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## TOWARD A THEORY OF STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRACY

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# TOWARD A THEORY OF STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRACY

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years political scientists have been particularly concerned with finding viable means of measuring the impact of government on people. One of the most important and least studied areas relating to this concern is the problematic "place" in the political system where government meets people, the point of interaction between "clients" and government officials who deal with them in the regular course of their jobs.

This paper attempts to draw together materials on police, teachers, and lower court judges in order to begin to develop a theory of "street-level bureaucracy" which: 1) identifies the salient dimensions of bureaucracy/client interaction; 2) identifies characteristic behaviors that transcend single bureaucratic contexts; and 3) makes a start toward explaining the impact of public service bureaucracies on the public.

Street-level Bureaucrats are identified as people employed by government who: 1) are constantly called upon to interact with citizens in the regular course of their jobs; 2) have significant independence in job decision-making; and 3) potentially have extensive impact on the lives of their clients. The analysis focuses on Street-level Bureaucrats whose work experiences are relatively strongly affected by three conditions: 1) relative unavailability of resources, both personal and organizational; 2) existence of clear physical and/or psychological threat; and 3) ambiguous, contradictory and in some ways unattainable role expectations. The extent to which these defining characteristics and these work conditions are applicable to police, teachers and lower court judges, are elaborated in some detail.

The bulk of the paper describes and analyzes strategies and mechanisms that Street-level Bureaucrats develop in order to deal with the strains imposed by these conditions, the impact of these mechanisms on clients, and the implications of the interaction between Street-level Bureaucrats and clients for proposals for change.

# TOWARD A THEORY OF STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRACY

## *SECTION I*

Recent American urban conflict has focused attention on bureaucratic structures providing services to the poor. Police departments, school systems, and welfare service organizations have increasingly been the objects of public concern. Social scientists, sensitive to the importance of citizen experiences with government, have urged that scholarly efforts be addressed to these structures.[1]

This paper is a first attempt to develop a theory of the political behavior of Street-level Bureaucrats and their interaction with clients.[2] Street-level Bureaucrats, defined below, are those men and women who, in their face-to-face encounters with citizens, "represent" government to the people. The discussion is concentrated on problems affecting Street-level Bureaucrats that arise from lack of organizational and personal resources, physical and psychological threat, and conflicting and ambiguous role expectations. Individuals in these bureaucratic roles both deliberately and unconsciously develop mechanisms to cope with these problems. These mechanisms primarily serve protective bureaucratic functions. Analysis of the ways in which they intersect client needs and behavior suggests that in some ways street-level bureaucracies, as currently structured, have inherent difficulties in serving clienteles consisting predominantly of minority groups and other stigmatized individuals. Further, because of certain characteristic behavior patterns, they may be incapable of responding to pressures from client groups, and may be structured in such ways as to exacerbate the very conflicts which they otherwise declare interest in ameliorating.

For the sake of clarity and illustration, the discussion will focus

primarily, but not exclusively, on Street-level Bureaucrats from three organizational structures who significantly affect the lives of large numbers of people: policemen, teachers and lower court judges.[3]

A Street-level Bureaucrat is defined as a public employee whose work is characterized by the following three conditions:

1. He is called upon to interact constantly with citizens in the regular course of his job.
2. Although he works within a bureaucratic structure, his independence on the job is fairly extensive. One component of this independence is discretion in making decisions; but independence in job performance is not limited to discretion. The attitude and general approach of a Street-level Bureaucrat toward his client may affect his client significantly. These considerations are broader than the term discretion suggests.[4]
3. The potential impact on citizens with whom he deals is fairly extensive.

In this paper the clienteles of street-level bureaucracies are said to be the population on which Street-level Bureaucrats act.

While not of primary importance, Street-level Bureaucrats share a few other common job conditions. First, they have non-voluntary clienteles.[5] Second, and no doubt related, the clienteles for the most part, do not serve as primary reference groups for these bureaucrats. The clientele of police departments to a significant degree consists of offenders and suspects;[6] the clients of teachers are pupils; and the

clients of lower criminal court judges are persons brought before them in court. In these cases they are not voluntary, and are not primary reference groups for Street-level Bureaucrats.[7]

Another condition commonly characterizing the bureaucracies discussed here is that they have limited control--although extensive influence--over clientele performance, accompanied in part by high expectations and demands concerning that performance. Police and lower court judges are charged with controlling behavior which has profound social roots; teachers are asked to compensate for aspects of children's upbringing for which they are not responsible.[8]

Although the theoretical aspects of this paper are intended to apply to all clients of street-level bureaucracies to some degree, they are most applicable to low-income group clients, and to minority groups. This is because poor people, and minority group members, command fewer personal resources than more favored individuals, and thus are more dependent upon governmental bureaucratic structures for fair treatment or provision of basic services.

In this brief paper I will not be able to provide a comprehensive analysis of these three professional groups.[9] Nor can the roles of policemen, teachers, and judges be described in monolithic fashion. These jobs or professions encompass a wide range of variation. In attempting to develop a parsimonious theory of governmental organizational behavior and client interaction, I am interested rather in making more understandable certain problems of these bureaucratic structures, and in initiating critical analysis of certain aspects of governmental organizational behavior at the point of consumption.

The discussion will apply to aspects of street-level bureaucracy when the following conditions are relatively salient in the job environment:

1. Available resources are inadequate.
2. Work proceeds in circumstances where there exists clear physical and/or psychological threat, and/or the bureaucrat's authority is regularly challenged.
3. Expectations about job performance are ambiguous and/or contradictory, and include unattainable idealized dimensions.

Although to some extent these conditions prevail in most bureaucratic contexts to some degree, they are *relatively salient* in street-level bureaucracies in the contemporary American urban setting, as I will show. They are the results of (and I will suggest they are in some ways the causes of) what is known as the urban "crisis." Evidence of the existence of these conditions can be found in contemporary discussions of these professions, and to some degree in general analyses of organizational behavior. They do not invariably obtain, and are less salient in some bureaucratic contexts than in others. In some settings teachers, policemen and judges are relatively free from these conditions. Judges, for example, are relatively free from concern over physical threat. These considerations do not invalidate the argument. They only suggest that at times the inferences drawn here may not be applicable, and that it would be useful to specify those conditions under which they *are* applicable. Although the analysis is concentrated on police, teachers, and lower court judges, it is intended to be relevant in other bureaucratic

contexts when the characteristics and qualifications discussed above obtain.

*Inadequate Resources*

Resources necessary to function adequately as Street-level Bureaucrats may be classified as organizational resources, and personal resources. One particularly salient organizational resource in this regard is the manpower/client ratio. There must be sufficient numbers of other people working at the same job to provide service to the client with a relatively low degree of stress, consistent with expectations of service provision. Typical personal resources necessary for adequate job performance are sufficient time to make decisions (and act upon them), access to information, and information itself.[10]

For the policeman in many encounters with citizens, scarce personal resources frequently consist of conditions making it difficult to collect relevant information, or to process information adequately. When breaking up a fight in a bar, a policeman may not have time to determine the initiating party, and so must make a double arrest.[11] The need to mobilize information quickly in an uncertain bureaucratic environment may account for police practices of collecting or hoarding as much information as possible on individuals and situations in which policemen may be called to intervene, even if this information is inadmissible in court.[12] It is not only that guidelines governing police behavior are inadequate[13] but that inadequacy of personal and organizational resources contribute to the "improvisational" ways in which law enforcement is carried out.[14]

In big cities, lower court judges who process tens of thousands of

cases each year, do not have time to obtain a comprehensive picture of every case on which they sit.[15] One might call this lack of manpower, since more judges would permit each case to be heard more fully. But whether one attributes the pressure to lack of time or to inadequate staffing, lower court judges lack the resources to do their job adequately. Many big city teachers must perform in overcrowded classrooms with inadequate materials and with clients requiring intense personal attention.[16]

*Threat and Challenges to Authority*

The conditions under which Street-level Bureaucrats are asked to do their jobs often include distinct physical and psychological threats. This component is most clearly relevant to the police role. Police constantly work under the threat of violence that may come from any direction at any time.[17] Threat may exist independent of the actual incidence of threat materialization. Because policemen spend most of their time in non-threatening tasks[18], does not reduce the threat affecting their job orientations.[19]

Teachers in inner city schools under some circumstances also appear to work under threat of physical harm.[20] But more common may be the threat that chaos poses for a teacher attempting to perform his job. The potential for chaos, or a chaotic classroom, implies the elimination of the conditions under which teaching can take place. The threat of chaos is present whether or not teachers commonly experience chaos and whether or not chaotic student-classroom conduct can be said to be caused by the students or inspired by the teacher.

Although the institutional setting in which lower court judges

conduct cases reduces the potential for threat, judges are harried by the enormous backlogs of cases which confront them. They are under constant pressure from administrative judicial superiors to reduce this backlog.[21] The imperative to "keep the calender moving," reinforced by judges' desires to serve a clientele speedily, is distinctly dissonant with the component of the ideal judicial image which stresses hearing each case on its merits.

The reciprocal of threat for Street-level Bureaucrats is personal or role authority. The greater the degree of authority that can be imposed, the less the threat. One might also hypothesize that the greater the threat, the less bureaucrats feel that authority is respected, and the more they feel the need to invoke it. These hypotheses tend to be confirmed by invocations to teachers to establish classroom control as a precondition to teaching.[22] They also tend to be confirmed by studies of police behavior. Danger and authority have been identified as the two principal variables of the police role.[23] The authority vested in the role of policeman is seen by police as an instrument of control, without which they are endangered.[24] Hence comes the often reported tendency to be lenient with offenders whose attitude and demeanor are penitent, but harsh and punitive to those offenders who show signs of disrespect.[25] Indeed, policemen often appear to "test" the extent to which an offender is respectful in order to determine whether he is a "wise guy" and thus has an improper attitude.[26]

*Expectations about Job Performance*

Street-level Bureaucrats often must perform their jobs in response to ambiguous and contradictory expectations. These expectations may

include an unattainable goal dimension. The unattainability of some goal orientations in part is related to the lack of control over the client's background and performance, as discussed above. Street-level Bureaucrats also are not free to determine who their clienteles will be. Indeed, in this sense Street-level Bureaucrats may be said to be non-voluntary *servants* in the same way that their clients are non-voluntary. To the extent that Street-level Bureaucrats consider themselves professionals (and they do to a significant and increasing degree), they are likely to develop frustrations with the institutional framework inhibiting them from doing their jobs "professionally,"[27] and with clients whose uncooperativeness or unmalleability may be used against them.

Role theorists generally have attempted to locate the origin of role expectations in three "places": in peers and others who occupy complementary role positions; in reference groups, in terms of whom expectations are defined, although they are not literally present; and in public expectations generally, where consensus about role expectations can sometimes be found.[28] While we cannot specify here the location of role expectation generation for these various Street-level Bureaucrats, we can make a few points concerning conflict in urban areas over these bureaucracies.

Conflicting and ambiguous role expectations stemming from divided community sentiments are the source of considerable bureaucratic strain. As public officials, Street-level Bureaucrats are subject to expectations that they will treat individuals fairly and impartially. To some degree they are also subject, as public officials, to expectations that

individuals and individual cases will be treated on their unique merits. Providing services in terms of the ideals is constantly challenged by "realists" who stress the legitimacy of adjustments to working conditions and the unavailability of resources. The expectation of impartiality is particularly salient to judges, of course. But, additionally, judges are confronted with the case ideal, wherein citizens expect to "have their day in court."

Apparently in direct conflict with expectations concerning equal treatment are expectations from more parochial community interests, to which Street-level Bureaucrats are also subject as public officials. In a real sense, Street-level Bureaucrats are expected by some reference groups to recognize the desirability of providing *unequal* treatment. Invocations to "clean up" certain sections of town, to harass undesirables through heavy surveillance (prostitutes, motorcycle or juvenile gangs, civil rights workers, hippies), to prosecute vigorously community "parasites" (junkies, slumlords), and even to practice reverse discrimination (for minority groups)--all such instances represent calls for unequal bureaucratic treatment. They illustrate the efforts of some community segments to use street-level bureaucracies to gain relative advantages.

Conflicts stemming from divisive, parochial community expectations will be exacerbated in circumstances of attitudinal polarization. As relative consensus or indifference concerning role expectations diminish, Street-level Bureaucrats are likely to choose among conflicting expectations rather than attempt to satisfy more than one of them. In discussing police administrative discretion, James Q. Wilson suggests that the

prevailing political culture creates a "zone of indifference" within which administrators are free to act.[29] In times of value polarization, we may suggest that the zone becomes wider, but that indifference and, as a result, discretion, is diminished as bureaucratic performance is increasingly scrutinized and practices formerly ignored assume new meaning for aroused publics.[30]

The police role is significantly affected by conflicting role expectations. In part stemming from public ambivalence about the police, policemen must perform their duties somewhere between the demands for strict law enforcement, the necessity of discretion in enforcement, and various community mores.[31] They must accomodate the constraints of constitutional protection and demands for efficiency in maintenance of order and crime control.[32] They must enforce laws they did not make in communities where demands for law enforcement vary with the laws and with the various strata of the population, and where police perceive the public as hostile yet dependent.[33] Police role behavior may conflict significantly with their own value preferences as individuals,[34] and with the behavior and outlook of judges.[35] They are expected to be scrupulously objective and impartial,[36] protective of all segments of society. Speaking generally, we may expect lack of clarity in role expectations in these cases to be no less dysfunctional than in other circumstances where results of lack of role clarity have been observed empirically.[37]

In discussing the development of role expectations in street-level bureaucracies, the relative unimportance of clients should be noted. The clients of these bureaucracies are not primary (nor even secondary)

in creating role expectations for these jobs.[38] Contemporary political movements that appear to be particularly upsetting to some Street-level Bureaucrats, such as demands for community control and student power, may be understood as client demands for inclusion in the constellation of bureaucratic reference groups. It may not be that street-level bureaucracies are generally unresponsive, as is sometimes claimed.[39] Rather, it is that they have been responsive in the past to constellations of reference groups which have excluded client-centered interests.

Public bureaucracies are somewhat vulnerable to the articulated demands of any organized segment of society because they partially share the ethos of public responsiveness and fairness. But street-level bureaucracies seem particularly incapable of responding positively to the new groups because of the ways in which their role expectations are currently framed. Demands for bureaucratic changes are most likely to be responded to when they are articulated by primary reference groups. When they are articulated by client groups outside the regular reference group arena, probabilities of responsiveness in ways consistent with client demands are likely to be significantly lower.[40]

*SECTION II*

In order to make decisions when confronted with a complex problem and an uncertain environment, individuals who play organizational roles will develop mechanisms to make the tasks easier. Confronted with permutations of the three kinds of problems described in the first section, they will develop psychological mechanisms specifically related to these concerns. Organizational mechanisms will also be developed relating to these problems. In this discussion we will focus on the ways in which simplifications, routines, and other psychological and institutional

mechanisms or strategies for dealing with the bureaucratic problems described earlier are integrated into the behavior of Street-level Bureaucrats and their organizational lives.

By simplifications we refer to those symbolic constructs in terms of which individuals order their perceptions so as to make the perceived environment easier to manage. They may do this for reasons of instrumental efficiency, and/or reasons of anxiety reduction.[41] By routines we mean the establishment of habitual or regularized patterns in terms of which tasks are performed. For this paper we will concentrate on routines developed for the purposes of, or with the effect of, alleviating bureaucratic difficulties arising from resource inadequacy, threat perception and unclear role expectations. The notion of routines has been exploited effectively in discussions of budgetary processes.[42] This paper may be said to focus on the trade-offs incurred in, and the unintended consequences of, developing such mechanisms.

Having discussed three conditions under which Street-level Bureaucrats frequently must work, we now turn to examination of some of the ways in which they attempt to accomodate or deal with these conditions and of some of the implications of the mechanisms developed in the coping process.

*Inadequate Resources*

The development of simplifications and routines permits Street-level Bureaucrats to make quick decisions and thereby accomplish their jobs with less difficulty (perhaps freeing scarce resources through time saving), while at the same time partly reducing tensions with clients or personal anxiety over the adequacy of decisions made. The "shortcuts" developed

by these bureaucracies are often made because of inadequate resources. Police limit enforcement because of inability to enforce constantly all laws[43] (even if the community wanted total enforcement). Routinization of judicial activities in the lower courts is pervasive. Decisions on bail and sentencing are made without knowledge of the defendant's background or an adequate hearing of the individual cases, as judges

> ...become preoccupied simply with moving the cases. Clearing the dockets becomes a primary objective of all concerned, and cases are dismissed, guilty pleas are entered, and bargains are struck with that end as the dominant consideration.[44]

The implications of simplifications and routinization will be discussed throughout the paper, but some are appropriately mentioned here. Not only does performance on a case basis suffer with routinization, but critical decisions may effectively be made by bureaucrats not ultimately responsible for the decisions. Thus, for example, judges in juvenile courts have effectively transferred decision making to the police or probationary officers whose undigested reports form the basis of judicial action.[45] Both in schools and in the streets, the record of an individual is likely to mark him for special notice by teachers and policemen who, to avoid trouble or find guilty parties, look first among the pool of known "troublemakers."[46] Certain types of crimes, and certain types of individuals, receive special attention from Street-level Bureaucrats who develop categorical attitudes toward offenses and offenders.[47] Additionally, the routines may become ends in themselves. Special wrath is often reserved for clients who fail to appreciate the bureaucratic necessity of routine. Clients are denied rights as individuals because to encourage exercise of individual rights would jeopardize processing

of clients on a mass basis.[48]

*Threat Reduction*

Routines and simplifications are developed by Street-level Bureaucrats who must confront physical and psychological threat. Inner city school teachers, for example, consider maintaining discipline one of their primary problems. It is a particularly critical problem in "slum" schools, where "keeping them in line" and avoiding physical confrontations consume a major portion of teachers' time, detracting from available educational opportunities.[49] Even under threatening circumstances, elementary school teachers are urged to "routinize as much as possible" in order to succeed.[50]

"You gotta be tough kid, or you'll never last," appears to be the greeting most frequently exchanged by veteran officers in socializing rookies into the force.[51] Because a policeman's job continually exposes him to potential for violence, he develops simplifications to identify people who might pose danger. Skolnick has called individuals so identified "potential assailants." Clues to the identity of a potential assailant may be found, for police, in the way he walks, his clothing, his race, previous experiences with police, or other "non-normal" qualities.[52] The moral worthiness of clients also appears to have an impact on judicial judgement.[53] In this regard, the police experience may be summed as the development of faculties for suspicion.[54]

Mechanisms may be developed to reduce threat potential by minimizing bureaucratic involvement. Thus policemen are tutored in how to distinguish cases which should be settled on the spot with minimal police intervention.[55] Ploys are developed to disclaim personal involvement

or to disclaim discretion within the situation. "It's the law," or "those are the rules" may be empirically accurate assertions, but they are without substance when weighed with the relationship between discretion and law enforcement.[56] Street-level Bureaucrats may totally evade involvement through avoidance strategies. Thus, according to one account failure to report incidents in ghetto neighborhoods are "rationalize(d)"

> ...with theories that the victim would refuse to prosecute because violence has become the accepted way of life for his community, and that any other course would result in a great loss of time in court, which would reduce the efficiency of other police functions.[57]

Routines also serve to provide more information about potential difficulties, and project an image of authority. "Potential assailants" are frequently approached by police in a brusque, imperious manner in order to determine if the person respects police authority.[58] Teachers consider it imperative to establish authority on the first day of class.[59] Early teacher identification of "trouble makers" and the sensitivity of policemen to sudden movements on the part of a suspect (anticipating the reaching for a weapon) further illustrate the development of simplifications for the purposes of reducing the possibility of physical threat.

Street-level Bureaucrats attempt to provide an atmosphere in which their authority will be unquestioned, and conformity to their system of operation will be enhanced. The courtroom setting of bench, bar and robes, as well as courtroom ritual, all function to establish such an environment.[60] Uniforms also support the authoritative image, as do institutional rules governing conduct and dress. Imposition of symbols of authority function to permit Street-level Bureaucrats to test the general compliance of the client to the system. Thus the salute to the

uniform, not the man;[61] thus the police concern that disrespect for him is disrespect for the law.[62]

We may suggest the following hypotheses about these mechanisms for threat reduction. They will be employed more frequently than objective conditions might seem to warrant, rather than less. This is because for these mechanisms to be effective they must be employed in every instance of possible threat, which can never be known. The consequences of failure to guard against physical threat are so severe that the tendency will develop to employ safety mechanisms as often, rather than as little as possible. This contrasts significantly from cases of routines invoked for efficiency. Traffic law enforcement, for example, may be insured by sporadic enforcement, where occasional intervention serves as a sufficient deterrent. But in threatening circumstances, the risks are too great to depend upon sporadic invocation.[63]

Threat reduction mechanisms also are more likely to be invoked in circumstances where the penalities for employing them are not severe, rarely imposed, or non-existant. One might suggest that penalities of this kind are least likely to be directed against Street-level Bureaucrats who are most exposed to threat, because for these bureaucracies, freedom to reduce threat and thus reduce personal anxiety are organizational maintenance requisites.

Additionally, Street-level Bureaucrats will have a stake in exaggerating the potential for danger or job-oriented difficulties. The reasoning is similar. If the threat is exaggerated, then the threat reduction mechanisms will be employed more often, presumably increasing the likelihood that actual physical danger will be averted.[64]

Exaggerating the threat publicly will also reduce the likelihood of imposition of official sanctions (if they are ever imposed), since bureaucrats' superiors will have greater confidence that knowledge of the dangers accompanying job performance will be widely disseminated. Thus Street-level Bureaucrats paradoxically have a stake in continuing to promote information about the difficulties of their jobs at the same time that they seek to publicize their professional competence.[65] One function of professional associations of policemen and teachers has been to publicize information about the lack of adequate resources with which they must work. This public relations effort permits the Street-level Bureaucrat to say (to himself and publicly) with greater confidence that his position will be appreciated by others: "any failures attributed to me can be understood as failures to give me the tools to do the job."

The psychological reality of the threat may bear little relationship to the statistical probabilities. One teacher, knifed in a hallway, will evoke concern among teachers for order, even though statistically the incident might be insignificant. Policemen may imagine an incipient assault and shoot to kill, not because there is a probability or even a good chance that the putative assailant will have a knife, but perhaps because once, some years ago, a policeman failed to draw a gun on an assailant and was stabbed to death.[66] Such incidents may also be affected by tendencies to perceive some sets of people as hostile and potentially dangerous. In such circumstances the threat would be heightened by the conjunction of both threatening event and actor.[67]

Problems of psychological threat will be discussed partially below.

But we may conclude this section by noting some of the institutional mechanisms developed in street-level bureaucracies which are conducive to greater bureaucratic control over the work environment, whether or not they are intentionally conceived. Prominent among these is the tracking system in schools, whereby, early in a pupil's career, schools institutionally structure teacher expectations about him. Teachers are thus provided with institutional mechanisms which permit them to make marginal decisions about their students (in the case of tracking, to decide whether a student should or should not leave a given track). In addition to reducing the decision making burden, the tracking system, as many have argued, largely determines its own predicted stability.[68]

Another institutional mechanism which results in reducing client-related difficulties in street-level bureaucracies is the development of procedures for effectively limiting clientele demands by making the systems irritating to use and financially or psychologically costly. For lower courts this kind of development results in inducing people to plead guilty in exchange for lighter sentences.[69] Welfare procedures and eligibility requirements have been credited with limiting the number of actual recipients. It has been suggested that destroying this rationing system by enrolling as many eligible recipients as possible would effectively overwhelm welfare administrations, and result in necessary reforms.[70] Inability to solve burglary cases results in preemptory investigations by police departments, resulting further in reduced citizen burglary reports.[71] The Gothic quality of civilian review board procedures effectively limits complaints.[72] The unfathomable procedures for filing housing violation complaints in New York City provides yet

another illustration of effective limitation of demand.[73]

Still another institutional mechanism resulting in reduced pressures on the general system is the "special unit" designed to respond to particularly intense client complaints. Illustrations may be found in the establishment of police review boards, human relations units of public agencies, black studies departments or curricula, and public agency emergency services. The establishment of such units, whether or not they perform their manifest functions, also works to take bureaucracies "off the hook" by making it appear that something is being done about problems. However, usually in these cases the problems about which clients want something done (police brutality, equitable treatment for minority groups, re-orientation of school curricula, housing inspections and repairs) are related to *general* street-level bureaucratic behavior. Thus they can only be ameliorated through *general* attacks on bureaucratic performance. These units permit Street-level Bureaucrats to allege that problems are being handled and provide a "place" in the bureaucracy where particularly vociferous and persistent complainants can be referred. At the same time, the existence of the units deflects pressures for general reorientations.[74]

*Expectations of Role Performance*

Role expectations that are ambiguous, contradictory, and in some ways unrealizable represent additional job difficulties with which Street-level Bureaucrats must cope. Here general treatment will be given to two ways in which Street-level Bureaucrats can , in effect, reduce the pressures generated by unclarity and unattainability of role expectations.

Changing Role Expectations. Street-level Bureaucrats can attempt

to alter expectations about job performance. They can try to influence the expectations of people who help give their roles definition. They may try to create a definition of their roles which includes an heroic component recognizing the quality of job performance as a function of the difficulties encountered. Teachers may see themselves and try to get others to see them as the unsung heroes of the city. They may seek an image of themselves as people who work without public recognition or reward, under terrific tension, and who, whatever their shortcomings, are making the greatest contribution to the education of minority groups. Similarly, policemen appear interested in projecting an image of themselves as soldiers of pacification, keeping the streets safe despite community hostility and general lack of recognition. Judges, too, rationalize their job performance by stressing the physical strain under which they work and the extraordinary case loads they must process.

One of the implications of role redefining may be the disclaiming of responsibility over the results of their work. In bureaucratic terms this is the ultimate routinization. It is surely difficult to demand improvement in job performance if workers are not responsible for the product. Furthermore, this conclusion is not falsifiable in real circumstances unless illustrations are available of significantly more successful performances under similar constraints.[75]

Another facet of role redefinition may be efforts to perform jobs *in some way* in accordance with perceived role expectations. This is manifested in greater teacher interest in some children who are considered bright ("if I can't teach them all, I can at least try to teach the few who have something on the ball"); in the extraordinary time some

judges will take with a few cases while many people wait for their turn for a hearing; and in the time policemen spend investigating certain crimes. In these cases, Street-level Bureaucrats may be responding to role expectations that emphasize individual attention and personal concern for community welfare.[76] The judge who takes the time to hear a case fully is hardly blameworthy. But these tendencies, which partially fulfill role expectations, deflect pressures for adequate routine treatment of clienteles. They also marginally divert resources from the large bulk of cases and clients, although not so many resources as to make a perceptible dent in public impressions of agency performance. Like the public agency which creates a staff to insure a quick response to "crisis" cases, these developments may be described as routines to deal with public expectations on a case-by-case basis, reducing pressures to develop routines conforming to idealized role expectations on a *general* basis.[77]

Changing Definitions of the Clientele. A second way by which Street-level Bureaucrats can attempt to alter expectations about job performance is to alter assumptions about the clientele to be served. This may be called "segmenting the population to be served." The Street-level Bureaucrats can conform to role expectations by redefining the clientele in terms of which expectations are framed. If children are perceived to be primitive, racially inferior or "culturally deprived," a teacher can hardly fault himself if his charges fail to progress.[78] Just as policemen respond to calls in different ways depending on the victim's "legitimacy," teachers often respond to children in terms of their "moral acceptability."[79]

In police work the tendency to segment the population[80] may be

manifested in justifications for differential rates of law enforcement between white and black communities. It is also noticeable in police harassment of "hippies," motorcycle gangs, and more recently, college students, where long hair has come to symbolize the not-quite-human quality that a black skin has long played in some aspects of law enforcement.[81] The police riots during the Democratic National Convention of 1968, and more recently in various university communities, may be more explicable if one recognizes that long-haired, white college students are considered by police in some respects to be "outside" of the community which can expect to be protected by norms of due process. Segmenting the population to be served reinforces police and judicial practices which condone failure to investigate crimes involving black against black,[82] or encourage particular vigilance in attempting to control Negro crime against whites.[83] In New York City, landlord orientations among public officials and judges concerned with landlord-tenant disputes are reinforced by diffuse but accepted assumptions that Negroes and Puerto Ricans are insensitive to property and property damage.

The segmenting of populations to be served does not necessarily begin with public employees who serve citizens in the ways mentioned here. But for Street-level Bureaucrats this segmentation has certain functions. It permits bureaucracies to make some of their clienteles even more remote in their hierarchies of reference groups while, at the same time, it allows bureaucracies to perform without the need to confront their manifest failure. They can think of themselves as having performed adequately in situations where raw materials were weak, or the resources necessary to deploy their technical skills were insufficient.

*SECTION III*

Thus far I have tried to describe and analyze some of the behavioral continuities in three disparate areas where public employees regularly interact with citizens. I have suggested that three conditions are particularly salient to these Street-level Bureaucrats: the lack of personal and organizational resources; the sense of threat under which they operate; and the ambiguous and conflicting nature of their role expectations. I have further suggested some continuities in the strategies, explicit and implicit, both overt and psychological, which are employed to deal with pressures encountered.

Routinization and simplification, both inherent parts of the bureaucratic process, have been significant in this analysis. In this section we are concerned with stating more sharply some of the ways in which the bureaucratic processes described here affect clientele groups. In the real world the ways in which routines, simplifications, and other mechanisms invoked by Street-level Bureaucrats are structured will be highly significant. Some simplifications will have a greater impact on a person's life than others and the ways they are structured will affect some groups more than others. The simplifications by which park department employees choose which trees to trim will have much less impact on people's lives than the simplifications in terms of which policemen make judgments about potential suspects.

Stereotyping and other forms of racial and class biases significantly inform the ways in which simplifications and routines are structured in certain situations. This simple conclusion cannot be escaped by anyone who reads intensively in the literature on police, courts, and judges,

as some of the illustrations already cited have shown. Judges frequently sentence on the basis of what they perceive to be the moral acceptability of defendants, which often depends upon their race, or the cut of their clothes. Police are racially prejudiced to a significant degree, as many empirical studies have suggested, and they form their simplifications in terms of racial stereotypes. Teachers do the same.[84]

It is useful to stress that stereotypes affect simplifications and routines, but they are not equivalent. In the absence of stereotypes, simplifying and routinizing would go on anyhow. Categorization is a necessary part of the bureaucratic process. But in American urban life, easily available stereotypes affect bureaucratic decision making in ways which independently exacerbate urban conflict. First, in a society which already stigmatizes certain racial and income groups the bureaucratic needs to simplify and routinize become colored by the available stereotypes, and result in *institutionalization* of the stereotyping tendencies. Second, as will be discussed below, street-level bureaucratic behavior is perceived as bigoted and discriminatory, probably to a greater degree than the sum of individual discriminatory actions. Third, and perhaps most interestingly, the results of the interaction between simplifications, routines, and biases are masked from both bureaucrats and clients. Clients primarily perceive bias, while Street-level Bureaucrats primarily perceive their own responses to bureaucratic necessities as neutral, fair and rational (i.e., based upon empirical probabilities). The bureaucratic mode becomes a defense against allegations of lack of service. By stressing the need for simplifying and routinizing, Street-level Bureaucrats can effectively deflect confrontations concerning

inadequate client servicing by the mechanisms mentioned earlier. But when confrontations do occur, they may effectively diminish the claims of organized client groups by their insistance that clients are unappreciative of service, ignorant of bureaucratic necessity, and unfair in attributing racial motives to ordinary bureaucratic behavior.

This last point is well illustrated by the conflict over tracking systems in Washington, D.C. and other cities. The school bureaucracy defended tracking as an inherently neutral mechanism for segregating students into ability groupings for more effective teaching. Rigidities in the system were denied, reports that tracking decisions were made on racial bases were ignored, and evidence of abuse of the tracking system was attributed to correctable malfunctioning of an otherwise useful instrument. Missing from the school bureaucracy's side of debate, as I have suggested in this discussion, was recognition of the ways in which, given the District school system, tracking would inevitably be permeated by stereotypic and biased decision making.[85]

In addition to the interaction between stereotyping and simplifications, four developments may be mentioned briefly which tend to reinforce bureaucratic biases: 1) playing out of self-fulfilling prophecies;[86] 2) the acceptance of partial empirical validation; 3) the acceptance of illustrative validation; and 4) the avoidance of responsibility for clients' behavior.

In categorizing students as low or high achievers, in a sense predicting their capacity to achieve, teachers appear to create validity for the very simplifications in which they engage. Rosenthal has shown that on the whole students will perform better in class if teachers

think pupils are bright, regardless of whether or not they are.[87] Policemen insure the validity of their suspicions in many ways. They provoke "symbolic assailants" through baiting them or through oversurveillance tactics.[88] They also concentrate patrol among certain segments of the populations, thereby insuring that there will be more police confrontations with that group.[89] In this context there is triple danger in being young, black, and noticed by the law. Not only may arrest be more frequent, but employers' concerns for clean arrest records, and the ways in which American penal institutions function as schools for criminals rather than rehabilitative institutions--all increase the probabilities that the arrested alleged petty offender will become the hardened criminal that he was assumed to be turning into. Hospital staffs, to illustrate from somewhat different sets of bureaucrats, appear to "teach" people how to be mentally and physically ill by subtly rewarding conforming behavior.[90] Value judgments may intrude into supposedly neutral contexts to insure that the antipathies of some bureaucrats will be carried over in subsequent encounters. This occurs in the creating of client "records" which follow them throughout their dealings with bureaucracies.[91]

Partial empirical validation may occur through selective attention to information, reinforcing the legitimacy of simplifications informed by stereotypes. Statistics can be marshalled to demonstrate that black crime has increased. A policeman may screen out information which places the statistical increase in perspective, never recognizing that his own perceptions of the world have contributed to the very increases he deplores. He also "thinks" he knows that Negro crime is worse than it was, although there have been some studies suggesting that he overestimates

its extent.[92] Similarly, it is unquestionable that children from minority groups with language difficulties do have greater problems in school than those without difficulties. Obviously there is something about lack of facility in English in an English-speaking school system that will affect achievement, although it may not be related to potential.

Illustrative validation may confirm simplifications by illustration. The common practice of "proving" the legitimacy of stereotypes and thus the legitimacy of biased simplifications by example, is not only a logical horror but a significant social fact which influences the behavior of street-level bureaucracies. Illustrative validity not only confirms the legitimacy of simplifications, but also affects the extent to which simplifications are invoked. The policeman killed in the course of duty because he neglected to shoot his assailant provides the basis for illustrative validity not only about the group of which the assailant is a part, but also the importance of invoking simplifications in the first place.

Finally, biased simplifications are reinforced by the need of Street-level Bureaucrats to perceive their clients in such a way as to absolve them from responsibility for their clients' fate. This may either take the form of attributing responsibility for all actions to the client, and/or perceiving the client as so victimized by social forces that he cannot really be helped by service. Such people, as Bob Dylan would say, are assumed to have been bent out of shape by society's pliers. Goffman explains well the function of the first mode of perception:

> Although there is a psychiatric view of mental disorder and an environmental view of crime and counter-revolutionary activity, both freeing the offender from moral responsibility and his offense,

> total institutions can little afford this particular kind of determinism. Inmates must be caused to *self-direct* themselves in a managable way, and, for this to be promoted, both desired and undesired conduct must be defined as springing from the personal will and character of the individual inmate himself, and defined as something he himself can do something about.[93]

Police tendencies to attribute riots to the riffraff of the ghettos (criminals, transients, and agitators) may also be explained in this way.[94] Instances of teachers beating children who clearly display signs of mental disturbance, as described by Jonathan Kozol, provide particularly brutal illustrations of the apparent need to attribute self-direction to non-compliant clients in some cases.[95]

The second perpetual mode also functions to absolve Street-level Bureaucrats from responsibility by attributing clients' performance difficulties to cultural or societal factors. Low school performances are explained by factors of cultural deprivation or environmental disruptions.[96] Undeniably there are cultural and social factors that affect client performance. Similarly, there is a sense in which most people are responsible for their actions and activities. What is important to note, however, is that these explanations function as cognitive shields between the client and Street-level Bureaucrat, reducing what little responsibility and accountability may exist in the role expectations of Street-level Bureaucrats and perhaps contributing to hostility between clients and bureaucrats.

## *SECTION IV*

To better understand the interaction between government and citizens at the "place" where government meets people, I have attempted to

demonstrate continuities in the behavior of Street-level Bureaucrats. I have tried to suggest that there are patterns to this interaction, that continuities may be observed which transcend individual bureaucracies, and that certain conditions in the work environment of these bureaucracies appear to be relatively salient in structuring the bureaucrat-citizen interaction. In conclusion it is appropriate to highlight some aspects of this interaction for public policy analysis.

This analysis may help to explain some aspects of citizen antagonism. Clients may conclude that service is prejudiced, dehumanizing and discriminatory in greater degree than is warranted by the incidence of such behavior. Just as I have suggested that it takes only one example of a policeman killed by an assailant to reinforce police defensive simplifications, so it only takes a few examples of bigoted teachers or prejudiced policemen to reinforce widespread conviction on the part of clients that the system is prejudiced. As Herman Goldstein has put it in discussing police/client relations:

> A person who is unnecessarily aggrieved is not only critical of the procedure which was particularly offensive to him. He tends to broaden his interest and attack the whole range of police procedures which suddenly appear to him to be unusually oppressive.[97]

To refer again to propositions concerning threat, client stereotyping of bureaucracies may be greater in direct relation to the extent of control and impact that these bureaucracies have on their lives. Thus these tendencies will be relatively salient in schools, in courts, and in police relations, and will be relatively salient to low-income clients, whose resource alternatives are minimal. Furthermore, such clients may

recognize that in a sense the bureaucracies "create" them and the circumstances in which they live.

Just as Street-level Bureaucrats develop conceptions of clients which deflect responsibility away from themselves, so clients may also respond to bureaucracies by attributing to bureaucracies qualities that deflect attention away from their own shortcomings. This may result in clients' developing conceptions of bureaucrats and bureaucracies as more potent than they actually are. On the other hand, because of predicted neglect or negative experiences in the past, clients may withdraw from bureaucratic interaction or act with hostility toward Street-level Bureaucrats, evoking the very reactions they have "predicted." Minority groups particularly may have negative experiences with these bureaucracies, since they may be the clients most likely to be challenged by Street-level Bureaucrats, and most likely to be unable to accept gracefully such challenges to their self-respect.[98]

Clients also will concur to some extent in the role expectations of Street-level Bureaucrats' performance, although they may have little to do with shaping them. This may be another source of tension. Clients may expect personal, individualized consideration, or may demand it in spite of bureaucratic needs to provide impersonal treatment in a routinized fashion.[99]

This analysis may help place in perspective the apparent paradox that some community groups, in good faith, insist that street-level bureaucracies are biased and discriminatory, while at the same time members of these bureaucracies also insist in good faith that their members do not engage in discriminatory and biased practices. Overlooking whatever dissemblance may be involved here, we can partially explain the

paradox by noting: 1) the way in which relatively little discriminatory behavior can result in client ascription of a great deal of bureaucratic behavior to discriminatory attitudes; and 2) the ways in which Street-level Bureaucrats institutionalize bias without necessarily recognizing the implications of their actions.

One is tempted in conclusion to comment on current controversies concerning street-level bureaucracies and the ways they may be informed by this analysis. This analysis suggests (although by no means conclusively) that it would be appropriate, in reform proposals, to concentrate attention on organizational structure and behavior in organizations at "lowest" hierarchical levels, rather than on recruitment and training.[100] It also suggests concentration on the ways in which Street-level Bureaucrats are socialized into roles, a process which often appears to "wash out" the training and preparation provided by superiors in response to reform demands. Finally, consistent with the arguments of community control advocates, the paper suggests the desirability of concentrating attention on the reference groups which help define the roles of Street-level Bureaucrats. The ways in which Street-level Bureaucrats are able to avoid responsiveness to clients has formed a critical part of this analysis.

More generally, if at all successful, the paper suggests the desirability of continuing and expanding research on the interaction between Street-level Bureaucrats and their clients. In this enterprise, attention should be concentrated on problems of bureaucratic organizational constraints, psychological factors affecting bureaucratic perceptions, and clientele behavior. As I have tried to show, integration of these

factors into the same analysis may be a necessary requisite to formulation of an adequate theory of street-level bureaucracy.

FOOTNOTES

[1]See, e.g., James Q. Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 1ff; Peter M. Blau and W. Richard Scott, *Formal Organizations* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1962), p. 74; Peter Rossi, Richard Berk, David Boesel, Bettye Eidson, and W. Eugene Groves, "Between White and Black, The Faces of American Institutions in the Ghetto," in *Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government, 1968);Herbert Jacob and Michael Lipsky, "Outputs, Structure, and Power: An Assessment of Changes in the Study of State and Local Politics," *Journal of Politics*, 30 (1968), 538.

[2]The reader will recognize the tentative nature of some of the conclusions and analyses which follow. This paper is an effort to synthesize data and propositions derived from studies of individual bureaucratic contexts in order to discover whether the interactions of Street-level Bureaucrats and clients display characteristics that transcend these contexts. No claim is made that bureaucratic behavior may be fully explained by this analysis, only that through this analysis propositions may emerge which illuminate individual bureaucratic encounters with citizens and form the groundwork for the development of more elaborate theory.

For many useful insights and warnings, I am grateful to colleagues Kenneth Dolbeare, Murray Edelman, Herman Goldstein, Joel Handler and Ira Sharkansky. Graduate students in political science at the University of Wisconsin provided helpful comments on a preliminary draft. I am particularly indebted to Martha Wagner for inspired and persevering research assistance.

[3]The importance of stressing the role of organizational structure in studying police has been noted by Jerome Skolnick, *Justice without Trial* (New York: John Wiley, 1967), p. 6. The priority of organizational over recruitment factors in studying police behavior has been stressed by John H. McNamara, "Uncertainties in Police Work: The Relevance of Police Recruits' Backgrounds and Training," in David Bordua (ed.),

*The Police: Six Sociological Essays* (New York: John Wiley, 1967), p. 194; Arthur Niederhoffer, *Behind the Blue Shield* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), ch. 5. See also Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, chs. 1, 5-7.

[4] James Q. Wilson has suggested that the greater exercise of discretion at the lower hierarchical levels is a unique characteristic of police and a few other organizations. See Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, p. 7.

[5] See Jerome Skolnick and J. Richard Woodworth, "Bureaucracy, Information, and Social Control: A Study of a Morals Detail," in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, p. 127; Peter Blau, *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), ch. 6.

[6] Attention in this paper is focused on offenders and suspects because these are the clients on whom policemen primarily act. Another formulation might require extensive consideration of police interaction with people who initiate complaints. This consideration has been omitted here. Defining clienteles in this way highlights the difference between conceiving clients as those acted upon, and conceiving them as those served. cf. Peter Blau and W. Richard Scott, *Formal Organizations*, previously cited, ch. 3; Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964), pp. 95ff.

[7] See below for discussion of Street-level Bureaucrats' reference groups, pp. 7-11.

[8] See, for example, Jerome Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest*, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969), p. 255.

[9] For example, I will not be able to discuss extensively the role of recruitment in determining the quality of bureaucratic performance. For police, see the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, *Task Force Report: The Police* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government, 1967) (hereafter referred to as *Task Force Report: The Police*) and McNamara, previously cited. For judges, see *Task Force Report: The Courts*, p. 32. For teachers, see e.g., the

report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, (New York: Bantam, 1968). I will also neglect the role of community values. For the police this is treated in Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, and in John Gardiner, *Traffic and the Police: Variations in Law Enforcement Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

[10]Less than sufficient time and information undoubtedly characterize all decision-making contexts in the real world. Thus we must again stress the *relative* degree to which, in some circumstances, these conditions prevail for Street-level Bureaucrats, and the consequences of these conditions for job performance. See Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), pp. 2-3.

[11]"A family dispute might have been merely noisy prior to the entrance of a police officer; after his entrance, personal violence often became more likely to occur in all possible combinations and permutations of assaulter and assaultee." McNamara in Bordua, previously cited, p. 168. One of the critical factors in gaining voluntary citizen compliance with policemen in face to face interaction revolves around "the gathering of an adequate amount of relevant information about a situation and the citizen prior to and during the interaction. . .," *ibid.*, p. 169. See generally pp. 168-177.

[12]Skolnick and Woodworth, previously cited, p. 101.

[13]See the critique of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders in its *Report*, previously cited, pp. 312-314.

[14]According to F.B.I. statistics, the ratio of policemen to population has remained static in recent years, despite extraordinary increases in complaints. See *Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, p. 15.

[15]See *Task Force Report: The Courts*, previously cited, p. 31.

[16]For a discussion of stress in urban school systems in general and Washington, D. C. in particular, see Paul Lauter and Florence Howe, "The School Mess," in Marilyn Gittell and Allan G. Hevesi (eds.), *The Politics of Urban Education* (New York: Praeger, 1969).

[17]See Wilson, previously cited, pp. 19-20.

[18]See, for example, Wilson, *ibid.*, pp. 18ff., for a description of "typical" police activities.

[19]Policemen have a "Hobbesian view [in which] the world becomes a jungle in which crime, corruption, and brutality are normal features of the terrain ." Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 9. See also Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest*, previously cited, p. 251. Psychological threat may account in part for the high rate of suicide among patrolmen. For discussion of this point, see Wilson, previously cited, p. 29, note 20.

[20]See, e.g., accounts of stabbings and other attacks on teachers in the New York City schools in January and February, 1969. *The New York Times*, January 10, 1969, p. 43; January 21, 1969, p. 1; January 28, 1969, p. 29; February 4, 1969, p. 28.

[21]In this regard, the pressures on judges may be said to emanate from above, rather than below. See Skolnick, *Justice without Trial*, previously cited, p. 190.

[22]Lauter and Howe have pointed out that because of the pervasiveness of threat perception, control has become the main value held by teachers and administrators in the schools and has been elevated to the status of "educational idol." Lauter and Howe, previously cited, p. 254. See also Robert Crain and David Street, "School Desegregation and School Decision-making," Gittell and Hevesi (eds.), previously cited, pp.118-119.

[23]Skolnick, *Justice without Trial*, previously cited, p. 44.

[24]See e.g., Niederhoffer, previously cited, pp. 52-54.

[25]Werthman and Piliavin, "Gang Members and the Police" in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, p. 74; Skolnick, *Justice on Trial*, previously cited, pp. 84ff; and Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest*, previously cited, pp. 261ff.

[26]See, e.g., William A. Westley, "Violence and the Police," *American Journal of Sociology*, 59, (August, 1953), p. 39; Werthman and Piliavin,

previously cited, p. 93; Richard Blum, "The Problems of Being a Police Officer," *Police* (January, 1961), 12. Cited in Paul Chevigny, *Police Power* (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 139.

[27]As Erving Goffman suggests in *Asylums* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1961), pp. 91-92.

[28]This formulation is adopted from Theodore Sarbin and Vernon Allen, "Role Theory," in Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, 2nd ed. (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1968), pp. 488-567, especially pp. 498-499 and 532.

[29]This well-known phrase is from Chester Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 167. See also Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, p. 233. For analogous behavior on the part of Congressmen, see Raymond Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool and Lewis Dexter, *American Business and Public Policy* (New York: Atherton, 1967), pp. 415ff.

[30]For an extended discussion of this phenomenon, see Murray Edelman, "Public Policy and Political Violence," Discussion Paper 19-69. The Institute for Research on Poverty, Madison, Wisconsin.

[31]The theme of role conflict pervades the literature on police. On these points, see, e.g., Werthman and Piliavin, previously cited, p. 66; Herman Goldstein, "Police Discretion: The Ideal Versus the Real," *Public Administration Review*, 23 (September, 1963), p. 142.

[32]See *Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, p. 17; Skolnick, *Justice without Trial*, previously cited, p. 240.

[33]See Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 49; James Q. Wilson, "Police Morale, Reform, and Citizen Respect: The Chicago Case," in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, p. 147.

[34]Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest*, previously cited, p. 248.

[35]*Ibid.*, p. 196 and pp. 225ff. See also Albert Reiss and David Bordua, "Environment and Organization: A Perspective on the Police," in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, pp. 30ff.

[36]Goldstein, previously cited, p. 144.

[37]Research findings in this area have been summarized by Sarbin and Allen, previously cited, pp. 503-506.

[38]This is not to say that children are unimportant to teachers, or that litigants and defendents are unimportant to judges. But they are not determinant of bureaucratic role expectations. This may be contrasted with determinants of role expectations for higher status public officials. See, e.g., Wallace Sayre and Herbert Kaufman, *Governing New York City* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1960), pp. 253ff. The analysis in this paper suggests the desirability of research on the specific determinants of Street-level Bureaucrats' role expectations, a neglected topic in empirical studies.

[39]See, e.g., David Rogers, *110 Livingston Street* (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 267ff.

[40]I have attempted to demonstrate this point for protest demands and target responsiveness in Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource," *American Political Science Review*, LXII (December, 1968), pp. 1144-1158.

[41]On the last, see Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964), pp. 69ff.

[42]See Aaron Wildavsky, *The Politics of the Budgetary Process* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964); Thomas Anton, *The Politics of State Expenditures in Illinois* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966). See also Ira Sharkansky, *The Routines of Politics* (New York: Van Nostrand, forthcoming, 1970).

[43]See, e.g., *Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, p. 15; Herman Goldstein, previously cited, pp. 142ff; and Wayne LaFave, *Arrest: The Decision to Take a Suspect into Custody* (Little, Brown, 1965), pp. 102ff.

[44]*Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, p. 31. See also pp. 18, 30.

[45]Joel Handler, "The Juvenile Court and the Adversary System: Problems of Function and Form," *Wisconsin Law Review*, 17 (Winter), 1965.

[46]See, e.g., Jonathan Kozol, *Death at an Early Age* (New York: Bantam, 1967), pp. 56-60, and Werthman and Piliavin, previously cited, p. 72.

[47]"Some judges have particularly strong aversions to certain types of crime and tend to be more severe when confronted with such a case." Donald Newman, *Conviction: The Determination of Guilt or Innocence without Trial* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), p. 61. Conversely, some judges, in categorizing offenders, do not rank some offenses as serious. This is the case when lower court judges in New York City fail to treat landlord violations of housing codes as serious offenses. One reason may be that they consider narcotics violations so much more serious that, in comparison, landlord offences are treated leniently. See Michael Lipsky, *Protest in City Politics: Rent Strikes, Housing and the Power of the Poor* (Chicago: Rand McNally, forthcoming, 1969), pp. 112-113. For police attitudes toward categories of offenses, see Dallin Oaks and Warren Lehman, *A Criminal Justice System and the Indigent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 21ff; Skolnick and Woodworth, previously cited, p. 130.

[48]See Handler, previously cited, p. 32; Lipsky, *Protest in City Politics*, previously cited, pp. 177-178.

[49]Howard Becker, "Social Class and Teacher-Pupil Relationships," in Blaine Mercer and Edwin Carr (eds.), *Education and the Social Order* (New York: Rinehart, 1957), pp. 278-279.

[50]Bernard G. Kelner, *How to Teach in Elementary School* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1958), p. 19.

[51]According to Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 53.

[52]Skolnick, *Justice without Trial*, previously cited, pp. 45-46.

[53]*Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, p. 50.

[54]*Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

[55]Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 60. Overlooking offenses rather than confronting offenders is characteristic of prison guard behavior. See Donald R. Cressey, "Prison Organizations," in James March (ed.),

*Handbook of Organizations* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 1064.

[56]Skolnick describes the policeman's strategy of displacing hostility from himself by stressing his "instrumental status as societal agent." Skolnick, *Justice without Trial*, previously cited, p. 107.

[57]Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 61.

[58]Skolnick, *Justice on Trial*, previously cited, p. 105; Werthman and Piliavin, previously cited, p. 87. That a policeman's approach to a suspect is a strategy for dealing with an uncertain environment in part may be inferred from the ways in which police attitudes reportedly change after the confrontation has ended and the suspect is in custody. See, e.g., *ibid.*, p. 86.

[59]See Becker, "Social Class and Teacher-Pupil Relationships," previously cited, p. 280. See also Herbert Kohl's description of his first day in the classroom, *Thirty-Six Children* (New York: Signet, 1967), especially pp. 30ff.

[60]For the importance of ritual and ceremony in establishing an environment of accepted authority, see Goffman, previously cited, pp. 93ff.

[61]Goffman, previously cited, p. 115.

[62]"The police expect law-abiding citizens to express their respect for the law by addressing its representatives with various gestures of deference...[t]he use of such terms as "Sir" and "Officer" are expected as indications that the humble status of the juvenile in the eyes of adult and legal authority is properly understood." Werthman and Piliavin, previously cited, p. 87.

[63]Arbitrary or discriminatory factors of course may also affect the traffic ticketing process. But the *need* to invoke "protective" simplifications will be significantly less. The invocation of disciplinary routines in prisons to minimize the danger of attack is noted in Cressey, previously cited, p. 1064.

[64]Although increased invocations of threat-reducing routines may evoke the very dangers that are feared. See below for further discussion of this point.

[65]This is analagous to the paradox of police administrators, who thrive simultaneously on crime waves (and the budgets to fight them), and on publicity concerning victories over crime.

[66]The discrepancy between actual threat and perceived threat may be paralleled at the aggregate level by the police tendency to consider public attitudes toward police as hostile (see, e.g., Wilson, in Bordua, ed., previously cited, p. 147) when there is some evidence that most people (particularly whites) have a high regard for the police (see, e.g., *Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, pp. 146-147). Also related to the phenomenon of "overperceiving" hostility may be the tendency of police to overestimate the rate of Negro crime. See William Kephart, *Racial Factors and Urban Law Enforcement* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1957), pp. 88-91.

Racial biases interact with threat perception in these circumstances. For the tendency of teachers to underestimate intellectual ability and to overestimate the degree of "disadvantaged" and minority group misbehavior, see Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), pp. 54ff. On the interaction of threat perception and racial stereotypes, see Hubert M. Blalock, *Toward a Theory of Minority-Group Relations* (New York: John Wiley, 1967), p. 167.

[67]For further discussion, see below, pp. 21-22.

[68]For an extensive commentary on the tracking system as conducive to the "self-fulfilling prophecy" see the decision of Judge Skelly Wright in *Hobson v. Hanson*, June 19, 1967, 269 F Supp. 401 (1967). See also Kenneth Clark, *Dark Ghetto* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 128; Rosenthal, previously cited, especially pp. 116-118.

[69]"If all the defendents should combine to refuse to plead guilty, and should dare to hold out, they could break down the administration of criminal justice in any state in the Union. But they dare not hold out, for such as were tried and convicted could hope for no leniency. The prosecutor is like a man armed with a revolver who is cornered by a mob. A concerted rush would overwhelm. . . . The truth is that a criminal court

can operate only by inducing the great mass of actually guilty defendants to plead quilty," *Task Force Report: The Courts*, previously cited, p. 112. For some judges, asking for a jury trial, and then being found guilty, constitutes an "offense" in itself (against judicial routine) and is grounds for being particularly harsh in sentencing. *Ibid.*, p. 143.

[70]See Richard Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, "The Weight of the Poor: A Strategy to End Poverty," *The Nation*, May 2, 1966, pp. 510-517.

[71]This rationing effect is somewhat countermanded by citizen reporting of burglaries for insurance purposes.

[72]See Walter Gellhorn, *When Americans Complain* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 186ff.

[73]See Lipsky, *Protest in City Politics*, previously cited, pp. 69, 105.

[74]For this analysis regarding housing emergency repairs, see Lipsky, *ibid.*, pp. 177-178. For two views on the experience with police review boards, see Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest*, previously cited, pp. 278ff.; Gellhorn, previously cited, pp. 179-195. Goffman describes the tendency for professionals in mental hospitals to be used as "window dressing" for the purposes of enhancing the institution's image in the outside world. See Goffman, previously cited, p. 92.

[75]Wide acceptance of the Vera Foundation bail experiments provides a good illustration of breakthroughs in routines and simplifications based upon demonstrable, qualitatively different results. For information about the Vera Foundation project and other bail projects, see The University of Illinois *Law Forum*, 1965 (Spring), 42ff.

[76]On this tendency in teachers, see Kohl, previously cited, p. 193; Kozol, previously cited, pp. 150-152. In police work, see Reiss and Bordua, previously cited, p. 34; Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 71. I have observed this tendency in judges on a number of occasions in New York City municipal courts.

[77]See Lipsky, *Protest in City Politics*, previously cited, pp. 177-178. The same kind of mechanism is noted by Niederhoffer, previously cited, p. 13.

[78]Kenneth Clark has analyzed theories of racial inferiority and cultural deprivation as functional equivalents. See *Dark Ghetto*, previously cited, pp. 125ff.

[79]According to Howard Becker, children may be morally unacceptable to teachers in terms of values centered around health and cleanliness, sex and aggression, ambition and work, and age group relations. See Becker, "Social Class and Teacher-pupil Relationships," previously cited, pp. 281-282. These considerations are particularly related to class discrepancies between teacher and pupil.

[80]This has often been noted by students of police. See, e.g., Wilson's discussion of relative "legitimacy" of different classes of victims in *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, p. 27. See also Skolnick's discussion of police polarization of the world into respectables and criminals in *Justice without Trial*, previously cited, p. 218.

[81]See, e.g., Skolnick, *ibid.*, and p. 94; Chevigny, previously cited, p. 210.

[82]Until recently, "...American police...(have assumed) intra-racial violence among Negroes, thus implicitly defining the Negro population in a sense as a group 'without the law'." See Albert J. Reiss and David J. Bordua, "Environment and Organization: A Perspective on the Police," in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, p. 31. See also Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, pp. 157ff; Joseph Goldstein, "Police Discretion not to Invoke the Criminal Process: Low Visibility Decisions in the Administration of Justice," *Yale Law Journal*, 69 (1960), 547.

[83]See Wilson, *Varieties of Police Behavior*, previously cited, pp. 157ff.

[84]Supportive references can be found throughout this paper. But see, e.g., for judges, Newman, previously cited, pp. 155ff. For police, see *Task Force Report: The Police*, previously cited, pp. 164ff.

[85]For discussion of the various viewpoints, see *Hobson v. Hansen*, previously cited.

[86]Generally, see Robert Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1957), ch. 11.

[87]See Rosenthal and Jacobson, previously cited. See also Clark, previously cited, pp. 127-129; *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 36. Howard Becker describes how teachers revise their expectations and the demands they make on themselves, in "Social Class and Teacher-Pupil Relationships," previously cited, pp. 281ff.

[88]See Chevigny, previously cited, p. 139; McNamara in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, p. 171.

[89]See, e.g., Werthman and Piliavin in Bordua (ed.), previously cited, p. 76. It should be remembered that oversurveillance, perceived as harassment by the subjects of patrol, may be welcomed, and may have been requested, by other groups.

[90]See David Mechanic, *Medical Sociology: A Selective View* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 115ff.

[91]This can be observed in school, police and court records. Goffman has made this point in the case of mental hospitals. See Goffman, previously cited, pp. 157-158.

[92]See Kephart, previously cited, pp. 88-91.

[93]Goffman, previously cited, pp. 86-87.

[94]For police convictions along these lines, see Rossi, *et al.*, previously cited. That riots are not attributable to such elements is demonstrated in Robert M. Fogelson and Robert B. Hill, "Who Riots? A Study of Participation in the 1967 Riots," in *Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, previously cited. For evidence that police attitudes are not completely homogeneous on this subject, see the research of Thomas Mitch, unpublished manuscript, the University of Chicago Law School, 1969.

[95]Kozol, previously cited, pp. 10-19.

[96]See Clark, previously cited, pp. 129ff; Kozol, previously cited, p. 113; Rossi, *et al.*, previously cited, p. 136.

[97]Herman Goldstein, previously cited, p. 147.

[98]On this last point and the police, see Chevigny, previously cited, p. 138.

[99]See Robert Merton, "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality," in Robert Merton, Ailsa P. Gray, Barbara Hockey, and H. Selvin (eds.), *Reader in Bureaucracy* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960), p. 368. Joel Handler suggests that in some circumstances, such as welfare investigations, where personalized attention to clients may be undesirable, lack of job resources and routinization can be a blessing. David Matza makes the same point in approving routinization of juvenile court judicial decision-making, arguing that "making the punishment fit the crime" by routinizing sentencing is preferable to individualized diagnoses. See David Matza, *Delinquency and Drift* (New York: John Wiley, 1964), pp. 129ff.

[100]See, e.g., the recommendations of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, previously cited, pp. 305ff.; and of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, in *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), pp. 101ff.