes may lead workers to favor self-management by alienating them from their bosses and bringing them into contact with radical agitators” (p. 293).

Hypothesis 6: Workers with strike experience are expected to be more supportive of workplace democracy than are those without such experience.

In addition to union membership and strike participation, it is important to consider particular workplace experiences. As previously documented, worker participation programs are widespread in contemporary corporate America. Seeing (and perhaps being involved in) such participation-in-action should be crucial in determining attitudes toward workplace democracy. Therefore, current worker influence should have positive effects on these attitudes, regardless of class location. Managers typically institute such programs and eliminate them if they become ineffective (suggesting that if they are present, they should have a positive effect on managers’ attitudes). In the case of workers, according to Greenberg’s (1986) “theory of escalation,” those who experience some participation are likely to be supportive of more substantive worker participation as well as worker control. Similarly, Rothschild (2000) noted, “as more and more employees get a taste of democracy . . . they will insist that the team be given more authority . . . and they will seek a voice in successively larger decisions” (p. 210).

Hypothesis 7: Those who are employed at workplaces in which workers currently have more influence over decisions are more likely to be supportive of workplace democracy.

DATA AND METHODS

The data employed here are the second U.S. wave of the Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness (Hout, Wright, & Sanchez-

Jankowski, 1996; see Wright, 1989). This random-digit dialing telephone survey was administered in the 48 contiguous states in June-September 1991 to 2,488 English-speaking adults over 18 years old. It was fielded by the University of California—Berkeley Survey Research Center. The response rate was a notable 68% (due in part to a \$10 incentive) and there are no known response biases. This survey instrument is unique as it taps into job-level data of organizationally based class relations, historical data of respondents' class biography and experience, and attitudinal data of political, class-related beliefs.

These data are a clear advance over the other existing survey data (see Table 1). No other known data set contains items on both worker participation and worker control and includes both workers and managers in its population. Although some substantial economic shifts took place in the decade of the 1990s, the debate over workplace democracy remains essentially the same. Exposure issues should not be problematic because corporate participation programs were well developed by the time the instrument was fielded and continue to be popular. Moreover, whereas the survey questions address specific workplace decision-making issues, they do not seek opinions about particular programs. Earlier data employed in the previous research suggest that the degree of support for workplace democracy remained rather constant over the last quarter of the 20th century.

The first analysis here simply tests whether there are significant differences in managers' and workers' attitudes toward workplace democracy.⁶ The raw mean scores and the adjusted mean scores obtained through a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) model are tested. Five significant control variables were identified through exploratory analyses and the previous research (age, gender, race, job satisfaction, and income). To test the hypotheses surrounding class ideology and class experience, ordinary least squares regression models for each of the dependent variables are estimated. All the independent variables are entered simultaneously in the models. Collinearity diagnostics were studied to determine whether multicollinearity poses a problem. For each of the predictors, the variance inflation factor is relatively small (5.51 is highest) and the tolerance statistic is relatively large (.18 is lowest), both within acceptable levels. Although the condition index did produce one dimension with a high value (27.80), this component does not contribute significantly (.33 is highest) to the variance of more than one variable (contact the author for a copy of the correlation matrices and/or the collinearity diagnostics).

Following the hypothesis testing, the final analyses go into more detail. Because class ideology and class experience do not emerge independent of class location, path models are employed to estimate the effects of ideology,

experience, and the control variables on attitudes toward workplace democracy for each class location. Path analysis is most appropriate as the inclusion of intervening variables will better represent the complexity of the issue. These analyses are more exploratory as the best fitting model for each class location is estimated. All the ideology, experience, control, and dependent variables were tested for any relationships among one another. Modification indices are employed to determine the best fitting model for managers and for workers.

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

The data contain 12 items that tap into attitudes toward workplace democracy. Respondents were asked two questions dealing with participation issues:

1. How would you feel about having all employees in a work organization like yours participate—with an equal voice—in choosing who should be the director and top managers of the company?
2. If this actually happened and all employees participated in choosing the director and top managers, how do you think it would affect the overall efficiency of the organization? (Hout et al., 1996)

A total of 63.8% of respondents stated that they “agree completely” or “agree somewhat” on the first question (and only 17% “disagree completely”) and 61.7% felt that these types of organizations “would become much more efficient” or “somewhat more efficient” (and only 15% felt they would be “much less efficient”).

Respondents were also asked how much influence they thought that management and nonmanagement employees should have over 10 decisions in the workplace. They were asked to choose whether the following 10 decisions should be made mainly by management (coded 0) or mainly by employees who are not part of management (coded 1). The percentage choosing the pro-worker response follows each item: how much time employees can take for lunch breaks (19.6%), what time employees should arrive/leave work (14.7%), who is assigned to work overtime and how much (36.3%), which employees carry out different tasks (20.1%), who introduces new technology (31.1%), who decides about the appropriate discipline for various problems (21.5%), who introduces new ways of organizing work (58.2%), who decides about making changes in the products or services (29.3%), who decides about the pay levels for different jobs (18.8%), and who decides about lay-off policies (15.2%). The “mainly by employees” response implies

that workers would have independent, decisive power over these issues. Thus, these items tap into worker control.

The 12 items were subjected to a principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. Three factors were extracted. The two participation items exhibited very high loadings (each at .91) on what will be referred to as the *worker participation in electing managers* factor. The new technology (.69), organizing work (.64), and changes in products (.76) items loaded on the *worker control over production decisions* factor. The discipline (.73), pay levels (.72), and lay-off policies (.72) items loaded on the *worker control over personnel decisions* factor. The four remaining variables lacked strong loadings on any factor and were dropped from the analysis.

The factor analysis confirms theoretical expectations. First, participation issues are distinguished from control issues. Second, as the International Labour Office (1981) classification suggests, production-related decisions and personnel decisions cluster together and are distinguished from one another. The factor analysis was duplicated separately for managers and workers and no substantive differences resulted—confirming that these differentiations are not artificial as they are perceived similarly by both classes. Three simple additive scales were constructed from the factor items and served as the dependent variables in the analyses. Although there was some minor skewness in the participation (−.43), production (.35), and personnel (1.49) scales, transformations did not substantively improve the measures.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Class location. Two class locations are identified. Following Wright (1985, pp. 306-311), “managers” are non-business-owning employees who have supervisory abilities and the power to do at least one of the following: grant pay raises, prevent pay raises, fire or suspend employees, or issue formal warnings. “Workers” are non-business-owning employees who do not manage or supervise the work of others and who are not employed in professional or technical (“expert”) occupations (see Wright, 1997, p. 82).

Class orientation. Clement and Myles’s (1994, pp. 101, 283, note 30) construction of their typology of class orientations was replicated here. The typology is based on four questions: two concerning anti-capital sentiments (whether people agree or disagree that “big corporations have far too much power in American society today” and “corporations benefit owners at the expense of workers and consumers”) and two tapping into pro-labor attitudes (“during a strike, management should be prohibited by law from hiring workers to take the place of strikers” and “striking workers are generally justified

in physically preventing strikebreakers from entering the place of work”). Each set of questions was summed and the resulting scales were dichotomized, producing four categories: leftist, populists, corporatist, and conservatives. Dummy variables were constructed for each of the four categories.

Dominant ideology. Two variables were employed to operationalize the dominant ideology thesis. Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that “one of the main reasons for poverty is lack of education and job opportunities for the poor” and whether “one of the main reasons for poverty is that many poor people simply do not want to work.” Those who agreed with the first statement and disagreed with the second were categorized as system blamers. Those who disagreed with the former and agreed with the latter were labeled individualists, and all others were considered mixed. Dummy variables were constructed for each of the three categories.

Pay equity. The pay equity measure was constructed from a set of questions concerning 10 occupations: “I will give you a list of several occupations. Would you tell me roughly how much you think a typical person who performs this job earns a year?” Out of the 10 occupations, the average respondent estimated that janitors receive the lowest annual earnings and surgeons receive the highest. These 10 questions were followed by “Now for the same list of occupations, would you please tell me roughly how much you feel they deserve to make in a year?” Incorporating these ought-to-earn measures, those who felt that janitors should earn more than what they were perceived to and that surgeons should earn less than what they were perceived to were categorized as “income egalitarians.” Those who felt that surgeons should earn more and janitors less than they currently do were “differential compensation advocates.” Those who felt that both parties should earn more saw both as “deserving,” and those who felt that both should earn less saw both as “not deserving.” Dummy variables were constructed for each of the four categories.

Union membership. This dummy variable identified those who reported they were union members at the time of the survey.

Strike experience. This dummy variable identified those who have ever participated in an organized strike or work stoppage.

Current worker influence. Following the 10 worker control items, respondents were asked, “Now think of employees who are not part of management in your own workplace, and tell me how much say they actually have on these

same decisions.” The six decision areas comprising the worker control scales were also subjected to a principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation. Paralleling the attitudinal factors, the three production-related items loaded highly on a *worker influence over production* factor and the three personnel-related items loaded highly on a *worker influence over personnel* factor. Two simple additive scales were constructed from the factor items.

CONTROL VARIABLES

Age. The respondent’s self-reported age was a continuous variable.

Woman. This dummy variable identified the female respondents.

Minority. This dummy variable captured the people of color (self-identified African Americans and Latinos).

Job satisfaction. This ordinal variable was based on a 5-point scale in which respondents were asked to rate how much they like their job (1 = *I hate my job* and 5 = *I love my job*).

Income. This was an interval variable based on the respondent’s annual household income. It was coded into 10 categories ranging from *less than \$10,000* to *\$90,000 and above*. The descriptive statistics for all of the variables are provided in the appendix.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The univariate distributions reported above indicate that American workers and managers are very supportive of worker participation in electing managers. This same enthusiasm is not found in the case of worker control. On 6 of the 10 items, less than one quarter of the respondents are pro-worker. These results are not surprising given that the average American worker is currently unable to make any of these decisions independent of management. However, the majority of the respondents do feel that workers should control the introduction of new ways of organizing work.

RAW AND ADJUSTED MEANS FINDINGS

Table 2 provides the raw and adjusted mean scale scores of managers’ and workers’ attitudes toward the three forms of workplace democracy identified

TABLE 2: Managers' and Workers' Raw and Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitudes Toward Workplace Democracy

	<i>Worker Participation in Electing Managers (Range 0-6)</i>		<i>Worker Control Over Production Decisions (Range 0-3)</i>		<i>Worker Control Over Personnel Decisions (Range 0-3)</i>	
	M	(SD)	M	(SD)	M	(SD)
<i>Raw Means</i>						
Managers ^a	2.96***	(1.72)	1.20 (ns)	(1.03)	0.40***	(0.73)
Workers ^b	3.49	(1.79)	1.17	(.99)	0.65	(0.92)
<i>Adjusted Means^c</i>	M	(SE)	M	(SE)	M	(SE)
Managers	3.08*	(.11)	1.20 (ns)	(.06)	0.44**	(.05)
Workers	3.39	(.09)	1.17	(.05)	0.63	(.04)

a. $n = 280$.

b. $n = 414$.

c. Control variables include age, woman, minority, job satisfaction, and income.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; two-tailed tests.

in the factor analysis. The raw means indicate that workers are significantly more supportive of worker participation and worker control over personnel decisions. After the effects of the five significant control variables are accounted for in the MANCOVA model, the mean differences on the two measures are smaller but remain significant. Managers and workers hold basically identical attitudes toward worker control over production decisions and none of the control variables had any impact here.

RAW AND ADJUSTED MEANS DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 is only partially supported by these findings. The area where there is the greatest cross-class support is sensible as existing participation programs are most likely to focus only on production-related decisions (Appelbaum & Batt, 1994; Strauss, 1992). This particular form of workplace democracy is most familiar to both U.S. managers and workers. As some have suggested (Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Fairris, 1997; Mason, 1982), managers are less interested in workers' having influence over areas that directly threaten their prerogatives. As the findings demonstrate, managers are relatively less supportive of having their subordinates participate in their (and their peers') appointments and controlling personnel decisions.

Comparing the mean scores to the range of the measures also gives an idea of the relative amount of support for each form. As theory suggests (Bernstein, 1976; Witte, 1980), Americans are more supportive of worker participation than worker control. The latter is a more radical form of workplace democracy. Also, Americans are more supportive of worker control over production decisions than worker control over personnel decisions. This parallels suggestions that these desires will be highest for decision areas that workers are closest to and already have some knowledge and experience with (Espinosa & Zimbalist, 1978; Kruse, 1984). Therefore, as the path models will explore, it is likely that attitudes toward participation will significantly predict attitudes toward control over both production and personnel issues. Likewise, one's views about worker control over production decisions are likely to affect one's attitudes toward worker control over personnel decisions. Such hierarchies of support have been suggested in the literature (see Katzell & Yankelovich, 1975; Maslow, 1954).

REGRESSION FINDINGS

Table 3 presents the ordinary least squares regression results of the effects of the independent variables on the three dependent measures. An interaction between union membership and strike experience was discovered, so a multi-level interaction term is employed. In the first model—worker participation in electing managers—all the control variables are significant. Younger people, women, minorities, the dissatisfied, and those with lower incomes are more supportive of worker participation. Whereas the class location variable was significant with only the controls included in the model (see Table 2), the effect of class ideology overrides the impact of being a worker. Class is not uniquely salient.

In respect to class ideology, leftists and populists are more supportive than the corporatists and conservatives. The dominant ideology measure has no effect on attitudes toward worker participation. Income egalitarians and those who think that both janitors and surgeons deserve more pay are significantly more supportive. One of the union/strike interactions is also significant. Union members without strike experience are more supportive of participation. This model explained about 15% of the variance in these attitudes. This low explanatory power is typical in attitudinal analyses.

The next model presents the results for worker control over production decisions. None of the control variables, the class location variable, nor the class ideology variables is significant. Union members who lack strike experience and those who are employed in workplaces in which workers currently

TABLE 3: Ordinary Least Squares Coefficients From the Regression of Attitudes Toward Worker Participation in Electing Managers (WPEM), Worker Control Over Production Decisions (WCPD), and Worker Control Over Personnel Decisions (WCLD) on Control Variables, Class Location, Class Ideology, and Class Experience

	<i>WPEM</i>			<i>WCPD</i>			<i>WCLD</i>		
	b	(SE)	β	b	(SE)	β	b	(SE)	β
Controls									
Age	-.017**	(.006)	-.112	-.001	(.003)	-.017	.004	(.003)	.058
Woman (Man = 0)	.466***	(.136)	.130	.087	(.080)	.043	.048	(.066)	.028
Minority (White = 0)	.435*	(.183)	.091	.044	(.107)	.016	.131	(.088)	.057
Job satisfaction	-.143*	(.072)	-.076	-.015	(.042)	-.014	-.086**	(.035)	-.096
Income	-.064*	(.030)	-.084	.003	(.017)	.007	-.029*	(.014)	-.079
Class location									
Worker (Manager = 0)	.208	(.143)	.057	.005	(.083)	.003	.121	(.069)	.069
Class ideology									
Leftist	.596**	(.207)	.137	.094	(.121)	.039	.156	(.100)	.075
Populist	.567***	(.165)	.158	.083	(.097)	.041	.138	(.080)	.080
Corporatist	.332	(.253)	.055	-.005	(.148)	-.001	.098	(.122)	.034
(Conservatives omitted)									
System blamer	.273	(.214)	.075	.176	(.125)	.086	.187	(.103)	.108
Mixed	.251	(.207)	.070	-.039	(.121)	-.020	.035	(.100)	.021
(Individualists omitted)									
Income egalitarian	.638*	(.303)	.178	.008	(.178)	.004	.143	(.146)	.084
Deserving	.804*	(.348)	.143	-.018	(.204)	-.006	.132	(.168)	.049
Nondeserving	.352	(.313)	.091	-.053	(.183)	-.025	.123	(.151)	.067
(Differential advocates omitted)									

Class experience									
Union/striker	.547	(.302)	.070	.107	(.177)	.025	.551***	(.146)	.148
Nonunion/striker	.377	(.298)	.048	.098	(.174)	.022	-.026	(.144)	-.007
Union/nonstriker (Nonunion/ nonstriker = 0)	.574*	(.239)	.094	.339*	(.140)	.099	.223*	(.115)	.076
Worker influence—production	-.008	(.034)	-.011	.092***	(.020)	.210	-.004	(.016)	-.012
Worker influence—personnel	.048	(.039)	.051	-.033	(.023)	-.062	.080***	(.019)	.178
Intercept	2.974***	(.530)		.693*	(.310)		.180	(.256)	
R^2		.146			.063			.130	

NOTE: $N = 677$.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; two-tailed tests.

have some influence over production decisions are more supportive. The standardized coefficients indicate that production influence is a much stronger determinant than the union/strike interaction. Explaining a mere 6% of the variance, the R^2 is much lower here than in the participation model.

The last model is for worker control over personnel decisions—the most far-reaching form of workplace democracy considered here. Job satisfaction and income are both negatively related toward these attitudes. Class location and class ideology make no unique contribution. Those with the most consciousness-raising class experiences—union/strikers—are the most supportive of this radical form of workplace democracy. Union members without strike experience are also more supportive than the nonunionized. Moreover, those who currently work where there is some worker influence over personnel decisions are much more supportive of worker control over these areas. As in the production decisions model, the effect of current worker influence is the single most important predictor. The R^2 documents that these attitudes are the second most explicable of the three—with 13% of the variance explained.

REGRESSION DISCUSSION

The regression findings support Hypothesis 1 because class location is not uniquely salient in any of the models. Inasmuch as leftists and populists are more supportive of worker participation than corporatists and conservatives, Hypothesis 2 is largely supported for this measure. However, it can be rejected for the control measures. Hypothesis 3 is rejected because the dominant ideology measures have no effect on any of these attitudes. Hypothesis 4 is supported for worker participation because income egalitarians and those who see all as deserving are more supportive.

Union membership is quite important, for Hypothesis 5 receives support in all three models. Union members without strike experience are more supportive of all forms of workplace democracy. Also, union/strikers are particularly supportive of personnel control (which provides some support for Hypothesis 6).

Current worker influence has no significant impact on attitudes toward worker participation in electing managers. However, Hypothesis 7 receives support as influence over production decisions is strongly related to attitudes toward worker control over production issues and influence over personnel decisions is strongly related to attitudes toward worker control over personnel issues. The fact that personnel influence does not predict production control and production influence does not predict personnel control is consistent with the claim that the distinction between these forms of workplace democracy is empirically valid.

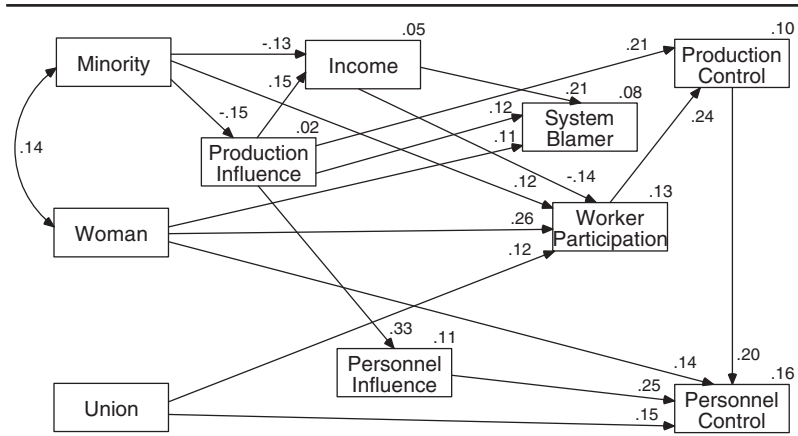


Figure 1: Standardized Path Coefficients for Managers' Class Ideology and Class Experience Model of Attitudes Toward Workplace Democracy

NOTE: Goodness of fit = .98; root mean squared residual = .04; chi-square = 30.07; $df = 27$; probability = .31; $n = 281$. Standardized path coefficients are located near the head of the arrows, and the variance explained for each intervening and dependent variable is outside of the upper right-hand corner of the boxes. All paths are significant ($p < .05$, two-tailed tests).

Overall, these analyses suggest that class experience is most relevant in shaping attitudes toward workplace democracy, followed by class ideology, and last, class location. Nonetheless, the issues are complex as the causal dynamics are operating quite differently for each form of workplace democracy. The nature of the effects of class ideology, class experience, and the control variables is more accurately pursued by considering their salience *within* each class location. Path analysis is most appropriate and also permits the consideration of causal processes occurring among the three dependent attitudinal measures.

MANAGERS' PATH MODEL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 provides the results for the managers. The high values of the goodness-of-fit index, the low values of the root mean squared residual index, the relatively low chi-square, and the relatively high probability values all suggest that the managers' (as well as the workers') model "fit" the data well. For managers, three of the control variables (minority, woman, and income), one of the ideology variables (system blamer), and three of the experience

variables (union,⁷ production influence, and personnel influence) are included along with the workplace democracy items (worker participation, production control, and personnel control).

Several findings from the regression analyses are further supported here for the case of managers. The more the workers at these managers' workplaces currently have influence over production decisions, the more likely managers are to support worker control over production decisions. The same is true for the case of personnel decisions. This suggests that managers are interpreting the existing worker influence as being "successful" and are therefore advocating greater worker empowerment, assuming that it will continue to serve their class interests. Also, the degree to which workers have influence over production decisions acts as a precondition and largely determines how much influence over personnel decisions they have. Those public sector managers who belong to unions are more likely to support worker participation and control over personnel decisions. Perhaps their own union experience has made them more sympathetic to workers' rights.

The more worker influence over production, the more likely managers are to have higher incomes. This reflects a number of possibilities. If worker influence is successful in these firms, these managers may be reaping its productivity benefits through increased earnings. It is also important to realize that managers are usually the major force initiating and implementing corporate participation programs. It is therefore likely that these "cutting-edge" managers receive higher incomes than their managerial counterparts in firms without any worker influence over decisions.⁸

Women, managers with higher incomes, and those managers who work where there is more worker influence over production are more likely to be system blamers. The latter is particularly interesting. Perhaps seeing the successful collective worker efforts in action leads these managers to better understand the importance of opportunity. Worker influence may also make managers be less likely to blame individuals themselves for their particular plight. If this reasoning is true, then worker influence assists managers in obtaining the "sociological imagination" (Mills, 1959). Of course, the relationship may be an artifact of the fact that managers in firms with worker influence may simply be more cosmopolitan and liberal. Regardless, whether or not a manager is a system blamer has no effect on his or her attitudes toward workplace democracy.

Female managers and managers of color, as well as those with lower incomes, are found to hold more favorable attitudes toward worker participation. This supports Barrera's (1979) class segmentation argument that those who are subordinated within their respective classes have different interests than the dominant segment. Moreover, as suggested earlier, there does exist a

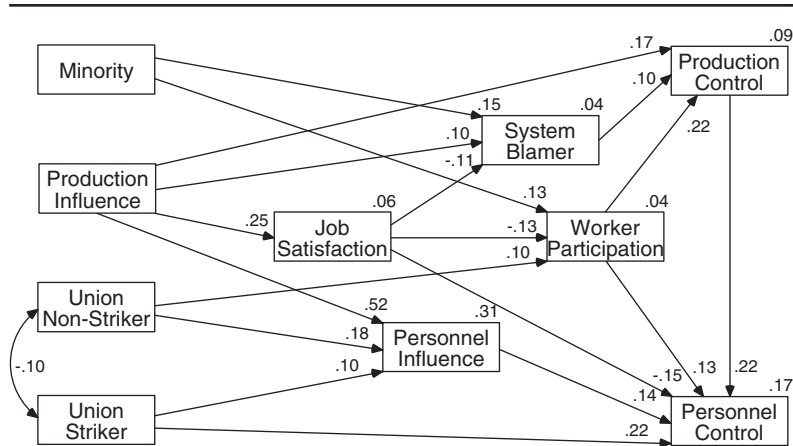


Figure 2: Standardized Path Coefficients for Workers' Class Ideology and Class Experience Model of Attitudes Toward Workplace Democracy

NOTE: Goodness of fit = .98; root mean squared residual = .05; chi-square = 38.15; $df = 26$; probability = .06; $n = 405$. Standardized path coefficients are located near the head of the arrows, and the variance explained for each intervening and dependent variable is outside of the upper right-hand corner of the boxes. All paths are significant ($p < .05$, two-tailed tests).

hierarchy of support as favorable attitudes toward worker control over personnel decisions are somewhat contingent on supporting production control, which in turn is contingent on favoring worker participation. This model clearly demonstrates that for managers, class experience is quite relevant in shaping attitudes toward workplace democracy, whereas class ideology is not at all.

WORKERS' PATH MODEL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 2 displays the best fitting model for workers. Although there are some important differences, this model is quite similar to that of the managers. The relations between current influence and control attitudes and between production influence and personnel influence are also positively significant here, though the magnitudes vary. Slightly different from the managers, it is unionized workers without strike experience who are more supportive of participation and unionized workers who have struck who are more supportive of personnel control. This is sensible as the more radical unionized workers (strikers) support the more radical form of workplace

democracy. The effect of the union interaction variables on the personnel influence item indicates that workers in unionized work settings are currently more likely to have influence over personnel decisions.

Job satisfaction, a factor not relevant for the managers, is quite central to the workers' model. The more current worker influence over production decisions, the more satisfied workers are with their jobs. Yet being dissatisfied with one's job is more of a radicalizing force. These workers are more likely to support personnel control, be system blamers, and support participation (the latter two in turn positively affect support for production control as well). Thus, there are two different trends emanating from existing worker influence: (a) If workers experience some influence over decisions, they tend to want greater voice (control) in those areas; (b) some workers who experience production influence are satisfied with their jobs and (in accordance with management's objectives) are less supportive of further worker empowerment. Notice that the conservatizing effects of job satisfaction apparently do not occur to unionized workers.⁹ These workers are more likely to experience influence over personnel decisions, which also leads to the desire for personnel control. The effects of current worker influence supports Greenberg's (1986) theory of escalation as those who experience some participation are likely to want more control. The positive effects of being dissatisfied with one's job mirror Markowitz's (1996) claim that the desire to want more control and the inability to get it creates a dissatisfied workforce that becomes radicalized through these processes.

As in the case for managers, class experience is much more relevant in shaping workers' attitudes than is class ideology—only the effect of being a system blamer is significant as the other ideology variables lose their relative importance amid these more complex relationships. The big differences in the two models is the role of job satisfaction for workers and the effect of gender for managers. Being female was the single most important determinant of support for worker participation among the managers, whereas it had no effects within the workers' model. Female managers are currently largely appointed by male managers and are likely to face discrimination in that process (Reskin & Padavic, 1994). These females apparently feel that the outcomes would be more equitable if workers participated in the election of managers. Moreover, Hegelsen (1990) argued that, in general, female managers have a distinctive leadership style, which makes them more likely to support workplace democracy. The lack of gender effects among workers may reflect socialization processes in which women are encouraged to subordinate their needs to others (see Mitchell, 1975). Also, arguments surrounding the "female ethic of care" are suggestive (see Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Collom, 2000; Ferguson, 1984; Sirianni, 1994). Perhaps female managers

care for their workers—supporting worker empowerment—whereas female workers care about their managers—deferring to their authority.

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Previous research consistently found that women and younger people are more supportive of workplace democracy and that education and income had no effects. Here, gender and age were significant in predicting attitudes toward worker participation in electing managers. Further examination illustrated that it is female managers who are particularly supportive, not female workers as others have found. Age lost its relative salience in the separate path models. Similar to the previous research, education had no significant effects (and was therefore not included as a control variable). Unlike the earlier studies, income is salient in two of the regression models and plays an important role in the managers' model. While three of the four studies found race to be an insignificant factor, here it was shown that both managers and workers of color are more supportive of worker participation. Likewise, union membership was a significant factor across all the models here, while it was relevant in only half of the previous studies. Organization size and income from stock ownership were tested (unreported) but did not significantly affect these attitudes. Overall, although the results here do clarify some of the earlier findings, they also raise some new inconsistencies. The present effort employs more rigorous methodology with a better data source—it would be particularly interesting to replicate this study if new data become available.

CONCLUSION

This study began with the premise that workplace democracy has been advocated by both U.S. labor and management. This contention was empirically tested through an analysis of the attitudes of managers and workers. This cross-class support was immediately confirmed for worker control over production decisions, the area where most of the contemporary participation programs focus. Indicators of class ideology and class experience were employed to help clarify the cross-class support for workplace democracy. Class experience turned out to be the strongest predictor, whereas class ideology was rather weak. With the inclusion of the other variables, class location became nonsignificant in predicting any of the three forms of workplace democracy. Given these other important bases, the implication is that these classes are internally segmented by some other important criteria that affect these attitudes. Separate path models for managers and workers demon-

strated that gender is salient for the case of managers, whereas job satisfaction is central for workers.

There are several implications surrounding these findings. Apparently, the worker participation existing in these respondents' workplaces is a success in management's eyes. Exposure to such worker influence makes managers support greater changes, is associated with higher incomes, and tends to make workers become more satisfied with their jobs. The latter finding has also been supported in other studies (see Hodson, 1996, 1997). Thus, workplace democracy does appear to be in the interests of managers. Nonetheless, there are some interesting contradictory effects.

In addition to those satisfied workers who do not desire more, the analysis suggests that there are three other trends—all of which pose potential problems for managers. First, workers want more control once they get some influence. This trend will eventually produce class conflict as managers will only be willing to give up so much power, lest they lose their status (and perhaps their jobs) as managers—this taps into one of the larger contradictions of workplace democracy under capitalism (see Gunn, 1984; Markowitz, 1996). The second trend concerns the dissatisfied workers who are more radical and more likely to support the most far-reaching form of workplace democracy. Finally, there are the union members. Those who have participated in strikes are particularly supportive of worker control over personnel decisions. The fact that the most active, class-conscious workers are most supportive of the most radical form of workplace democracy may spell trouble for management. It is unlikely that purely corporate-backed forms of participation will satisfy the unionized or the dissatisfied workers.

Another interesting potential consequence of worker influence emerged from these findings. Both managers and workers who experience worker influence are more likely to be system blamers. This may represent the educative effects that Pateman (1970) argued workplace democracy can have. Such experiences may enlighten people to understand better the larger structures of inequality and to dismiss victim-blaming explanations. This suggests the dialectical nature of these class relations. Ideology affects attitudes—both of which are transformed through workplace experiences.

The results also have important implications for unions. The contemporary management-initiated workplace reorganization is certain to only continue (see Appelbaum et al., 2000; Nissen, 1997; Osterman, 2000). The recent revival of the American labor movement reinforces the fact that the workplace democracy question is increasingly important (Clawson & Clawson, 1999). Given workers' desire for participation and control, unions

should push for the democratization of the workplace *while being critical of the limited managerial efforts.*

Union-backed worker participation can empower unions and has the potential “to expedite the labor movement’s transition from a service model of unionism to an organizing model” (Banks & Metzgar, 1989, p. 3). “Articulating a distinct union role in workplace change could be a powerful tool in outreach” (Sheahan, 1997, p. 117) and may enhance the attractiveness of unions to the unorganized (Kochan et al., 1984). As Lazes and Savage (1997) argued,

The key to unions’ survival and growth in the twenty-first century is to redefine what they are after. . . . Although organizing new members is a vital component of a new unionism . . . it is equally important that unions obtain a role for workers in the fundamental decisions that affect their employment security, their workplace, and how they perform their jobs. (p. 204)

Where unions are currently involved in worker participation programs, the results are positive. The changes are more likely to empower workers substantively (Bluestone & Bluestone, 1992; Heckscher, 1996) and improve the economic performance of the firm (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Eaton & Voos, 1992). Moreover, unionized workers who have participation experience tend to be more satisfied with their unions than those members who lack such voice (Freeman & Rogers, 1999). Nonetheless, recent events surrounding the poster child case of meaningful, union-backed worker participation does raise skepticism. Rank-and-file discontent at the UAW-GM Saturn plant led to the ousting of the “Vision Team” leaders and the ratification of a contract that closely resembles the standard UAW-GM National Agreement (Hopp, 2000).

In the era of a globalizing economy, workplace democracy is more relevant than ever (Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992; Collom, 2001; Howard, 2000). If more workers had more substantive voice in corporate governance, there would be less capital flight and the “race to the bottom” may be suppressed. Despite some arguments about the “win-win” potential of workplace democracy (see Appelbaum et al., 2000), the results here suggest that there are several underlying contradictions that may potentially result in class conflict—not the “cooperation” that management has sought. The dilemmas behind this phenomenon that both labor and management have supported are certain to continue.

APPENDIX

Descriptive Statistics

	n	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent variables					
Worker participation	771	3.31	1.78	0	6
Worker control—production	771	1.19	1.00	0	3
Worker control—personnel	771	0.56	0.85	0	3
Class location variables					
Managers	771	0.40	0.49	0	1
Workers	771	0.60	0.49	0	1
Class ideology variables					
Leftist	756	0.22	0.41	0	1
Populist	756	0.45	0.50	0	1
Corporatist	756	0.09	0.29	0	1
Conservative	756	0.24	0.43	0	1
System blamer	770	0.41	0.49	0	1
Mixed	770	0.46	0.50	0	1
Individualist	770	0.13	0.34	0	1
Income egalitarian	763	0.53	0.50	0	1
Deserving	763	0.12	0.32	0	1
Nondeserving	763	0.31	0.46	0	1
Differential advocate	763	0.05	0.21	0	1
Class experience variables					
Union/striker	771	0.05	0.22	0	1
Nonunion/striker	771	0.06	0.23	0	1
Union/nonstriker	771	0.09	0.29	0	1
Nonunion/nonstriker	771	0.80	0.40	0	1
Worker influence—production	760	5.27	2.31	1	10
Worker influence—personnel	759	2.76	1.93	1	10
Control variables					
Age	766	38.01	12.34	18	78
Woman	771	0.50	0.50	0	1
Minority	730	0.17	0.38	0	1
Job satisfaction	768	3.95	0.96	1	5
Annual household income	755	4.65	2.33	1	10

NOTES

1. For example, see Kochan, Katz, and Mower (1984) and Bluestone and Bluestone (1992) for pro-arguments; Fantasia, Clawson, and Graham (1988) and Parker and Slaughter (1994) for anti-arguments; and Nissen's (1997) collection.

2. As others have argued (Archer, 1995; Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992; Putterman, 1990), the position here is that workplace democracy is primarily an issue of control, not ownership. Nonetheless, there has also been some support for employee stock ownership plans among both unions (Rothschild-Whitt, 1984) and corporate managers (Rothschild & Russell, 1986).

3. Like many others (i.e., Bernstein, 1976; Greenberg, 1986), workplace democracy is considered a general, catch-all term here.

4. Unions are by no means unified on this issue, and in the past it has been a major source of divisiveness (see Nissen, 1997). Markowitz (1996) argued that all labor advocates do support workplace democracy in theory—what is specifically objected to is employers' controlling the involvement, the idea of labor-management "cooperation," and the contradictions that fully democratized firms face under capitalist competition.

5. Osterman (1994, 2000) found that roughly 40% of private sector establishments *with 50 or more employees* have 50% or more of their employees participating in teams. The 50% penetration restriction suggests that as few as half (20%) of the employees in this 40% of establishments are team members. However, his sample represented only 51% of all private sector employees (Osterman, 1994, p. 175, note 4). So, the conservative estimate is that about 10% of all private sector employees are involved with teams, whereas the most liberal estimate places that number at 20%.

6. Managers are explicitly focused on here because it is primarily among management that these ideas have been advocated and implemented. Moreover, the business owners in this sample are overwhelmingly small employers (the median number of employees is 5 and two thirds have fewer than 10) who tend to be disengaged from such management "fads" and practices. The number of employers in these data who could be included in the analyses is also prohibitively low ($N < 100$).

7. These data indicate that 8% of the managers are currently union members. Two thirds of these unionized managers are employed in the governmental or nonprofit sector. Such managerial unionization is not unusual in the public sector. The National Labor Relations Act covers private sector employees and basically excludes all supervisory employees from union representation (Balliet, 1997). The few private sector unionized managers (8 to be exact) may have misunderstood some of the authority questions or represent special cases in which "managers" are unionized. Exploratory analyses indicated that the sector variable is not significant in the models.

8. Alternatively, one reviewer suggested that more affluent managers may simply be overestimating the degree of influence that their workers have.

9. A subanalysis further supports this claim—especially in the case of worker participation. The correlation between job satisfaction and worker participation for unionized workers was not significant (Pearson's $r = .02$), whereas it was for nonunion workers ($-.16$). The relationship between job satisfaction and personnel control was also nonsignificant for union members ($-.12$).

REFERENCES

- AFL-CIO. (1996). *What we stand for: Mission and goals of the AFL-CIO*. Retrieved September 12, 2002, from <http://www.aflcio.org/about/mission.htm>
- AFL-CIO. (1997). *Workplace democracy*. Retrieved September 12, 2002, from <http://www.aflcio.org/publ/estatemts/feb1997/workplac.htm>
- AFL-CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work. (1994). *The new American workplace: A labor perspective*. Washington, DC: AFL-CIO.
- Alvesson, M., & Billing, Y. D. (1997). *Understanding gender and organizations*. London: Sage.
- Appelbaum, E., Bailey, T., Berg, P., & Kalleberg, A. L. (2000). *Manufacturing advantage: Why high-performance work systems pay off*. Ithaca, NY: ILR.

- Appelbaum, E., & Batt, R. (1994). *The new American workplace: Transforming work systems in the United States*. Ithaca, NY: ILR.
- Archer, R. (1995). *Economic democracy: The politics of feasible socialism*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Bachrach, P., & Botwinick, A. (1992). *Power and empowerment: A radical theory of participatory democracy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Balliet, L. (1997). Labor-management partnerships in state and local governments. In B. Nissen (Ed.), *Unions and workplace reorganization* (pp. 159-177). Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Banks, A., & Metzgar, J. (1989). Participating in management: Union organizing on a new terrain. *Labor Research Review*, 14(1), 1-55.
- Barker, J. R. (1993). Tightening the iron cage: Concertive control in self-managing teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 408-437.
- Barrera, M. (1979). *Race and class in the Southwest: A theory of racial inequality*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Bernstein, P. (1976). *Workplace democratization: Its internal dynamics*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press.
- Bluestone, B., & Bluestone, I. (1992). *Negotiating the future: A labor perspective on American business*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brecher, J. (1997). *Strike! Revised and updated edition*. Boston: South End.
- Burawoy, M. (1985). *The politics of production: Factory regimes under capitalism and socialism*. London: Verso.
- Clawson, D., & Clawson, M. A. (1999). What has happened to the U.S. labor movement? Union decline and renewal. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 25, 95-119.
- Clement, W., & Myles, J. (1994). *Relations of ruling: Class and gender in postindustrial societies*. Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's.
- Cohen-Rosenthal, E. (1981). An overview of alternative approaches to worker participation. In A. Nickelhoff (Ed.), *Extending workplace democracy: An overview of participatory decisionmaking plans for unionists*. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations.
- Collom, E. (2000). Worker control: The bases of women's support. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 21(2), 211-235.
- Collom, E. (2001). Social inequality and the politics of production: Identifying potential supporters of economic democracy. *Sociological Forum*, 16(3), 471-501.
- Cotton, J. L., Vollrath, D. A., Froggatt, K. L., Lengnick-Hall, M. L., & Jennings, K. R. (1988). Employee participation: Diverse forms and different outcomes. *Academy of Management Review*, 13(1), 8-22.
- Dachler, H. P., & Wilpert, B. (1978). Conceptual dimensions and boundaries of participation in organizations: A critical evaluation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23, 1-39.
- Della Fave, L. R. (1980, December). The meek shall not inherit the earth: Self-evaluation and the legitimacy of stratification. *American Sociological Review*, 45, 955-971.
- Derber, C., & Schwartz, W. (1983). Toward a theory of worker participation. *Sociological Inquiry*, 53(1), 61-78.
- Drago, R. (1997). Employee involvement in America: The 1930s and the 1980s. *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change*, 20, 61-101.
- Drago, R., & Heywood, J. S. (1989). Support for worker participation. *Journal of Post-Keynesian Economics*, 11(4), 522-530.
- Eaton, A., & Voos, P. (1992). Unions and contemporary innovations in work organization, compensation, and employee participation. In L. Mishel & P. Voos (Eds.), *Unions and economic competitiveness*. New York: M. E. Sharpe.

- Edwards, R. (1979). *Contested terrain: The transformation of the workplace in the twentieth century*. New York: Basic Books.
- Espinosa, J. G., & Zimbalist, A. (1978). *Economic democracy: Workers' participation in Chilean industry, 1970-1973*. New York: Academic Press.
- Fairris, D. (1997). *Shopfloor matters: Labor-management relations in twentieth-century American manufacturing*. London: Routledge.
- Fantasia, R., Clawson, D., & Graham, G. (1988). A critical view of worker participation in American industry. *Work and Occupations*, 5(4), 468-488.
- Fenwick, R., & Olson, J. (1986, August). Support for worker participation: Attitudes among union and non-union workers. *American Sociological Review*, 51, 505-522.
- Ferguson, K. E. (1984). *The feminist case against bureaucracy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Form, W. (1985). *Divided we stand: Working-class stratification in America*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Freeman, R. B., & Medoff, J. L. (1984). *What do unions do?* New York: Basic Books.
- Freeman, R. B., & Rogers, J. (1999). *What workers want*. Ithaca, NY: ILR.
- Greenberg, E. S. (1975). The consequences of worker participation: A clarification of the theoretical literature. *Social Science Quarterly*, 56, 191-209.
- Greenberg, E. S. (1986). *Workplace democracy: The political effects of participation*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Grenier, G. J. (1988). *Inhuman relations: Quality circles and anti-unionism in American industry*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Gunn, C. E. (1984). *Workers' self-management in the United States*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Haas, A. (1980). Workers' views on self-management: A comparative study of the United States and Sweden. In M. Zeitlin (Ed.), *Classes, class conflict, and the state: Empirical studies in class analysis* (pp. 276-295). Cambridge, MA: Winthrop.
- Halaby, C. N., & Weakliem, D. L. (1989). Worker control and attachment to the firm. *American Journal of Sociology*, 95(3), 549-591.
- Hammer, T. H., & Stern, R. N. (1980). Employee ownership: Implications for the organizational distribution of power. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23(1), 78-100.
- Harvey, D. (1989). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the origins of cultural change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Heckscher, C. (1980). Worker participation and management control. *Journal of Social Reconstruction*, 1(1), 77-102.
- Heckscher, C. C. (1996). *The new unionism: Employee involvement in the changing corporation*. Ithaca, NY: ILR.
- Hegelson, S. (1990). *The female advantage: Women's ways of leadership*. New York: Doubleday.
- Heller, F. (1991). Participation and competence: A necessary relationship. In R. Russell & V. Rus (Eds.), *International handbook of participation in organizations: Ownership and participation* (Vol. 2, pp. 265-281). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hodson, R. (1996, October). Dignity in the workplace under participative management: Alienation and freedom revisited. *American Sociological Review*, 61, 719-738.
- Hodson, R. (1997). Group relations at work: Solidarity, conflict, and relations with management. *Work and Occupations*, 24(4), 426-452.
- Hopp, T. (2000, February). In showcase of labor-management teamwork, workers choose the old way. *Labor Notes*, 251, 1, 14.

- Hout, M., Wright, E. O., & Sanchez-Jankowski, M. (1996). *Comparative project in class analysis: United States and Russia, 1990-1992* [Computer file] (ICPSR version). Berkeley, CA: M. Hout & M. Burawoy, University of California/Sydney; Komi A.S.S.R.: P. Krotov/Moscow, Russia: V. Mansurov, Russian Academy of Sciences [producers], 1995; Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor].
- Howard, M. W. (2000). *Self-management and the crisis of socialism: The rose in the fist of the present*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Huber, J., & Form, W. H. (1973). *Income and ideology: An analysis of the American political formula*. New York: Free Press.
- Industrial Democracy in Europe International Research Group. (1981). *Industrial democracy in Europe*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon.
- International Labour Office. (1981). *Workers' participation in decisions within undertakings*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Office.
- Ivancic, C. J., & Logue, J. (1991). Democratizing the American economy: Illusions and realities of employee participation and ownership. In D. Hancock, J. Logue, & B. Schiller, (Eds.), *Managing modern capitalism: Industrial renewal and workplace democracy in the United States and Western Europe* (pp. 215-247). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Jain, H. C. (1980). Worker participation and industrial relations: A conceptual framework. In H. Jain (Ed.), *Worker participation: Success and problems* (pp. 3-20). New York: Praeger.
- Katzell, R. A., & Yankelovich, D. (1975). *Work, productivity, and job satisfaction: An evaluation of policy-related research*. New York: Psychological Corporation.
- King, C. D., & van de Vall, M. (1978). Roads toward the goal. In C. King & M. van de Vall (Eds.), *Models of industrial democracy: Consultation, co-determination and workers' management* (pp. 3-17). The Hague: Mouton.
- Kluegel, J. R., & Smith, E. R. (1981). Beliefs about stratification. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 7, 29-56.
- Kluegel, J. R., & Smith, E. R. (1986). *Beliefs about inequality: Americans' views of what is and what ought to be*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Kochan, T. A., Katz, H. C., & Mower, N. R. (1984). *Worker participation and American unions: Threat or opportunity?* Kalamazoo, MI: W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.
- Kruse, D. (1984). *Employee ownership and employee attitudes: Two case studies*. Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions.
- Lazes, P., & Savage, J. (1997). New unionism and the workplace of the future. In B. Nissen (Ed.), *Unions and workplace reorganization* (pp. 181-207). Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Lawler, E. E., III. (1986). *High-involvement management*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lawler, E. E., III, Renwick, P. A., & Bullock, R. J. (1981). Employee influence on decisions: An analysis. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 2, 115-123.
- Leggett, J. C. (1968). *Class, race, and labor: Working-class consciousness in Detroit*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Levine, D. I., & Tyson, L. D. (1990). Participation, productivity, and the firm's environment. In A. Blinder (Ed.), *Paying for productivity: A look at the evidence* (pp. 183-227). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Long, R. J. (1982). Worker ownership and job attitudes: A field study. *Industrial Relations*, 21(2), 196-215.
- Mandel, E. (1971). *The formation of the economic thought of Karl Marx*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Markowitz, L. (1996). Employee participation at the workplace: Capitalist control or worker freedom? *Critical Sociology*, 22(2), 89-103.

- Maslow, A. K. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Mason, R. M. (1982). *Participatory and workplace democracy: A theoretical development in critique of liberalism*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Mills, C. W. (1959). *The sociological imagination*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mitchell, J. (1975). *Psychoanalysis and feminism*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Montgomery, D. (1993). Industrial democracy or democracy in industry? The theory and practice of the labor movement, 1870-1925. In N. Lichtenstein & H. Harris (Eds.), *Industrial democracy in America: The ambiguous promise* (pp. 20-42). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Nissen, B. (Ed.). (1997). *Unions and workplace reorganization*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.
- Osterman, P. (1994). How common is workplace transformation and who adopts it? *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 47(2), 173-188.
- Osterman, P. (2000). Work reorganization in an era of restructuring: Trends in diffusion and effects on employee welfare. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 53(2), 179-196.
- Parker, M., & Slaughter, J. (1994). *Working smart: A union guide to participation programs and reengineering*. Detroit, MI: Labor Notes.
- Pateman, C. (1970). *Participation and democratic theory*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Princeton Survey Research Associates. (1994). *Worker representation and participation survey: Report on the findings*. Princeton, NJ: Author.
- Putterman, L. (1990). *Division of labor and welfare: An introduction to economic systems*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Reskin, B. F., & Padavic, I. (1994). *Women and men at work*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Roca, S., & Retour, D. (1981). Participation in management: Boggled down concepts. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 2, 1-25.
- Rothschild, J. (2000). Creating a just and democratic workplace: More engagement, less hierarchy. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29(1), 195-213.
- Rothschild, J., & Ollilainen, M. (1999). Obscuring but not reducing managerial control: Does TQM measure up to democracy standards? *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 20(4), 583-623.
- Rothschild, J., & Russell, R. (1986). Alternatives to bureaucracy: Democratic participation in the economy. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 12, 307-328.
- Rothschild-Whitt, J. (1984). Worker ownership: Collective response to an elite-generated crisis. *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change*, 6, 167-194.
- Rundle, J. (1998). Winning hearts and minds in the era of employee-involvement programs. In K. Bronfenbrenner, S. Friedman, R. Hurd, R. Oswald, & R. Seeber (Eds.), *Organizing to win: New research on union strategies* (pp. 213-231). Ithaca, NY: ILR.
- Russell, R. (1988). Forms and extent of employee participation in the contemporary United States. *Work and Occupations*, 15(4), 374-395.
- Schiller, B. (1991). Workplace democracy: The dual roots of worker participation. In D. Hancock, J. Logue, & B. Schiller (Eds.), *Managing modern capitalism: Industrial renewal and workplace democracy in the United States and Western Europe* (pp. 109-120). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Sheahan, M. (1997). Participating in labor-management initiatives to build the union. In B. Nissen (Ed.), *Unions and workplace reorganization* (pp. 110-129). Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.

- Shuchman, A. (1957). *Codetermination: Labor's middle way in Germany*. Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press.
- Sirianni, C. (1994). Learning pluralism: Democracy and diversity in feminist organizations. In F. Fischer & C. Sirianni (Eds.), *Critical studies in organization and bureaucracy* (pp. 554-576). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Stephens, J. D. (1980). *The transition from capitalism to socialism*. Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities Press.
- Strauss, G. (1992). Workers' participation in management. In J. Hartley & G. Stephenson (Ed.), *Employment relations: The psychology of influence and control at work* (pp. 291-313). Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.
- Street, J. (1983). Socialist arguments for industrial democracy. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 4, 519-539.
- Vallas, S. P. (1999). Rethinking post-Fordism: The meaning of workplace flexibility. *Sociological Theory*, 17(1), 68-101.
- Witte, J. F. (1980). *Democracy, authority, and alienation in work: Workers' participation in an American corporation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wright, E. O. (1985). *Classes*. London: Verso.
- Wright, E. O. (1989). The comparative project on class structure and class consciousness: An overview. *Acta Sociologica*, 32, 3-22.
- Wright, E. O. (1997). *Class counts: Comparative studies in class analysis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Zipp, J. F., Luebke, P., & Landerman, R. (1984). The social bases of support for workplace democracy. *Sociological Perspectives*, 27(4), 395-425.

Ed Collom is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Southern Maine and specializes in work, social movements, and inequality. In addition to workplace democracy, he also studies other alternative social forms, including homeschooling and local currency systems. His previous research appears in Sociological Forum, Berkeley Journal of Sociology, and Economic and Industrial Democracy.