

TASK PERFORMANCE DISCRETION AND  
NONWORK SPILLOVER: A TEST OF  
KATZ'S THESIS

by

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#### ABSTRACT

From the time of Durkheim and Weber sociologists have been interested in the relationship between the economic order and larger communal life. Generally, investigation of this relationship has been guided by either a holistic (spillover between social spheres) or a segmental (distinct boundaries between social spheres) theoretical perspective. Under a holistic model of social structure, this paper addresses the problem suggested by Katz, of whether task performance discretion in blue collar jobs is related to the spillover of working class culture patterns into the organization. Drawing on data describing male and female Australian blue collar workers, this study tests the hypotheses that I) Blue collar workers will indicate that they have little discretion in work variety, work speed, physical movement, and relief opportunities as they go about performing their tasks; and II) Blue collar workers with less task performance discretion will be more likely than workers with some discretion to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork. Results indicate support for hypothesis I for the group as a whole, but when the data are broken down by sex, it is apparent that female workers have much less task performance discretion than do male workers. No support is found for hypothesis II prior

to the introduction of four control variables. However, when the effects of total years worked, job training, occupational status, and job involvement are held constant, some support for hypothesis II is evident among a few females who ranked high on these variables. This unanticipated finding is probably due to women's status in the blue collar labour force vis à vis men. The paper concludes that while nonwork spillover is quite common among the blue collar workers surveyed, it is not conditional upon task performance discretion.

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## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the economic order and larger communal life has been of interest to sociologists since the time of Durkheim and Weber. For Durkheim, the division of labour played a central role in the integration of the individual into mainstream society (1933). From the task specialization that arose from the modern division of labour, came various occupational groups that fulfilled a special function in industrial society. According to Durkheim: "a nation can be maintained only if, between the state and the individual, there is intercalated a whole series of secondary groups near enough to the individuals to attract them strongly in their sphere of action and drag them in this way, into the general torrent of social life" (1933:28). Durkheim further views task specialization as influencing other functions of social structure; he observes that,

. . . the division of labour is not peculiar to the economic world; we can observe its growing influence in the most varied fields of society. The political, administrative and judicial functions are growing more and more specialized. It is the same with the aesthetic and scientific functions. It is long since philosophy reigned as the science unique; it has been broken into a multitude of special disciplines each of which has its object, method and thought (1933:40).

Weber too, wrote about the relations between work and nonwork (1958). In his writings on religion and capitalism, Weber seeks to uncover, as Tawney puts it, "the

part played by religious movements in creating conditions favourable to the growth of a new type of economic civilization" (Tawney, 1958:6). Weber also viewed the economic order as a source of social integration. Echoing Durkheim's notion of society as reality sui generis, Weber writes:

. . . the capitalistic economy of the present day is an immense cosmos into which the individual is born and which presents itself to him, at least as an individual, as an unalterable order of things in which he must live. It forces the individual, in so far as he is involved in the system of market relationships, to conform to capitalistic rules of action. The manufacturer who in the long run acts counter to these norms, will just as inevitably be eliminated from the economic scene as the worker who cannot or will not adapt himself to them will be thrown into the streets without a job (1958:54).

Hence both Durkheim and Weber view the economic order as closely interrelated with non-economic life. From the origins of the discipline to the present, the relationship between the domains of work and nonwork has been of interest to sociologists.

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Contemporary empirical studies, such as Wilensky's investigation of the relationship between orderly careers and social participation (1961), have elaborated upon these traditional theories. In Wilensky's 1961 study, he writes that,

. . . plainly, Durkheim's view that in modern society workplace and occupational group draw the person into

the mainstream of social life deserves further elaboration and test. This is perhaps the central problem of the sociology of work - the effect of the division of labour on social integration, or more precisely, the conditions under which work role, occupational association and career are most and least effective as bonds of solidarity either within workplace or between workplace and larger units, or both (1961:522).

Wilensky's specific concern with the relationship between "attachment to community" and "cumulative experience in the economic system," is of interest as a pioneering study in the relationship between work and nonwork. By relating careers in the economic sector with participation in community organization, Wilensky's research marked the beginning of various empirical studies in the field of work and nonwork.

On the whole, the studies that followed Wilensky's work have been concerned with two competing viewpoints of social structure. On the one hand are studies that take a segmental approach to social structure. For example, Dubin (1956) in his study of work and nonwork as central life interests among industrial workers, sums up the segmental view by stating that: "the social world of urban man is continuously subdivided into areas of activity and interest, with each social segment lived out more or less independently of the rest" (1956:54). A segmental approach to social structure then, is based on the premise that social reality is constructed of separate sectors, which are for the most part, mutually exclusive, with distinct boundaries isolating

one from another. It is assumed that acting individuals are capable of altering their behaviour patterns to fit the norms of the particular segment, such as religion, the family or the workplace.

On the other hand, there is the opposing view that social structure is basically "holistic," such that boundaries between spheres are weak and not well defined. Central to this view is the assumption that spillover can and does occur between sectors, meaning that certain characteristics common to one sphere may carry over into another, thus influencing life in that sector. Such a viewpoint is taken by Katz (1965), who believes that organizational autonomy functions to give blue collar workers a chance to "bring their working class culture into the organization, even though this is alien to the bureaucratic ethos of the higher echelons of the organization" (1965:290).

Instead of viewing society as constructed of separate noninteracting segments as Dubin and the "segmentalists" have, Katz and the "holists" view society as one large interacting whole, where spillover occurs among all sectors of social experience. A holist viewpoint offers at least two possible interpretations of the linkage between work and nonwork. Firstly, work may spill over into nonwork. An example would be the workman who worries about his job while at home, such that his nonwork time is taken up with

thoughts about work. Various studies have found support for the work spillover relationship; (see for example, Kornhauser, 1965; Bishop and Ikeda, 1970; Wilensky, 1961; Clark, 1956).

A second possible interpretation is that nonwork may effect or spill over into work. This is the view taken by Katz, and while other students of work have suggested that nonwork spillover is possible, little empirical evidence exists in support of such a relationship. This study examines the nonwork spillover hypothesis using data on Australian blue collar workers.

#### The Case for Nonwork Spillover: Katz's Thesis

In his paper entitled "Explaining Informal Work Groups in Complex Organizations: The Case for Autonomy in Structure," Katz, (1965) develops his theory of autonomy. Starting with the idea that blue collar workers are "largely disenfranchised from the organization's reward system," Katz suggests that some means is used to integrate workers into a basically alienating work environment. He believes that worker integration is accomplished through the concept of indirect autonomy which he defines as "independence from external control." According to Katz: "Workers have considerable autonomy within the confines of the organization. Even when their work is prescribed in exact detail, the work role tends to be defined narrowly. This leaves a

considerable portion of the worker's life within the work organization undefined," and it is during this time that workers bring their working class culture into the organization.

Of central importance to Katz's theory is his basic distinction between the spheres of autonomy found in blue collar work as opposed to white collar work. Blue collar autonomy, "although enacted in the work organization is essentially external to the work role" (1965:292). White collar autonomy, by contrast, is more broadly defined, and "within the work role" (1965:292). Katz perceives blue collar industrial jobs as closely regulated, where spheres of authority and discretion are strictly delimited. Hence the worker has very little choice as to the actual performance of his job. As a trade-off for this strict regulation of work, Katz believes that much of the time that is external to the work role, although still within the confines of working hours, is left undefined. During this undefined time, the worker is permitted to engage in autonomous behaviour, which Katz views as part of the barter system that occurs between the individual and the organization, and which is central to the integration and recruitment of workers.

Katz's major hypothesis with respect to blue collar workers is that workers use this undefined time to bring their working class culture patterns into the organization.

The overall effect is continuity between work and nonwork as witnessed by the rise of "informal patterns of various sorts - those that lessen boredom of workers, those that help get work done, as well as those that are alienative to the organization" (1965:291). That the worker succeeds in coping with the work environment to the extent that his life on the job is quite pleasant, is reported in studies of informal work groups such as Roy's "Banana Time" (1960). Citing Roy's study as an example, Katz states that "within the working clique inside the organization, the workman can enact the culture patterns of his life outside the organization. He can, for example, indulge freely in what is perhaps the workman's major form of creative mental activity; verbal play, imaginative exploits and romanticism on the theme of sex" (1965:294).

What Roy describes, Katz views as the "continuation of a working class style of life and provides ties of sociability in a context that is in many ways alien to workman's culture" (1965:292). Thus the undefined time of blue collar work gives workers the opportunity to bring their working class culture patterns into the workplace. In contrast to the autonomy found in white collar jobs, where work is more broadly defined, the autonomy of the blue collar worker is seen in the narrowness of the definition of his work. (See for example: Noe 1971, Morgan 1975).

During the undefined time, the spillover of working

class culture occurs. In essence, "the blue collar worker brings his nonwork role into the organization" (Katz, 1965: 292). Katz, however, uses only illustrative data (after the fact) to make his argument. The purpose of this thesis is to formulate a number of propositions in a direct test of Katz's assumptions. Using Australian data on blue collar workers, this paper tests the hypothesis that workers with narrowly defined jobs (jobs where there is little choice as to work variety, work speed, physical movement, and relief opportunities) will be more likely to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork than will workers who have relatively more discretion in their jobs.

For the purpose of this study, nonwork spillover is considered to be the dependent variable and is defined as the spillover of life in nonwork into life at work. The independent variable is task performance discretion which refers to the amount of choice available to workers as they perform their jobs. Stated in propositional form, job performance discretion and nonwork spillover are related in the following ways:

1. Blue collar workers will indicate that they have little discretion in work variety, work speed, physical movement and relief opportunities, as they go about performing their tasks.
2. Blue collar workers with less task performance discretion will be more likely than workers with some discretion to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork.

In testing these propositions, appropriate controls

are placed on those variables thought likely to impinge upon these relationships (see below).

## RESEARCH METHODS

This paper is based on secondary analysis of data collected by Dr. R. Alan Hedley in Australia between February and May 1977. A paper and pencil questionnaire was distributed to all shop floor workers among four firms at eight factories on six separate sites. The firms were located in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Hobart, which are metropolitan areas of southeastern Australia. Due to problems involved in gaining access to industrial organizations (Hedley and Taveggia, 1974), a purposive sample was used instead of a random sampling frame. A purposive sample, in this case, allowed the researcher to collect data reflecting the whole range of technological conditions that are found in blue collar work. The industries surveyed include electronics, cosmetics, confectioneries, and chemicals. Because of the non randomness of the survey, results cannot be generalized and refer only to the 58 per cent of the workers who completed and returned a questionnaire (N=1468). As some respondents did not answer all the questions, missing data procedures were initiated in the analysis. Males account for a little more than half of those surveyed and all employees can be classified as industrial blue collar workers. Below is a brief profile of the workers who responded to the questionnaire.

TABLE 1  
BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS  
OF WORKERS SURVEYED

---

<u>SEX</u>		<u>SKILL LEVEL</u>	
Male	52%	Unskilled	22%
Female	<u>48%</u>	Semi-Skilled	43%
	<u>100%</u>	Skilled	<u>35%</u>
			<u>100%</u>

  

<u>AGE</u>		<u>MARITAL STATUS</u>	
Under 20	5%	Married	77%
20 - 29	23%	Widowed	2%
30 - 39	26%	Separated	2%
40 - 49	25%	Divorced	2%
50 - 59	<u>21%</u>	Single	<u>17%</u>
	<u>100%</u>		<u>100%</u>

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### Measurement

The major variables in this study, task performance discretion and nonwork spillover, were operationalized as follows:

a) Task Performance Discretion. Task performance discretion refers to the amount of choice that a worker has in carrying out his actual job. Following Taveggia and Hedley's (1976) use of the term, task performance discretion refers to "what previous researchers have variously and often interchangeably, labelled among other things, discretion, autonomy, independence, and freedom from control." This study uses four measures of task performance discretion: work variety, physical movement, relief opportunities, and workspeed. These are listed below, along with the marginal distributions for each questionnaire item:

1. I always do the same thing in my job, there is no variety.

(N=1285)

Very inaccurate	20.4%
Mostly inaccurate	12.3%
Slightly inaccurate	14.6%
Uncertain	4.7%
Slightly accurate	13.7%
Mostly accurate	15.0%
Very accurate	<u>19.3%</u>
	100.0%

2. I can move around the shop or factory while doing my job.

(N=1290)

Very inaccurate	35.2%
Mostly inaccurate	8.6%
Slightly inaccurate	5.4%
Uncertain	2.9%
Slightly accurate	10.4%
Mostly accurate	13.1%
Very accurate	<u>24.4%</u>
	100.0%

3. In working at my job, I must wait to be relieved before I can stop working.

(N=1282)

Very inaccurate	43.1%
Mostly inaccurate	9.5%
Slightly inaccurate	5.6%
Uncertain	3.1%
Slightly accurate	4.6%
Mostly accurate	6.6%
Very accurate	<u>27.5%</u>
	100.0%

4. My job requires that I work at a set speed.

(N=1291)

Very inaccurate	22.0%
Mostly inaccurate	9.0%

Slightly inaccurate	7.3%
Uncertain	4.8%
Slightly accurate	13.0%
Mostly accurate	19.1%
Very accurate	<u>24.8%</u>
	100.0%

The responses on the four task discretion items produced varied results. Instead of a clear cut indication of task performance discretion, we find that most Australian blue collar workers in this study are likely to have little discretion in workspeed, but not in relief opportunities. On the job feature of workspeed, 57% have little choice, while on the feature of relief opportunities, only 39% are constrained. The responses are almost evenly split on the features of work variety and physical movement. These results accord reasonably well with earlier research on British workers reported by Taveggia and Hedley (1976).

b) Nonwork Spillover. Nonwork spillover refers to the idea that some part of nonwork is brought into the workplace (see Wilensky 1960:546; Champoux 1975:4). Of interest here are the patterns of social behaviour that develop as a result of the undefined time that characterizes blue collar autonomy. It is Katz's contention that these resultant behaviour patterns will be derived from the worker's life outside of the workplace, such that working class culture will spillover into the organization. The

following two items (with marginal distributions) are indicators of nonwork spillover:

1. At work, I often find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with my job.

(N=1348)

15.4%	Disagree
12.7%	Disagree slightly
25.6%	Agree slightly
<u>46.3%</u>	Agree
100.0%	

2. I like to talk to my fellow workers about my activities away from work.

(N=1344)

11.6%	Disagree
8.6%	Disagree slightly
24.0%	Agree slightly
<u>55.8%</u>	Agree
100.0%	

The results show that the majority of the Australian blue collar workers who responded to the above items do in fact form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork. By dichotomizing the two distributions, we find that 72 per cent of the workers often think about nonjob things, and that 80 per cent like to talk to their fellow workers about their nonjob activities.

### Criteria of Confirmation

Using these empirical indicators of task performance discretion and nonwork spillover, we will test the hypotheses that 1) Australian blue collar workers will have little task performance discretion on the work features of work variety, physical movement, relief opportunities and workspeed, and 2) that Australian blue collar workers with little discretion will be more likely than workers with some discretion to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork.

A test of these hypotheses will indicate the extent of the relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover. As specific criteria of confirmation of the hypotheses, the following conventions will hold: The first hypothesis will be considered confirmed when fifty per cent or more of the workers indicate that they have little discretion in the performance of their job, on all of the four job features taken as an index. This means that if on the average of the four items, 50 per cent or more of the workers experience little choice, then the hypothesis will be confirmed. Confirmation of the second hypothesis will depend on there being at least a ten per cent difference in nonwork spillover between those workers with discretion and those without. Any difference of less than ten per cent will be considered sufficient to reject the hypothesis.

## ANALYSIS

Discretion and Undefined Time

The first hypothesis stated that Australian blue collar workers will have little discretion in the task performance features of work variety, physical movement, relief opportunities, and workspeed. In order for this hypothesis to be supported, it is argued that blue collar workers must have very narrowly defined jobs, such that in terms of task performance discretion, they will have little choice in how they do their work. As contrasted with white collar jobs, where work performance is more broadly defined, blue collar jobs should leave very little room for choice as to the actual performance of the work. However, as Katz argues, a narrowly defined job will necessitate much undefined time within the work place and it is this undefined time that he views as a source of autonomy for blue collar workers. Table 2 provides a test of the first hypothesis by presenting an indication of the narrowness of the job definition among Australian blue collar workers.

It was stated that if on the average of the four job performance features, at least 50 per cent of the workers experienced little discretion, then the hypothesis is confirmed. Applying this criterion of confirmation to Table 2, we find that on the individual job features, 60 per cent of the workers have little choice concerning workspeed,

TABLE 2  
PER CENT OF WORKERS BY SEX EXPERIENCING  
LOW TASK PERFORMANCE DISCRETION

Job Feature	Per Cent With Low Discretion*					
	Total		Males		Females	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Workspeed	60	1229	42	642	80	587
Physical Movement	51	1252	34	664	70	588
Job Variety	50	1224	42	646	59	578
Relief Opportunities	40	1242	29	659	53	583
$\bar{X}$ Low Discretion	50%		37%		65%	

\* Low task performance discretion equals cumulative per cent of those respondents who agree that the questionnaire item is a "slightly, mostly, or very accurate" description of their jobs. Those respondents who are "uncertain" have been excluded from the analysis.

51 per cent are constrained in their physical movements, 50 per cent have little discretion in the variety of work they do, and 40 per cent have little choice regarding relief opportunities. From the last row of Table 2 we see that on the average, 50 per cent of the workers have little choice on the above four items. Hence the hypothesis that blue collar workers have little task performance discretion is confirmed.

However, when the data are grouped by sex, a different picture of task performance discretion emerges. Looking across the bottom row of the table, we see that an average of only 37 per cent of males have little choice on the four items compared with 65 per cent for females. Overall, females experience much more task performance constraint than do males as can be seen from the individual percentages on each job feature.

Above all, Table 2 shows that support for the hypothesis is conditional on the sex of the respondent. Among the blue collar workers in this study, it is women, not men, who are more likely to find constraint in their work.

The sex differences reported here seem to accord quite well with other studies of sex differences among blue collar workers. For example, Blauner in his analysis of the 1947 Roper survey, found that in the textile industry, "male textile workers are more likely to be in occupations

which give them some degree of control over their work process" (1964:71). Blauner goes on to report that "only 24 per cent of the male employees complained that their job made them work too fast, compared to 42 per cent of the female employees in the Roper study," and that females tend to "have less free movement than men" (1964:71,73).

#### Discretion and Nonwork Spillover

The second hypothesis stated that Australian blue collar workers with little task performance discretion will be more likely than workers with discretion to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork. It is expected that workers with little choice in the performance of their jobs will bring their working class culture into the workplace to help pass the time and to help cope with the alienation that characterizes their position in the organization. The undefined time that results from their narrowly defined jobs is taken up with various behaviours that are organized around the working class culture patterns with which they are most familiar. The thesis is, in other words, that blue collar workers make themselves feel at home while at work. To test this hypothesis, the preceding data describing task performance discretion were cross tabulated with two measures of nonwork spillover. The results are presented in Tables 3, 4, and 5.

On the basis of the criterion of confirmation mentioned earlier, no support was found for the hypothesis that task performance discretion and nonwork spillover are related. There are two major findings evident in Tables 3 through 5. Firstly, for the group as a whole, there is no evidence of a relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover in the hypothesized direction. The differences in nonwork spillover between workers with low and high discretion are minimal, in no case being more than four per cent. Furthermore, in two out of the eight tests possible, the percentage differences are directly contrary to the hypothesis.

Secondly, when the data are broken down by sex, there is still no evidence to suggest that task performance discretion and nonwork spillover are related.

Even among females (Table 5) where little task discretion exists, there is only a hint of a relationship on the features of "relief opportunities" and "workspeed," but in both cases the differences do not reach ten per cent. On most job performance features the difference in nonwork spillover between those workers with high and low discretion is slight.

The only difference that exceeds the ten per cent confirmation criterion is found on the task performance feature of relief opportunities among males. Results show that males with discretion in regard to relief opportunities

TABLE 3  
PER CENT OF WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER  
BY TASK PERFORMANCE DISCRETION

Task Discretion With Respect To:		Nonwork Spillover*	
		Thinking About Nonjob Things	Talking About Nonjob Things
Workspeed	Yes	71%	80%
	No	74%	82%
Physical Movement	Yes	72%	80%
	No	73%	81%
Job Variety	Yes	73%	83%
	No	73%	79%
Relief Opportunities	Yes	73%	80%
	No	72%	81%

\* Per cent of workers experiencing nonwork spillover equals cumulative per cent of those respondents who "agree, or slightly agree," with the questionnaire item.

TABLE 4  
PER CENT OF MALE WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER  
BY TASK PERFORMANCE DISCRETION

Task Discretion With Respect To:		Nonwork Spillover*	
		Thinking About Nonjob Things	Talking About Nonjob Things
Workspeed	Yes	72%	81%
	No	71%	79%
Physical Movement	Yes	72%	81%
	No	69%	79%
Job Variety	Yes	71%	82%
	No	72%	78%
Relief Opportunities	Yes	75%	81%
	No	62%	79%

\* See note for Table 3.

TABLE 5  
 PER CENT OF FEMALE WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER  
 BY TASK PERFORMANCE DISCRETION

Task Discretion With Respect To:		Nonwork Spillover*	
		Thinking About Nonjob Things	Talking About Nonjob Things
Workspeed	Yes	70%	77%
	No	76%	83%
Physical Movement	Yes	71%	84%
	No	76%	82%
Job Variety	Yes	67%	85%
	No	73%	80%
Relief Opportunities	Yes	70%	79%
	No	79%	83%

\* See note for Table 3.

are more likely to experience nonwork spillover than are males without discretion, a finding which is clearly at odds with Katz's theory. In sum, no evidence was found that could be considered as supportive of Katz's theory. The hypothesis that Australian blue collar workers with little task performance discretion would be more likely than workers with discretion to form a nonwork spillover relationship is not confirmed.

In order to investigate further the lack of a relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover, various relevant variables were controlled in an attempt to locate any suppressor effects (see Rosenberg, 1968:203). The relevant variables that were controlled were selected following an analysis of differences among the respondents by sex. Recall earlier that females had less task performance discretion than the males in the survey. On the dependent variables, presented in Table 6, we see that males and females are more similar, although women do exhibit slightly more spillover than men.

Since females indicated less discretion than males, and because they were slightly more nonwork oriented, it was expected that the hypothesis would at least be confirmed among females. When this turned out to be false, further differences by sex were investigated. Table 7 shows that Australian female blue collar workers are, on the average, younger than their male counterparts, have had less

TABLE 6  
RESPONSES TO THE NONWORK SPILLOVER ITEMS BY SEX

<u>Nonwork Spillover</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
	%	%
<u>Think About Nonjob Things</u>		
Disagree	14.6	16.4
Disagree Slightly	14.7	10.4
Agree Slightly	28.1	22.5
Agree	42.6	50.8
	100%	100.1%
<u>Talk About Nonjob Things</u>		
Disagree	11.1	11.2
Disagree Slightly	9.0	8.3
Agree Slightly	25.3	22.7
Agree	54.5	57.8
	99.9%	100%

experience in the labour force, and are slightly less educated. Also, a greater percentage of females are ranked low on job training and occupational status. Finally, while very few of the workers are strongly or very strongly involved in their jobs, females are more likely than males to be slightly or very little involved.

These six variables were selected for further analysis as possible suppressor variables. The relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover was re-examined by controlling for the independent effects of: age, total years worked, education, job training, occupational status, and job involvement. After controlling on these variables, the analysis produced new evidence that a relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover does occur for a certain type of Australian blue collar worker. Analysis shows a tendency for the hypothesized relationship to hold, but only for female workers who have worked the most years and who are ranked high on job training, occupational status, and job involvement.

A similar relationship did not hold for males nor did the effects of age and education alter the original lack of relationship. Consequently, we do not present data for males, nor for the test variables of age and education. Tables 8 through 11 present the results of controlling for total years worked, job training, occupational status, and

job involvement. Some categories of these variables have been combined to ensure that cell size equals fifty or more. Specific cell frequencies can be determined by referring to Table 7.

Analysis of possible suppressor variables results in the finding that among female workers who rank highly on total years worked, job training, occupational status, and job involvement, there is a tendency toward a relationship in the predicted direction between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover.

Table 8, controlling for the suppressor effects of total years worked, shows a greater than ten per cent difference in nonwork spillover (thinking about nonjob things) between females with and without discretion in workspeed and physical movement who have "16 or more" years of work experience. Table 9 shows that among females who require "more than 3 months" to train for their present job, there is a greater than ten per cent difference in nonwork spillover (talking about nonjob things) among those workers with and without discretion in "workspeed," "physical movement," and "job variety." Table 10 shows that for skilled women, the predicted relationship holds among those who have little discretion in "relief opportunities" and who "think about nonjob things," and among those who have little discretion in "workspeed" and "relief opportunities" and who "talk about nonjob things"

TABLE 7  
SEX DIFFERENCES AMONG AUSTRALIAN  
BLUE COLLAR INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

	Males		Females	
	%	n	%	n
<u>Age</u>				
16 - 25 years	15.8	110	22.1	135
26 - 35	22.8	159	24.9	152
36 - 45	22.8	159	30.6	187
46 - 55	22.9	160	20.1	123
55 - up	15.6	109	2.3	14
	99.9%	697	100.0%	611
	$\bar{X} = 40$		$\bar{X} = 36$	
<u>Years of Work</u>				
1 - 7 years	13.8	99	37.4	243
8 - 15	18.5	133	33.5	218
16 or more	67.7	486	29.1	189
	100.0%	718	100.0%	650
	$\bar{X} = 24$		$\bar{X} = 12$	
<u>Education</u>				
1 - 6 years	10.0	68	16.8	100
7 - 12	68.2	464	73.8	439
Over 12	21.8	148	9.4	56
	100.0%	680	100.0%	595
<u>Job Training</u>				
Less than 1 week	14.3	103	32.7	215
1 week to 1 month	21.6	155	44.0	289
1 - 3 months	15.2	109	15.8	104
3 months to 1 year	13.4	96	4.6	30
More than 1 year	35.5	255	2.9	19
	100.0%	718	100.0%	657

	Males		Females	
	%	n	%	n
<u>Occupational Status</u>				
Unskilled	13.7	99	30.8	198
Semi-skilled	35.8	258	47.0	302
Skilled	47.5	342	20.1	129
Administrative	3.0	21	2.1	14
	100.0%	720	100.0%	643
<u>Job Involvement</u>				
Very little involved	16.3	115	19.1	121
Slightly involved	19.7	139	27.2	172
Moderately involved	50.3	355	43.9	278
Strongly involved	11.2	79	7.3	46
Very strongly involved	2.5	18	2.5	16
	100.0%	706	100.0%	633

TABLE 8

PER CENT OF FEMALE WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER BY TASK PERFORMANCE  
DISCRETION CONTROLLING FOR TOTAL YEARS WORKED

Task Discretion With Respect To:		Nonwork Spillover					
		Thinking About Nonjob Things			Talking About Nonjob Things		
		Years of Work*					
		1-7	8-15	16 or More	1-7	8-15	16 or More
Workspeed	Yes	73	73	61	78	89	77
	No	78	74	75	81	85	81
Physical Movement	Yes	78	73	61	80	82	73
	No	76	74	79	80	86	82
Job Variety	Yes	78	76	72	84	88	83
	No	76	70	73	80	80	79
Relief Opportunities	Yes	70	71	68	79	79	81
	No	82	76	76	80	87	81

\* See Table 7 for cell N's.

TABLE 9

PER CENT OF FEMALE WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER BY TASK PERFORMANCE  
DISCRETION CONTROLLING FOR JOB TRAINING

		<u>Nonwork Spillover</u>							
		<u>Thinking About Nonjob Things</u>				<u>Talking About Nonjob Things</u>			
		<u>Job Training*</u>							
Task Discretion	With Respect To:	one week	1 week to 1 month	1 - 3 months	more than 3 months	one week	1 week to 1 month	1 - 3 months	more than 3 months
Workspeed	Yes	77	70	65	69	77	78	85	62
	No	85	75	69	57	84	85	75	86
Physical Movement	Yes	81	70	64	65	76	85	80	68
	No	84	75	68	59	81	82	74	88
Job Variety	Yes	91	73	71	59	90	84	86	71
	No	79	74	65	62	77	83	73	81
Relief Opportunities	Yes	81	72	57	62	81	82	72	78
	No	86	76	78	64	85	84	75	73

\*See Table 7 for cell N's.

TABLE 10

PER CENT OF FEMALE WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER BY TASK PERFORMANCE  
DISCRETION CONTROLLING FOR OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

Task Discretion With Respect to:		<u>Nonwork Spillover</u>					
		<u>Thinking About Nonjob Things</u>			<u>Talking About Nonjob Things</u>		
		<u>Occupational Status*</u>					
		Unskilled	Semiskilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Semiskilled	Skilled
Workspeed	Yes	71	68	73	74	85	64
	No	80	76	71	79	85	85
Physical Movement	Yes	68	73	69	73	76	41
	No	82	75	70	80	86	39
Job Variety	Yes	84	71	74	88	85	67
	No	74	78	67	73	86	62
Relief Opportunities	Yes	75	72	56	75	85	39
	No	82	78	77	80	84	55

\* See Table 7 for cell N's.

Table 11

PER CENT OF FEMALE WORKERS EXPERIENCING NONWORK SPILLOVER BY TASK PERFORMANCE  
DISCRETION CONTROLLING FOR JOB INVOLVEMENT

Task Discretion With Respect To:		<u>Nonwork Spillover</u>							
		<u>Thinking About Nonjob Things</u>				<u>Talking About Nonjob Things</u>			
		Little	Slight	Moderate	Strong	Little	Slight	Moderate	Strong
Workspeed	Yes	84	75	70	46	74	78	82	61
	No	90	86	69	50	82	71	87	80
Physical Movement	Yes	81	88	67	14	79	69	87	73
	No	93	81	70	38	79	82	86	73
Job Variety	Yes	94	82	74	48	88	80	90	74
	No	88	81	65	52	76	79	84	77
Relief Opportunities	Yes	65	80	67	32	78	78	85	64
	No	92	87	70	61	81	77	89	79

\* See Table 7 for cell N's.

while at work. Finally, Table 11 shows that among the women who are strongly involved in their jobs, the predicted relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover holds for women who have little discretion in "physical movement" and "relief opportunities," and who "think about nonjob things" while at work. Furthermore, the table shows that the relationship also holds for strongly involved women who have little choice concerning "workspeed" and "relief opportunities," and who "talk about nonjob things" during the working day.

While not all task performance measures, nor both nonwork spillover measures consistently showed evidence of a relationship when other variables were controlled, the fact still remains that a relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover did appear.

In summary, data analysis produced some support for the hypothesis that Australian blue collar workers will have little task performance discretion as they go about their work. Confirmation of this hypothesis was, for the most part, limited to female workers.

The second hypothesis which stated that Australian blue collar workers with little task performance discretion will be more likely to experience nonwork spillover than workers with discretion was not confirmed when the discretion measures were cross tabulated with the nonwork spillover measures. However, partial confirmation of the hypothesis

was found when certain test variables were introduced. Tested for possible suppressor effects were: age, years of work, education, job training, occupational status, and job involvement. Of these variables, all but age and education proved useful in the elaboration of the lack of relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover.

Analysis resulted in partial confirmation of the hypothesis among female workers who had greater experience in the work force, and who ranked high on job training, occupational status and job involvement. Table 12 summarizes the relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover, by indicating with a check where support of the hypothesis was found. A horizontal reading of the table shows that the relationship was confirmed most often on the independent variables of "workspeed," and "relief opportunities." "Physical movement" came in a close second, followed by "job variety." Vertically, Table 12 shows that most confirmation of the hypothesis was evident on the test variable of "job involvement" where four cases of support were found. Three instances of support were found using the test variables of "job training" and "occupational status," and finally, two cases of support were found on the test variable of "total years of work." In sum, 12 confirmations of the hypothesis out of 32 possible tests (i.e., 38%) were achieved.

TABLE 12

A SUMMARY OF SUPPORT FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TASK PERFORMANCE DISCRETION  
AND NONWORK SPILLOVER FOR EXPERIENCED, HIGH STATUS, INVOLVED WOMEN

Task Performance Discretion	Test Variables								Confirmations
	<u>Years of Work</u>		<u>Job Training</u>		<u>Occupational Status</u>		<u>Job Involvement</u>		
	Think	Talk	Think	Talk	Think	Talk	Think	Talk	
Workspeed	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	x	✓	4
Physical Movement	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	x	3
Job Variety	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	1
Relief Opportunities	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	4
Confirmations	2	0	0	3	1	2	2	2	12

## SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This paper began by discussing some past and present sociological interest in the relationship between work and nonwork. It was noted that the relationship has been discussed theoretically during the time of Durkheim and Weber, and investigated empirically in more recent studies by Wilensky. Other researchers have studied the actual direction that a work-nonwork relationship may take, which are usually broadly defined under either a segmental or a holist approach to social structure. This paper investigated the work-nonwork linkage under a body of theory that can be termed holist, where life outside of the workplace is seen to spill over into work.

Specifically, data on Australian blue collar workers were used to test two hypotheses which stated that: 1) blue collar workers will have little discretion in their work, and 2) that those workers with little discretion will be more likely than workers with discretion to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork.

Analysis found support for the first hypothesis, but only among female workers. Results indicated that Australian women, but not men, have little task performance discretion in their blue collar jobs. Generally, women have little discretion in the job features of job variety, physical movement, relief opportunities and workspeed.

Males, by contrast, have considerable discretion with respect to each of these features.

Further analysis did not confirm the second hypothesis. Among the Australian blue collar workers who are considered in the survey, those who reported little or no task performance discretion were no more likely than those with discretion to experience nonwork spillover. Even among the females, where task performance constraint was most prevalent, the results did not confirm the hypothesis, nor support the theory.

To investigate the lack of relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover, analysis shifted to a consideration of various factors that could be suppressing the true relationship between discretion and nonwork spillover. This additional analysis resulted in a finding that was not anticipated by Katz's theoretical considerations. After controlling for the possible suppressor effects of years worked, job training, occupation status, and job involvement, the results show that some of the female workers who rank high on these factors have little task performance discretion, and form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork. The reason for this finding is not totally clear, but a probable explanation may lie in the nature of the sexual inequality that characterizes men's and women's work in the labour force.

The argument is as follows: Katz believed that task performance constraint would be more likely to occur among those "persons in the lowest ranks with limited career prospects in their work and slight opportunity for advancement" (1965:290). To a certain extent, Katz was right, at least among the less skilled female blue collar workers in this study. However, a few of the females who have reached the more skilled positions in blue collar work are still confronted with little choice over the performance of their jobs. It was found that some of these women also form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork thus supporting Katz's theory, but probably not for the reasons he suggested.

Katz's theory is supported for the wrong reasons because the discretion constraint that is found among some of the highly skilled, highly trained women is a result not of the barter system between the organization and the individual as Katz would have it, but instead as a result of the devaluation of women's work regardless of the level of skill or training that they have achieved. Even highly skilled women are not necessarily satisfied with their work, as a study by Hedley and Taveggia (1975) has shown. In a study of British factory workers, these authors found "a weak, inverse relationship between skill and job satisfaction for female workers" (1975:10). Although this finding refers only to British women, it does lend support

to the argument that skilled blue collar jobs do not necessarily free women from various constraints, and make work more satisfying for them.

If we follow the argument that task performance constraint among some of the highly skilled, blue collar females is due to the nature of their work, then it is not surprising to find that these women experience nonwork spillover on the job. In fact we would expect them to form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork because of the constraint they find in their work. If after spending many years gaining experience in the labour force, and upon finally reaching a high skill, high status position, women find that their work is just as constraining as when they started out in the lower ranks, then it is highly probable that they will feel disillusioned and perhaps even fed-up with industrial work. As a result, women may "turn-off" from work as a source of satisfaction and pleasure, and instead find themselves spending their working hours daydreaming and talking about their life away from the job.

The situation of these women is seen more clearly when we refer back to Table 12. Here we see that the hypothesized relationship between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover is confirmed most often on the independent variables of workspeed, relief opportunities, and physical movement. Previous research has identified

these three variables as constraining factors most often associated with assembly line work where lack of choice is probably most prevalent (Taveggia and Hedley, 1976; Walker and Guest, 1952). Of the possible 24 tests of the hypothesis among these variables, confirmation occurred 11 times (i.e., 46%). On the variable job variety, a constraint factor not as strongly related to assembly line work, only 1 out of 8 possible tests (i.e., 12%) resulted in confirmation. Variety is thus not considered in the discussion to follow.

The test variable where confirmation is most often found is job involvement. On this variable, 4 out of 6 possible tests (i.e., 67%) resulted in confirmation. Of the four test variables, this represents the highest rate of confirmation, and the reason for this is attributable to the nature of the variable itself and the role it plays among these women. Unlike the ascribed status of years of work, where 2 out of 6 possible tests (i.e., 33%) resulted in confirmation, and unlike the achieved statuses of job training and occupational status, where 5 out of 12 possible tests (i.e., 42%) produced confirmation, the test variable job involvement is an attitude toward work which has a particular consequence for the women in this study who find constraint in their jobs and who also form a nonwork spillover relationship between work and nonwork.

The consequence suggested by Table 12, and which is

offered here as an explanation of the unanticipated results that are reported, is that some of the Australian women who have a high degree of job involvement find that they are faced with a very constraining work environment where they have little discretion in terms of their workspeed, their physical movement, and their relief opportunities. The blue collar woman who is involved in work finds that she is at the same time confronted by a high level of constraint which functions to block out meaningful attachment to work. Above all else, Table 12 demonstrates the futility and the frustration these women meet in attempting to find sources of meaning and interest in their work. The table suggests that they would like more involvement in their work, but at the same time the work that they do is constraining enough to discourage such meaningful involvement.

Thus the nonwork spillover that is found among some blue collar women in high skilled jobs, is due not to some specific means that the organization uses to recruit and integrate workers, but is due instead to the sexual inequality of the work place where women's work, no matter how skilled, is devalued in contrast to men's work.

Katz did not anticipate that nonwork spillover would occur among the advanced levels of the blue collar hierarchy. Nor can he be criticised on this point since he did precisely specify the type of blue collar worker who should experience nonwork spillover. The fact that some of

the highly skilled women have little choice and are nonwork oriented is an interesting side finding, but does not confirm Katz's theory. In fact, support for his theory is not readily available among the Australian data reported here. Only one hypothesis was confirmed, and it is conditional on the sex of the respondent.

Katz's hypotheses were generated out of a need to explain the structure of informal group relations as they occur within industrial organizations. More specifically, he wanted to relate the shop floor behaviour of blue collar workers with the organization's system of employee recruitment and integration. However, the sex differences that are reported in this study suggest that organizational theory, as it applies to American and Canadian industry, may not be applicable in Australia. Other research has documented between-sex and between-country differences among blue collar workers in Australia and America, (Hedley, Taveggia and Dubin, 1978), and others have raised the question whether "organizational theories proved valid in one national setting are equally applicable to others" (Lincoln, Olson and Hanada, 1978).

Alternatively, the nonconfirmation of Katz's theory reported here could be due to the fact that he engaged in ex post facto analysis using only illustrative data. Katz did not empirically test his theory on an appropriate sample of workers, but instead relied upon subjective data

previously collected by Roy (1960).

While more than three quarters of the male and the female workers reported that they experienced nonwork spillover, only the females had a significant degree of task performance constraint on the job. This leads to the conclusion that while nonwork spillover is quite common among the blue collar workers surveyed, it is not conditional upon task performance constraint. For the vast majority of men and women, there is no relationship between these two variables.

This conclusion is further strengthened by the results of additional analysis that examined the possible suppressor effects of four factors. After controlling for the effects of years worked, job training, occupational status and job involvement, no relationship was found between task performance discretion and nonwork spillover. The only exception to this finding occurred among a few highly skilled females who do have task performance constraint in their work, and who also do experience nonwork spillover. However, these women represent a special case among Australian blue collar workers because the nonwork spillover that they experience is not likely due to structural autonomy as a mechanism of worker integration instigated by the organization, but instead, it is probably due to their general status in the labour force vis-à-vis men.

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