Media and Mobilization: The Case of Radio and Southern Textile Worker Insurgency, 1929 to 1934

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The Organizational and Social Foundations of Worker Resistance

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The study of worker resistance has tended to focus either on organizational attributes that may alter actors' capacity to respond or on influential shop-floor social relations. This divide, partially driven by analytical and methodological preference, is also a function of different theoretical traditions. In this article, we suggest that organizational attributes and interpersonal relations in the workplace, in concert with union presence and collective action history, may be simultaneously but also conditionally meaningful for workers and their potential resistance strategies. Findings, derived from analyses of unique data on 82 workplace ethnographies and that merge Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) techniques and more conventional quantitative methods, largely support these expectations. Most notably, the impact of workplace organization and even union presence on worker resistance varies depending on social relations on the shop floor. Where there is union presence and significant interpersonal conflict with supervisors, the likelihood of collective resistance in the form of strike action is heightened. This pattern also holds for certain more individualized forms of worker resistance (i.e., social sabotage, work avoidance, and absenteeism). More central to individual resistance, however, are workplace contexts characterized by poor organization and a lack of collective action legacy. We conclude by discussing the implications of our results for future analyses of workplace social relations, workplace structure, and collective and individual resistance-oriented actions.

Worker resistance to real or perceived shortfalls of the contemporary workplace is a commonly occurring phenomenon. Despite some declines in recent decades, collective response in the form of union activity and strike action remains considerable and worthy of attention. Each year in the United States, for instance, more than 200,000 workers take part in work stoppages and strike action (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2001). Worker resistance can and often does take on individualized forms as well, such as sabotage, theft, and work avoidance—forms that are seldom studied given their subtle and often covert character (Jermier, Knights, and Nord 1994). Such actions, rather than being the mere product of delinquency, often reflect broader grievances about work organization and treatment on the job.

Worker resistance, particularly in its collective form, is patterned by broader societal dynamics pertaining to split labor markets (e.g., Brown and Boswell 1995; Bonacich 1972), the extent of elite cohesion (e.g., Jenkins and Perrow 1977; Pichardo 1995), legal-political structures (e.g., Burawoy 1985; Low-Beer 1978; McCammon 1993, 1994), and local cultural, kinship, familial and ascriptive attributes (Cornfield and Kim 1994; Lee 1998). Especially important will be the presence of unions, the

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resources they bring to bear, and collective action legacies (e.g., Kelly and Kelly 1991; Rubin 1996; Rubin, Griffin, and Wallace 1983). Yet, the grievances upon which collective and individual resistance strategies are founded are ultimately forged at the point of production—a fact highlighted in classical theoretical treatments (e.g., Marx 1971) and literature on rank and file activism (e.g., Brecher 1972; Kimeldorf 1999; Montgomery 1979; Scott 1985; see also Foucault 1988). Simply, workers' sense of dignity and satisfaction are formulated on an ongoing basis, and relative to what occurs in their particular workplaces.[1] Therefore, the workplace and its dynamics are the natural starting point for understanding how, why, and when workers contest.

Questions nevertheless remain about whether grievances and resistance unfold as a function of workplace organization or interpersonal mistreatment on the shop floor. Are workers more likely to strike in the case of abuse on the job, or are they more likely to protest incoherent workplace organization? Is an individual worker more likely to engage in sabotage or theft in a bureaucratized, more controlled work environment, or are such actions more likely to be triggered in the face of ongoing conflict with managers? A fundamental divide in the workplace literature exists on these questions. While differences in conclusions can be partly attributed to the methodological tendencies of organizational versus job-level research, or survey versus ethnographic designs, we believe that theoretical assumptions of each tradition are also involved.

In this article, we build upon and extend existing perspectives on collective and individual resistance, with a specific focus on the workplace as an often contested arena. Our discussion begins with the influence of workplace organization, and then we describe how interpersonal dynamics also may be important. Our theoretical discussion delineates how and why the bifurcated nature of this literature is problematic, and then offers an alternative understanding—one in which the effects of workplace organization and more proximate social relations are viewed in a conditional manner, and within the context of union presence and collective mobilization history. The data, comprising 82 workplace ethnographies, provide detailed information on worker-supervisor interpersonal relations and considerable variation in workplace organizational structure. Our unique use of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) techniques in concert with quantitative methods allows for the examination of unique configurations of organizational and interpersonal dynamics that either diminish or exacerbate collective and individual resistance. Indeed, findings reveal cross-level configurations that are conducive to both collective resistance, in the form of strike participation, and more individualized forms, such as sabotage, theft, and absenteeism. We conclude by discussing our results, the need for simultaneous examination of both organizational structures and social relations in the workplace, and what our findings suggest relative to prior and future research on worker well-being and insurgent action.

WORKPLACE ORGANIZATION

Associations between workplace organization, worker well-being, and resistance-oriented action have always been at the core of sociological theory (Collins 1981). Marx (1967, 1971), of course, clearly denoted the impact of structural and technological innovations, with the assumption that such transitions would create conflict and eventual resistance by alienating workers from their creative potentials, from the labor process and product, and from their fellow workers. Durkheim (1984) and Weber (1968), respectively, similarly noted inherent tensions associated with the "forced division of labour" and the ever-constraining impact of bureaucratization on workers.

It should thus come as no surprise, given these rich, early insights, that the issue of workplace organization and worker response has continued to demand the attention of sociologists, particularly since the emergence of Taylorism and scientific management in the early twentieth century. Indeed, Taylor (1911)

[1] This is not to suggest, of course, that inequality in other institutional areas (e.g., family, education, etc.) or dynamics outside of particular workplaces (e.g., segregation) may not intrude upon workplace resistance. They certainly may. What occurs in workplaces organizationally and socially, however, is more paramount. That is, day-to-day and more proximate workplace organization and social relations will hold the greatest implications for the resistance strategies undertaken in any given workplace.

himself recognized that resistance would occur, but suggested that the promise of higher material rewards and careful selection of employees could mitigate any disruptive potential. Take, for instance, his now classic (and quite derogatory) discussion of introducing specialization into pig iron work, and the importance of selecting the right employees:

> Now one of the very first requirements for a man who is fit to handle a pig iron as a regular occupation is that he shall be so stupid and so phlegmatic that he more nearly resembles in his mental make-up the ox than any other type. The man who is mentally alert and intelligent is for this very reason entirely unsuited to what would, for him, be the grinding monotony of work of this character. Therefore the workman who is best suited to handling the pig iron is unable to understand the real science of doing this class of work. He is so stupid that the word "percentage" has no meaning to him, and he must consequently be trained by a man more intelligent than himself into the habit of working in accordance with the laws of this science before he can be successful. (Taylor 1911:41)

Unlike Taylor, more contemporary social scientists have been more critical of workplace organizational transformation by highlighting the consequences for workers themselves. Dunlop (1958) and Blauner (1964), for instance, were concerned with resulting declines in worker autonomy and a shift in power from workers to managers and supervisors. Braverman (1974) was worried about the deskilling of workers via specialization and, consequently, the dissection of mental and physical labor. R. Edwards (1979) and Burawoy (1979, 1985) note that increasing bureaucratic control of workers over time not only may depress levels of worker power and satisfaction, but also may result in significant conflict on the shop floor. More likely, however, bureaucratic workplaces with pronounced organization and divisions of labor will mitigate the potential for class consciousness and action by constraining workers to their job tasks and by channeling broader grievances and conflicts through organizational channels (Wright 2002).[2]

Along with bureaucratization, a second crucial characteristic of organizations has implications for worker well-being and resistance—an organization's ability to maintain coherent and integrated production activities (Barnard 1950; Dunlop 1958; Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939). Organizational norms specify that management is responsible for maintaining a coherent and effective system of production that allows employees to meet the demands of their jobs (Whitener et al. 1998). Coherent organizational procedures are essential for organizational effectiveness (Bass 1985), the maintenance of management legitimacy (Della Fave 1980), and an organizational climate in which confidence and good will can replace rigid or coercive systems of coordination, inspection, and evaluation (Burawoy 1985; Pfeffer 1998). Without effective organization, workplaces become characterized by chaos and abuse (Juravich 1985).

Students of organizations suggest that a wide range of positive consequences follow from organizational coherence and integration (Barker 1999; Moore 1962; Smith 2001). These include increased citizenship on the part of employees and the creation of a more cooperative and less conflictual workplace (Pfeffer 1998). We thus expect organizational coherence to play a prominent role in mitigating both formal and informal worker resistance. In effect, organizational coherence and integration create

[2] One critique that can be made of the organizational literature is that it tends to treat resistance in strictly classic terms, as solely collective in nature, and often driven by class polarization and class identity among workers. While we do not disagree that such manifestations reflect class resistance, they are but one form. Indeed, important theorizing on the topic of class action suggests that collective resistance in the form of reformatory action is a viable, not to mention more practical, alternative for workers (Giddens 1982; Mann 1973; Rubin 1986). Such action typically emerges at key temporal moments, and often *precedes* overt manifestations of class solidarity (Fantasia 1988; Letwin 1998; Roscigno and Danaher 2001). Furthermore, workers have at their disposal a repertoire of individual actions that can be, and often are, used to exert class interests on the shop floor (Halle 1984; Jermier 1988; Molstad 1986). Following Hodson (1996:722), such actions are "attempts to defend or regain dignity in the face of work organizations that violate workers' interests, limit their prerogatives, or otherwise undermine their autonomy." Without taking into account these alternative forms of resistance, as we do in the analyses that follow, sociological accounts of workplace change and worker response (or lack thereof) become overly determined and devoid of primary forms of human agency.

at least a limited sphere of shared interests between employees and management. Where such coherence and integration are missing, employees may define management as illegitimate (Halaby 1986). Employees also may feel that their individual and collective interests in taking pride in secure and stable work are threatened (Hodson 2001a).

SOCIAL RELATIONS AT WORK

The literature on workplace organization, previously discussed, typically accords causal priority to organizational structure above and beyond social dynamics occurring on the shop floor. Poor interpersonal relations in the form of conflict and supervisory abuse, if they are dealt with at all, tend to be viewed as byproducts of organizational structure rather than causal agents in their own right (e.g., Burawoy 1985; Edwards 1992). We would not deny that associations at organizational and interpersonal levels exist. Far from it. One can easily see, for instance, how a high level of bureaucracy might decrease the need for, or likelihood of, more abusive and conflictual manager-worker relations. It is important to note, however, that there is social and interpersonal variability internal to any particular organizational form—facts that must be considered when generating theoretical models of worker behavior and the realities of workplaces.

Variations in social relations, and worker treatment and conflict with managers more specifically, may hold implications for workers' sense of injustice above and beyond workplace structural arrangements. Recent sociological research concurs on this point. Vallas (1987:252), for instance, analyzes intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of workplaces simultaneously, concluding that "it is not the tasks workers perform, but the broader treatment they receive at the hands of management that impinges on their level of class consciousness" (see also Vallas 2003). Hodson (1999) similarly finds that conflict with and abuse by managers erodes worker citizenship, even with work characteristics and organizational structural variations controlled.

Juravich (1985) provides ethnographic detail pertaining to the point we are making. Here, in a wire manufacturing company, the dynamic nature of workplace interpersonal relations, worker interpretation of abusive managerial behavior, and resistance in the form of sabotage become quite apparent:

> [Bobby] was originally called to make a small adjustment on the depth of the machine's applicator. It was a simple adjustment accomplished by loosening a single screw. In a normally equipped shop it would have been a five-minute job, but Bobby could not find the proper screwdriver. We searched all the toolboxes, but the screwdrivers were either too large or had been ground at the ends. Bobby asked Carroll [the boss] if he could buy a screwdriver at the hardware store down the street. Carroll refused and told him to grind one of the ones we had. Bobby tried, but ended up stripping the screwhead so badly that nothing could get it out. Then Carroll came to the floor and in typical fashion chewed Bobby out in front of everybody. After Carroll left, Bobby brought the applicator over to the bench and ... used a ten-pound copper mallet to smash a machine part that cost hundreds of dollars to replace. (Juravich 1985:135–136)

As this example suggests, workers hold a normative sense of what constitutes proper managerial ethics. Such ethics include good leadership, knowledge of the labor process, and fair and respectable treatment of employees (Brody 1960; Halaby 1986; Moore 1962).

Whether social relations at work exert an independent effect on workers with implications for resistance is a difficult question to answer. Theorizing on legitimacy, interpretation, and the emergence of insurgent action, however, does provide some basis for predicting that social relations at work make a difference. This literature suggests, most generally, that insurgency at group and individual levels requires not only grievances about structural inequalities and constraints, but also an understanding and interpretation that puts a malicious or greedy face on the suffering that is occurring (Gamson 1995). Such causal interpretation provides potential actors with not only a more concrete target, but also an essentially moral justification for acts of resistance and contention (Roscigno and Danaher 2001; Snow and Benford 1992; see also Della Fave 1980, 1986). It remains unclear, however, whether patterns of managerial behavior and worker response uncovered in qualitative accounts of the shop floor are, in fact, due to unmeasured organizational differences. The methodology typically employed is understandably case-oriented, which is detailed and useful in providing rich

insight into the active nature of workers and workplaces. However, such methodology usually constrains observations to one or a small set of environments. Thus, the wide continuum of organizational practices (from poorly to carefully organized, and from informal to highly bureaucratic), within which the micropolitical context of manager-worker relations are played out and possibly even conditioned, is largely missing.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND SOCIAL INTERPLAY WITHIN UNION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Sound sociological theory brings together awareness of structure and action and their potentially reinforcing and/or conditional nature (Giddens 1984; Lawler, Ridgeway, and Markovsky 1993). For our purposes, this entails not only simultaneous consideration of workplace organization structure and interpersonal relations, but also their possible joint impact on worker collective and individual action within union and historical contexts.

There is good reason to expect that organizational structure and social relations condition one another and, thus, have contingent effects on worker grievances and resistance strategies. First, as Burawoy (1985) has noted in one of the most developed treatments, worker-supervisor relations on the shop floor may be driven partially by organizational structure. Thus, all else being equal, workers will likely prefer consistency and integration in the structure of the organization and the behavior of the managers. Bureaucratic, well-organized work sites, for instance, procedurally constrain managers, at least to some extent, from adopting abusive tones and also provide institutional outlets for conflict resolution. Such a straightforward theoretical linkage, nevertheless, overlooks the often loose coupling between organizational setup and the capacity of actors (including workers and managers) to act independently of those structures. Moreover, causal and analytic priority in this association is given to organizational structure, even though such structure is fundamentally dependent on individuals complying with and, in fact, re-creating it. To be sure, the constraint of action by organizational structure may be the case much of the time. However, our theoretical models must also acknowledge agency[3] on the shop floor, its impact on organization, and possible organizational and interpersonal inconsistencies that may emerge (Vallas 2003).

Table 1 presents standard predictions regarding worker resistance, and then our conditional framework. The workplace organizational model suggests that well-run, bureaucratic work environments will experience less resistance due to institutionalized grievance procedures, greater control over the method and pace of production, and clear delineation of job tasks. A focus purely on social relations, in contrast, would suggest that poor interpersonal relations especially between workers and their supervisors will trigger resistance-oriented action.

We recognize the possibility that organizational and interpersonal factors may act independently in fostering resistance. Our conception, however, views these workplace features as mutually dependent. Well-organized, bureaucratic workplaces with little interpersonal conflict and abuse, for instance, will generate lower levels of resistance, while poorly organized, more informal work environments with poor social relations will display higher levels. Note, however, that our conditional conception also allows for disjuncture across levels. We base this on our previous assumption that organizational actors, including managers and workers, have significant agency. Flexibility in how one interprets organizational requirements and procedures can generate a loose coupling of organizational structure and interpersonal behavior. Such would be the case in a well organized and bureaucratic work environment with significant worker-manager conflict, or in a workplace that is poorly organized but has relative stability due to good management on the shop floor. Such situations will likely generate resistance, although its extent may be mitigat-

[3] By agency, we are referring to the objective capacity of individuals to act collectively or individually in a manner that either reinforces or undermines prevalent social relations and organizational structure. For the purposes of the analyses that follow, we suspect that significant agency is often expressed by workers and managers even in the face of some constraint and possible sanctions that expressions of agency might entail.

Table 1. Theoretical Models and Empirical Predictions Pertaining to Worker Resistance

Workplace Organization Model	Workplaces characterized by formal organizational structures and procedures will exhibit less worker resistance. This may be due to several factors, including formal organizational capacity to deal with grievances, greater workplace bureaucratic control, and clear specification and constraints on job duties and responsibilities.
Social Relations Model	Interpersonal relations in the workplace (e.g., abuse by managers and conflict between managers and workers) will provoke resistance by violating workers' normative expectations and thus helping to legitimate or justify resistance-oriented action.
Conditional Model	The impact of workplace organization on worker resistance will be conditional on worker-manager relations, and vice versa. Specifically, well-organized, bureaucratic environments may foster lower levels of worker resistance, although this will likely vary depending on levels of managerial abuse and worker-manager conflict. Workplaces characterized by poor and informal organization, in contrast, will experience heightened resistance at both collective and individual levels, although this may be buffered by good shop floor social relations.
Union and Legacy Model	Workplaces characterized by historical class identity and union presence will be more amenable to labor organization and activity. Direct and more aggressive forms of individual resistance may be more notable. Such effects, however, may be conditional upon organizational and interpersonal dynamics within workplaces.

ed by positive organizational or interpersonal features of those very workplaces.

Beyond acknowledging organizational and social dynamics and the contingent impact they may have, theoretical formulations of worker resistance must also be sensitive to preexisting differences in labor organization, class identity, and legacies of collective action (Cotgrove and Vamplew 1972; Griffin, Botsko, Wahl, and Isaac 1991; Vallas 1987). For this reason, Table 1 includes an additional prediction concerning union presence and historical legacy effects.

Union presence may bolster the likelihood of worker resistance (Ashenfelter and Johnson 1969; Edwards 1996; Rubin 1986). This expectation of a positive impact parallels broader theorizing and research on social movement organizations and the role they play in providing movements and movement participants with financial and informational support, networks, ideological framing, and recruitment, all of which are essential to get a movement off the ground and ensure its survival (e.g., Isaac and Christiansen 2002; Jenkins and Eckert 1986; Staggenborg 1989). Historically grounded analyses of unions, however, reach a more nuanced interpretation. Kimeldorf's (1999) detailed account of striking longshoremen and hotel and restaurant workers in the early 1900s, for instance, denotes a somewhat variable union role—a role that often depends on a given union's ability to tap into worker consciousness and radicalism already forged at the point of production. Rubin, Griffin, and Wallace (1983) similarly recognize the somewhat tenuous relationship between unions and activism, suggesting that pre-existing militancy on the shop floor along with political opportunity may condition the association and perhaps even precede union involvement.

A historical legacy of resistance, while often related to union presence, may be influential in its own right. Drawing from broader theoretical arguments pertaining to the sequential nature of social causation (for instance, see Abbott 1995), recent research has begun to delineate the importance of path dependence, or how temporally prior political processes and policies influence those that follow (e.g., Pierson 2000, 2001). Formal and informal resistance behaviors may similarly be shaped by successive processes. Past insurgency, for instance, may be meaningful for future action through the establishment of interpersonal and organizational networks (Minkoff 1997; Shin 1994) along with the forging of oppositional frameworks, identity, and abeyance structures that can be explicitly activated at a later point (Taylor 1989). Research on past and contemporary worker resistance, using a variety of methodologies, concurs with these possibilities. Specifically, a legacy of challenge and its level of success or failure have implica-

tions for future organizing (Griffin, McCammon, and Botsko 1990), the degree of worker quiescence (Edwards and Hyman 1994; Shalev 1992), and the development of critical consciousness among workers (Fantasia 1988; Kelly and Kelly 1991).

Union and historical legacy effects, as noted above, certainly may be independent of those resulting from the internal features of workplaces. We suspect, however, that union presence and mobilization history will have varying effects depending upon the actual, current experiences of workers on the shop floor—a conditional expectation derived from historically grounded analyses and interpretations of union activity, shop floor experiences, and worker contestation (e.g., P. Edwards 1978; Isaac and Griffin 1989; Kimeldorf 1999; Roscigno and Danaher 2004; Rubin, Griffin and Wallace 1983; Snyder 1975).

DATA

Our data are derived from the systematic coding of all book-length workplace organizational ethnographies pertaining to the United States and England (N = 82). Each represents an average of over a year in the field, with at least as much additional time spent in analysis and writing. The accumulated record of organizational ethnographies is based on more than 160 years of Ph.D. level observation and interpretation. Until recently, this rich data resource has remained largely unanalyzed by social scientists studying organizations (see Hammersley 1997; Schwartzman 1993). The systematic analysis of data from a comprehensive set of organization ethnographies takes advantage of the depth and range of observation offered by ethnographies, while avoiding the limits of analyzing a single case (Ragin 2000). Indeed, such data allow us to move beyond the bifurcation between case study analysis and large sample analysis evident in much prior work. Systematic coding of workplace ethnographies allows for detail pertaining to managerial behavior and worker resistance strategies, while also providing considerable variation in the organizational structure and significant representation across occupation and industry (Table 2).

The current analysis thus brings to bear data representing sustained in-depth observation of the workplace and workplace relations of a sort that is rarely utilized outside of specific case study settings. There are, nevertheless, certain limitations worth mentioning, not the least of which is the underlying assumption that these data constitute a realist account of the organizational structure and worker behavior existing in each workplace. Each ethnographer, in summarizing his or her experiences, chose to report certain events as typical. These events then form the basis of our codings (Van Maanen 1998; Lee 1999). The prevalence of a common frame of reference in these workplace studies allows the coding of key indicators across volumes (see Schwartzman 1993; but see also Blee and Billings 1986). The current analysis thus summarizes the available ethnographic evidence on the workplace and goes well beyond traditional analyses of ethnographic data by introducing probabilistic logic and affording comparative leverage across organizational types.

Generalizations derived from these data and applied to the population of all organizations must admittedly be made with some caution. The cases analyzed do not necessarily reflect a representative sample of all organizations. Rather the data represent the population of available ethnographic evidence on organizations, and conclusions from their analysis must be interpreted in that light.[4] The significant variations in industrial representation (Table 2), as well as the generally wide representation along the dimensions of workplace organization and social relations, nevertheless bolster our confidence in the utility of these data relative to analyses of single cases.

WORKER RESISTANCE MEASURES

Consistent with our previous discussion, it is important to measure both collective forms of resistance and more informal, individual strategies. The ethnographic data described earlier provide both, and the relevant variables are described in Table 3. For analytic purposes,

[4] The codesheet, coding protocol, and data are available at http://www.soc.sbs.ohio-state.edu/rdh/Workplace-Ethnography-Project.html. As with any content analysis project, we may have made errors in the interpretation of the texts or in the coding of the data. The data, however, are available for public scrutiny and analysis and we welcome suggestions, criticisms, and alternative views on the recorded data.

Table 2. Distribution of Ethnographies by Industry and Occupation (N = 82)

	%	Cases (n)
Industry		
Extractive	8.5	7
Construction	3.7	3
Non-Durable Foods	4.9	4
Textile Products	3.7	3
Paper Production	1.2	1
Chemical Production	8.5	7
Lumber and Wood Products	2.4	2
Metal Products	4.9	4
Machinery/Electrical Products	3.7	3
Transportation Equipment	8.5	7
Professional Equipment	4.9	4
Transportation/Communications and Other Public Services	9.8	8
Sanitation Services	1.2	1
Retail Trade	4.9	4
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	11.0	9
Business and Repair Services	1.2	1
Personal Services	8.5	7
Professional and Related Services	4.9	4
Public Administration	3.7	3
Occupation[a]		
Professional	8.5	7
Managerial	8.5	7
Clerical	9.8	8
Sales	1.2	1
Skilled	13.4	11
Assembly	31.7	26
Unskilled	9.8	8
Service	12.2	10
Farm	4.9	4

[a] Data in the "Occupation" section is from within the "Industry" population total of 82.

each of these outcomes as well as all independent variables are measured dichotomously.

Collective resistance is indicated by a strike occurrence during the period of observation. As noted in Table 3, approximately 21 percent of the establishments included in the sample experienced such a strike. As noteworthy, if not more so, is the prevalence of individual resistance strategies, including social sabotage, work avoidance, playing dumb, absenteeism, and theft.[5] Each of these measures is coded 0 if the occurrence was not observed or was rarely observed. For those workplaces coded 1, the particular form of individual resistance was observed often or was even prevalent in the particular workplace. In nearly half of the workplaces observed, social sabotage and absenteeism were witnessed as relatively commonplace. In more than half, significant work avoidance was observed. Theft and playing dumb are less pronounced, yet their consistent observation in 20 to 27 percent of the

[5] In preliminary analyses we also examined machine sabotage. Incidences of machine sabotage, however, are rare relative to the other forms of individual resistance. This may be a function of the seriousness of such behavior which, unlike the others, is a legally criminal act. We also suspect that machine sabotage is quite distinct in that such behaviors will be more constrained by the technology, the organization of production, and the resulting opportunities and limits on workers' actions. Given this uniqueness, both in terms of its actual statistical occurrence and the processes that likely guide its occurrence, machine sabotage and its analyses are not reported alongside those of other individual resistance strategies.

Table 3. Definitions, Coding, and Means for Dependent Variables

Variable	Definition	Coding	Mean
Collective Resistance			
Striking	Whether there was a strike during the period of observation	0 = none 1 = strike occurred	.207
Individual Resistance			
Social Sabotage	Undermining of superiors through mocking and ridicule	0 = not/rarely observed 1 = observed often/prevalent	.427
Work Avoidance	Avoiding work and/or work tasks	0 = not/rarely observed 1 = observed often/prevalent	.573
Playing Dumb	Pretending not to understand particular job tasks or organizational procedures	0 = not/rarely observed 1 = observed often/prevalent	.270
Absenteeism	Absenteeism as a response to workplace problems	0 = not/rarely observed 1 = observed often/prevalent	.451
Theft	Stealing while on the job	0 = not/rarely observed 1 = observed often/prevalent	.195

workplaces investigated reveals that these are by no means rare occurrences.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONS MEASURES, AND UNION PRESENCE/STRIKE HISTORY

The use of QCA, which we describe in the upcoming analytic strategy section, forces us to focus on a limited number of independent variables that are closely tied to the theoretical concerns addressed previously. We thus focus attention on arguably the two most important organizational structural attributes, bureaucracy and coherent organization, and on two key indicators of workplace social relations, management abuse and workplace conflict. Along with these, and consistent with our interest in possible union and historical legacy variations, are indicators of union presence and strike history at the workplace. These variables are described in Table 4.

Bureaucratic organizations, which comprise approximately 60 percent of the sample, are those wherein operational control of daily procedures resides in written rules. Such rules include day to day operations of production as well as grievance procedures and avenues. While virtually all contemporary workplaces entail at least nominal bureaucracy, this indicator is scored "yes" only for those cases in which the actual de facto control of the work process is

Table 4. Organizational and Social Relations Measures and Macro/Historical Elements

Variable	Definition	Coding	Mean
Organizational Attributes			
Bureaucratic (BUREAU)	Workplace bureaucratically organized—operational control of daily procedures resides in written rules	0 = no 1 = yes	.595
Good Organization (GOODORG)	Coherence and integration of production practices	0 = adequate or less 1 = good or exceptional	.351
Social Relations			
Managerial Abuse (ABUSE)	Verbal, emotional, or physical abuse by supervisor of individual employees	0 = never or rarely 1 = sometimes or common	.402
Workplace Conflict (CONFLICT)	Ongoing conflict between workers and supervisors	0 = never or rarely 1 = sometimes or common	.354
Union and Legacy Measures			
Union Presence (UNION)	Union representation in the particular workplace	0 = no union presence 1 = union presence	.598
History of Strikes (HIST)	Workplace has experienced strikes in the past	0 = no strikes in the past 1 = strikes in the past	.171

governed by bureaucratic rules. The use of bureaucratic rules for governing promotions and other job-related benefits is not sufficient for an organization to be considered bureaucratically organized. An example from an ethnographic study of an insurance company illustrates a significant use of bureaucratic rules in the daily organization of work tasks:

> The largest source of dissatisfaction for Kevin, however, is the bureaucratic framework of Servall, with its routinized work patterns and its restricted autonomy: ". . . I'm in a framework, a corporate framework, where I have to abide by their rules and regulations for everything, which gets to me because of all the bureaucratic junk that I have to go through to complete something. I know there's a faster way to do something, but I have to follow their ways, which is frustrating sometimes." (Burris 1983:157)

The measure of bureaucracy is distinct from that capturing good workplace organization. Good organization entails a coherence and integration of production practices including but not limited to the availability of materials, the efficiency of work flow, and the organization of work specific tasks. Those establishments that were good or exceptional on this dimension were coded 1, while others were coded 0. Distributions across these two organizational measures suggest considerable variation in the workplace organizational structure in this sample of ethnographies.

Managerial abuse and conflict are arguably the most important dimensions of workplace social relations, and they have implications for worker satisfaction, grievance interpretation, and resistance behaviors. Our indicator of abuse includes whether or not verbal, emotional, or physical abuse of employees by supervisors was witnessed as a common occurrence during the observation period. In the quote from a wiring harness manufacturer described previously, the example of a supervisor yelling at a worker in front of other workers illustrates such abuse. Specific incidents of abuse are distinct from our measure of conflict, which taps into ongoing, systematic animosities between groups of workers and supervisors. A notable 40 percent of workplaces examined had significant levels of supervisory abuse toward individual employees, while 35 percent of workplaces displayed evidence of ongoing conflict between supervisors and workers.

Conflict in the form of gossip, backbiting, and character assassination in a situation of chronic mismanagement is reported in an ethnographic study of a British apparel factory:

> There was no suggestion from the women in John's department that management had either the right or the ability to manage. Instead, the women were constantly critical of management. They asked, 'When are they going to manage? After all, it's what they get paid for and it's a darn sight more than we get.' The [lead workers] especially, were very critical of management:
> Gracie: The trouble with this place is we never know what's happening and it's my bet that management don't know either. . . .
> Jessie: Either we've got no work or there's a bloody panic on here. I ask you, what do management do with their time? I reckon I could do better myself than this lot. This place never runs smoothly. . . .
> Edna: I agree, they tell you one thing, you get ready to do it and then it doesn't arrive. We could do better ourselves, I don't know what this lot get paid for. (Westwood 1984:25–26)

Conversely, an example of infrequent conflict with managers is provided by an ethnographic study of copy machine repair workers, which reports that "most technicians enjoy informal, casual relationships with their immediate managers, most of whom have recently been technicians themselves" (Orr 1996:68).

Along with organizational and social features, we include indicators of union presence and strike history for reasons explained previously. Union presence denotes whether there is union representation at the particular workplace. Approximately 60 percent of the workplaces examined have some form of union presence, while 17 percent of the establishments had experienced strikes in their respective histories, according to the ethnographic accounts. Although ethnographic accounts may underestimate strike history, due to limitations in the ethnographers' knowledge of the particular workplace history, we suspect that this measure remains a reasonable indicator. Indeed, if an ethnographer garnered information about past strikes from a recorded history or especially from workers themselves, then that history likely continues to be consequential for workers' perceptions, consciousness, and available repertoires of resistance.

ANALYTIC STRATEGY AND RESULTS

We analyze configurations of workplace organization and workplace social relations, along with union presence and strike history, using a combination of QCA techniques, based on Boolean logic (Ragin 1987), and more conventional quantitative methods. This multi-method strategy affords us the ability to adopt QCA's case-oriented logic and reductive power, while simultaneously extending its typical (deterministic) usage in a more probabilistic manner.

QCA forces the analyst to consider all possible combinations of causal factors and, with its comparative algorithmic logic, eliminates redundant and superfluous information. The benefits of QCA, which lie in its ability to specify configurations of variables relative to all theoretical possibilities and their implications for various social outcomes, are being increasingly recognized in social science research. Recent articles using this method, for instance, have focused on wage policies and social welfare programs (Amenta and Halfmann 2000), the emergence of the social security system (Hicks 1994a), strikebreaking and split labor markets (Brown and Boswell 1995; Brueggemann and Boswell 1998), patterns of union growth and decline (Ebbinghaus and Visser 1999; Griffin et al. 1991), labor policies in Southern textile mills (Coverdill, Finlay, and Martin 1994), the success or failure of left-libertarian political parties (Redding and Viterna 1999), and the success or failure of mobilization drives among the homeless (Cress and Snow 2000).

QCA is uniquely suited to address our theoretical arguments, especially the potential conditional relations described earlier, given its ability to analyze complex conjunctures of causes in relation to a particular outcome. The method, however, is not without certain limitations—limitations that have received considerable attention recently (e.g., Abbott 2001; Hicks 1994b; Lieberson 2001). These include being constrained to a limited number of independent variables because of the conditional logic of QCA and the number of configurations generated. The inclusion of large numbers of independent variables makes interpretation exponentially unwieldy. Consequently, the researcher using QCA is forced to specify and focus on variables deemed theoretically important to the processes outlined. One might interpret this as a methodological weakness in that an array of control variables cannot be included as in the typical regression model. We believe, however, that the benefits of QCA—theoretical rigor in choosing variables in the first place, its case-oriented logic, and the specification of potentially complex, conditional configurations—outweigh the costs (see also Boswell and Brown 1999; Griffin et al. 1991; Ragin 2000).

A more serious limitation, in our view, is the typically deterministic character of QCA results. In common usage, results are derived from a logical reduction of configurations that are positively related to the outcome. That is, configurations of variables are usually generated in relation to the outcome always being coded "1" (i.e., yes or present), and then reduced by the program by logically teasing out redundancy and irrelevant factors. While useful in denoting conditions under which an event always occurs, this approach to using QCA does not make full use of the data and does not capture tendencies, variations, and divergences from absolutes in the real world. Specifically, information on configurations associated with a negative (0) outcome on the dependent variable or configurations associated with a contradictory outcome (where some cases in the configuration are coded 1 on the outcome of interest and other cases are 0) is usually not presented or considered. This is unfortunate, as configurations that are associated with 1, 0, and contradiction represent the actual degree of variation in the relation between the explanatory pattern and the dependent variable.[6] Acknowledging especially contradictory configurations and their relation to the dependent variable of interest can introduce probabilistic possibilities and interpretations into the typically restrictive QCA model. Ragin (2000:133) concurs on this point,

[6] It is for this reason and others that the first step in QCA, the generation of a truth table displaying the observed configurations and the outcome variable, is arguably the most important step (Boswell and Brown 1999). It helps analysts establish the coverage of their data, relative to all theoretically possible cases. Moreover, considering contradictory and negative cases within a truth table is essential to "guard against making spurious inferences and to reinforce conclusions drawn from positive cases" (Griffin et al. 1991).

suggesting how researchers can and should explore non-deterministic configurational patterns through the use of percentages, probabilities, and even *t* tests. In doing so, one can arguably show how the prevalence of an outcome for a particular configuration of attributes differs from that of another group or from some predefined standard set by the researcher.

Our modeling takes these criticisms and suggestions to heart by utilizing QCA to generate and then logically reduce all configurations represented in the data by eliminating superfluous information. The result is essentially a set of organizational typologies—typologies that denote unique combinations of attributes in the data. More specifically, these configurations denote the minimum number of factors (i.e., variables) and configurations of factors needed to logically cover all positive (1), negative (0), and contradictory cases in the data. The theoretical benefit here lies in the preservation of a case-oriented focus—a focus that underlies QCA—and the need for theoretical clarity in selection of variables. And, relative to more commonly used quantitative methods, such as OLS or logistic regression, we begin with the assumption that there exist cases (types of workplaces) with meaningful combinations of attributes.[7]

The typical use of QCA relies on a second reductive step in which further Boolean algebraic reduction identifies any deterministic correspondence between configurational attributes and a positive (or a negative) outcome on the dependent variable. Instead of relying on this second step, which is limited in dealing with probabilistic patterns and the degree of variation across outcomes as noted previously, we undertake a two-pronged multi-method strategy wherein (1) QCA's initial reduction procedure is used to identify nonredundant configurations in the data, and (2) we then analyze these configurations and their associations with collective and individual resistance using more conventional, quantitative methods.[8] Specifically, we use *t* tests to make proportional comparisons between the distribution of outcomes for a given configuration and that of the outcomes for cases not captured by that configuration. We ask, simply, is a given configuration associated with the dependent variable, and is this association significantly and statistically distinct from cases not captured by the configuration? For ease of interpretation, ratios of configuration percentages to nonconfiguration percentages on the dependent variable are used, with asterisks denoting statistically significant effects.

Beyond addressing positive, negative, and contradictory associations, and thus providing a more probabilistic interpretation of patterns, our strategy has the added benefit of offering some comparative leverage when examining multiple dependent variables. By selecting positive, negative, and contradictory configura-

[7] As suggested by Griffin et al. (1991) and Ragin 1987), the assumptions of QCA are fundamentally distinct from more conventional quantitative methods that attempt to tease out effects of individual variables, thus abstracting or stripping variables from the cases within which they exist. "Real cases, however, are comprised of attributes and their relational configurations, and it is the precise *constellation* of these relationships which makes one case different from another" (Griffin et al. 1991:133; emphasis in original). Conventional quantitative modeling can certainly capture unique configurational combinations with the introduction of interaction effects, although the typical usage tends to focus on effects of individual variables rather than on cases that fall into some form of typological category. Moreover, to adopt a full configurational approach in OLS or logistic regression, for instance, would require a test of all possible interactional combinations. In our case, with six independent variables, this would amount to testing all possible two-way, three-way, four-way, five-way, and six-way interactions, many of which may contain redundant information and some of which do not actually exist in the data.

[8] The cost of our approach is that it is limited in making causal, as opposed to associational, claims. This is why we do not use the typical QCA descriptive terminology of "necessary" or "sufficient" in our discussion or results. Nevertheless, since organizational structures and social relations in the workplace, not to mention union presence and strike history, were most assuredly intact prior to observation of resistance-oriented behavior, it seems reasonable to allow some causal interpretation. Moreover, our consistent findings even when retesting associations using logistic regression techniques bolster the likelihood that the associations we are describing may be of the causal variety. Assuredly, though, any ultimate test of causal claims necessitates longitudinal data.

tions for the initial reduction, QCA begins with the entire truth table (all observed configurations; see Appendix Table 1).[9] The configurations generated with QCA will thus be the same across dependent variables. Yet, the pattern of associations across configurations for the different outcomes, derived from our quantitative comparisons, may differ. This allows us to draw substantive conclusions pertaining to the configurational relationship to collective action (i.e., striking) relative to more individual-level resistance strategies.

We begin by examining collective resistance manifest in the form of strike occurrence (Table 5). The key question is, what factors and/or configurations of factors enhance or diminish the likelihood of strike action? The notation used to report configurations follows QCA conventions. The presence of a particular workplace attribute is indicated by capital letters, while the absence of that characteristic is denoted by lowercase letters. An asterisk indicates "and," and denotes that all of the conjoined attributes are part of the configuration. We also report the total number of cases captured by the configuration and the distribution (raw number and percentage) on the outcome. For reasons of interpretation, and as noted previously, we standardize this percentage by the average for cases not in the configuration, thus generating a more interpretable ratio. Values greater than one indicate a positive association and a generally greater likelihood of a strike occurrence among cases in the configuration (relative to those cases not in the configuration). In contrast, values less than one suggest a depressant effect. Where such effects are statistically significant, they are so denoted with asterisks. To highlight the strength of our multi-method strategy and the robustness of findings relative to strike occurrence, we reestimate the positive significant configurational associations in Table 5 using logistic regression (Table 6), and we include in these models the controls that also may potentially shape strike activity but that are not as central to our theoretical concerns.

The second portion of the analysis (Table 7) examines the same configurations and their respective associations with individual resistance in the form of social sabotage, work avoidance, playing dumb, absenteeism and theft. As with the strike analysis, statistically significant differences are highlighted. Findings pertaining to individual resistance are discussed relative to the predictions outlined previously, and relative to the analysis of strikes.

COLLECTIVE RESISTANCE

Table 5 reports levels of strike occurrence in relation to reduced configurations. Notably, each of the nine configurations includes at least three elements, and five highlight the necessary coexistence of some organizational and some social attribute in the workplace. The inclusion of indicators specifying union presence and strike history is validated by the inclusion of at least one of these attributes in each of the nine configurations.

The first configuration we report (CONFLICT * UNION * BUREAU) indicates workplaces with significant conflict on the shop floor, union presence, and a bureaucratized work structure. Of the 18 cases that hold all three attributes, 11 (approximately 61 percent) experienced a strike during the period of observation. Since it is important to interpret this

[9] Here, we are reducing all configurations in the data, not necessarily those strictly tied to some value of our dependent variables. Because our reduction begins with the entire truth table, all positive, negative, and contradictory configurations in the observed data are covered. Along with this point of clarification, it is also essential to be explicit about combinations that logically exist, but that are not evidenced in the data, since this has implications for generalizability claims (Griffin et al. 1991). It is for this reason that Boswell and Brown (1999) suggest that researchers using QCA make use of a "diversity index," or a ratio of observed to theoretically possible combinations. In the case of the analyses to follow, the data coverage is reasonable given the number of independent variables being used. Indeed, "The more complex the model, the greater number of unusual combinations of variables for which cases could not exist" (Boswell and Brown 1999:161; see also Ragin 1987). Exclusive of union presence and strike history, the number of observed configurations is 26 of 32 possible configurations, yielding a ratio index of 81.3. With the addition of union presence and strike history, the number of observed configurations with six independent variables becomes 33 of 64 possible, or a diversity index of 54. In the results section, we briefly discuss reduced configurations that do not actually exist in our data, and what these mean relative to our analyses and conclusions.

within the context of other cases in the sample that do not have these configurational attributes, we focus on the ratio. The resulting ratio of 6.5 suggests that those workplaces characterized by the constellation of conflict, union presence, and bureaucracy are six and a half times more likely than other workplaces to witness a strike occurrence—a large effect, to be sure.[10] The *t* test results reveal this difference is statistically significant, well beyond the .001 level.[11]

CONFLICT and UNION are necessary attributes in not only the first configuration, but the second configuration (CONFLICT * UNION * ABUSE * goodorg) as well. Within these workplaces, individualized abuse and poor organization also prevail, and strikes are approximately 4.4 times more likely compared to cases not captured by the configuration. The combination of conflict and union presence, noted in each of our first two configurations and that eventually culminates in strike action, is captured in the following:

> In building up an organization on the section the steward enforces unwritten agreements from his supervisor. When the supervisor is placed under pressure by his superiors he often breaks these secret understandings. Jack [the union steward[committed his feelings to print. He filled in a procedure report calling the supervisor a 'perpetual liar' and a 'deceitful bastard'. The supervisor went to law, but he wasn't allowed to push it too far. Higher management persuaded him that the case was better dropped and Jack Jones escaped his chance to testify in the dock. . . . The establishment of a steward in a particular section was clearly related to the attempt by the workers to establish job control in that section. If the steward wasn't up to the job he was replaced, or he stood down leaving the section without a steward for a while. Where a steward stuck with the job, he and the men on his section were involved in a perpetual battle with foremen and management. (Benyon 1975:144–145)

As the example above suggests, union presence in a conflict-laden environment may be meaningful due to the presence of shop stewards and their place in addressing worker grievances in an ongoing manner—a manner that may galvanize worker loyalties over time. Consistent with some of the themes we provided at the outset, we also attribute such effects to greater labor union and strike legitimacy,

[10] Ratios were calculated by dividing the configuration mean by the mean of cases not falling into the configuration. The ratio reported above, for instance, was derived from the following: 61.11/9.38 = 6.5. Although non-configuration means are not reported in the tables, they are available from the authors on request.

[11] In Table 6, reported momentarily, we test whether these configurations are significant when modeled in logistic regression. We also tested whether other configurations reported in Table 5 are significant in logistical regression, which they are not. We attribute this in part to weaker associations with striking, but also the relatively small (82) sample size.

Table 5. Reduced Configurations and Variations in Strike Occurrence

Configurations	Total Cases	# of zeros	# of ones	Strikes in Configuration (%)	Mean Ratio (configuration to non-configuration)	Example ethnography
CONFLICT * UNION * BUREAU	18	7	11	61.1	6.515***	Wedderburn (1972)
CONFLICT * UNION * ABUSE * goodorg	7	2	5	71.4	4.420**	Seider (1984)
CONFLICT * UNION * HIST * GOODORG * abuse	4	2	2	50.0	2.600	Walker (1957)
UNION * conflict * hist	21	19	3	13.6	.585	Cavendish (1982)
UNION * conflict * abuse * goodorg	8	8	0	0.0	.000	Finlay (1988)
conflict * abuse * hist	29	29	0	0.0	.000***	Burris (1983)
conflict * goodorg * hist	34	32	2	5.9	.188**	Paules (1991)
bureau * goodorg * hist	20	17	3	15.0	.867	Foster (1969)
bureau * unions * hist	16	16	0	0.0	.000*	Juravich (1985)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (one-tailed test): denotes statistically significant difference between configuration mean and mean of cases not captured by the configuration.

typically fostered on an ongoing basis by stewards and workers through networks and meetings (Dixon and Roscigno 2003). This possibility is reflected in the following observation from the same plant:

> The stewards in the Paint Trim Assembly plant met each other regularly. They ate their meals together in the works canteen and drank together after meetings. They were friends. Occasionally they arranged social evenings to which they took their wives. On all these occasions they joked and told stories about people and events, about the city and the factories. More often they told stories about the plant, about the early days when the PTA plant was first unionized by the Transport and General Workers Union. These stories in particular were always told to newcomers (the same stories were told to me dozens of times during the months when I cam to know them) particularly to new shop stewards and activists and almost inevitably at times of crisis. (Benyon 1975:74–75)

Ongoing conflict on the shop floor is also central and is typically driven by a lack of management competence. Worker response, particularly when the problem is viewed as ongoing and systematic, is likely to be collective in nature. Such is the case in the following excerpt, where the workplace also subsequently experienced a strike during the period of observation:

> An untactful supervisor had in the past tried to take a strong line against maintenance men he considered to be dilatory by making official complaints to his plant manager. The result was that it seemed extraordinarily difficult to repair electrical faults that occurred while he was on duty; often it was only when his shift had finished and the next had taken over that the job was done. It might be said that he had tried to use his formal powers as supervisor instead of informal influence, and that he failed dismally. (Harris 1987:149)

Table 6 speaks to the strengths of the findings thus far and to the credibility of our analytic strategy more generally by reexamining the two significant configurations we have just described, using logistic regression and including a number of other potentially influential controls. The controls include whether the case is in England as opposed to the United States, whether the workplace is in an area of high unemployment, the race and gender composition of the workplace, establishment size, and the era in which the ethnographic observation took place.[12] Rather than using interaction terms in the traditional sense, which would be very cumbersome for specifying third and fourth level interactions, each configuration in these models is measured as a dichotomous indicator of whether all configurational attributes are present (1 = yes; 0 = no). Along with greater interpretative ease, this measurement strategy is consistent with the case-oriented focus outlined in our analytic strategy section.

The configurational associations with strike action hold, even with the addition of the controls in the second equation of each model. Moreover, the configurational patterns remain strong and statistically significant. This reinforces confidence in the findings reported thus far. It also highlights the benefits of using QCA to reduce and generate configurational patterns, and then quantitative techniques to decipher associations between types of configurations and the outcome of interest.

Among the controls, the cases that were observed in England, workplaces characterized by relatively high minority concentration, and, to a lesser extent, the era in which the ethnographic observation occurred, influence strike likelihood. The influence of England may capture the impact of broader national history and collective action legitimacy, above and beyond union presence and strike history at a singular workplace (Griffin et al. 1991; Kelly and Kelly 1991; Scruggs and Lange 2002). Minority composition, while it may lead to labor fragmentation due to discrimination and associated competitive processes, may increase collective action given that "negatively privileged groups"

[12] Of the 82 cases in our sample, 31 percent are in England and 27 percent are in areas of high unemployment. The mean establishment size is 2363, while the average race and gender composition of these workplaces is 18 and 24 percent, respectively. Sixty percent of the ethnographic observation occurred post 1970, approximately 25 percent occurred between 1950 and 1970, and the remainder (15 percent occurred prior to 1950. Although not significant in these models, considering historical era effects makes sense given the possibility that conditions of political opportunity may differ (Tarrow 1998). Moreover, broader movements during certain eras may permeate workplaces and radicalize workers (Isaac and Christiansen 2002).

Table 6. Logistic Regression Estimates (Log-Odds) of Configurational Influence on Likelihood of a Strike

	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
CONFLICT * UNION * BUREAU	2.721***	2.485***		
CONFLICT * UNION * ABUSE * goodorg			2.422**	1.871*
England		2.758*		2.659**
High Unemployment		.524		.735
Percent Female		–.058		–.003
Percent Minority		.049*		.026*
Establishment Size		.000		.000
Era (Referent: Pre-1950)				
1950–1969		–1.645		–2.488*
1970–Current		–.992		–2.225*
Constant	–2.269	–1.847	–1.729	–1.461

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$ (one-tailed test).

may be more likely to join unions and collectively mobilize in the first place (Oberschall 1993; see also Cornfield and Kim 1994; Zingraff and Schulman 1984).

Recall that, given the configurational logic used, no one attribute can be interpreted outside the context of the other configurational attributes. With this point in mind, we now turn back to Table 5 and the impact of union presence within the fourth and fifth configurations. Notably, and consistent with the conditional expectations highlighted at the outset, union presence in and of itself is not enough to bolster strike action. Rather, it appears to be the copresence of union organization with existent shop floor conflict, reported previously, that is most meaningful. Indeed, union presence in the absence of ongoing conflict, characteristic of our fourth (UNION * conflict * hist) and fifth (UNION * conflict * abuse * goodorg) configurations appears, if anything, to be associated with a diminished likelihood of strike action. This possibility is exemplified in the case of unionized construction workers who do not strike over the period of observation and who, in the absence of conflict and supervisory abuse, express satisfaction in their productivity.

> At the sewage treatment plant, there were several occasions when the men placed a thousand yards of concrete in a single day. No one from management told them to do it. The superintendent, foremen, and key journeymen decided and planned it on their own initiative. One evening, at the local bar, in July 1976, after one of the thousand-yard pours, Pete expressed the pride and satisfaction that comes from extraordinary accomplishment, and said:
>
> "If they'd leave us alone, we can take care of the work and make money for the company. We did a thousand yards today. But I've done better. As long as Carmen [his employer] leaves Earl [the superintendent] alone we can turn out the work." (Applebaum 1981:63)

The four remaining configurations, reported at the bottom of the table, include no apparent strike history (4 configurations), the absence of conflict (2 configurations), poor organization (2 configurations), and little bureaucratic structure (2 configurations). All four configurations, generally capturing unorganized workplaces, are negatively associated with strike occurrence, and three of the four patterns are statistically distinct compared to cases not in that particular configuration. In two of these scenarios, the first where there is no conflict, abuse, or history of strikes and the second, where there is no bureaucracy, unions, or strike history, no strikes whatsoever are observed. In the third, characterized by poor organization but without conflict or strike history, the likelihood of strike occurrence is 80 percent less than cases without these configurational attributes. The fourth configuration, which entails limited bureaucracy, no strike history, and poor workplace organization, is only slightly less likely than other cases to have a strike occurrence. We interpret these configurations and their negative associations to be largely capturing the reverse of what was reported at the top of the table—that is, while union presence and conflict generally combine with other organizational attributes to increase strike propensity, their relative absence reduces strike likelihood. Clearly, however, the absence

of strike history across all four of the final configurations stands out as unique.

In general, our findings suggest that ongoing conflict between managers and workers is fundamental to forging collective resistance, but only in concert with union presence and sometimes with bureaucratic and poor workplace organization and abuse. Such associations, as Table 6 reports, remain strong and robust when retested with traditional techniques that allow for the inclusion of arguably important controls. Unions and the organization of production are certainly meaningful as well, although their effects are quite contingent on social relations on the shop floor. Bureaucracy, for instance, is associated with an increased likelihood of strike action, but only in the presence of conflict and unions. Union presence, interestingly, follows the same pattern. Where unions coincide with conflict and sometimes bureaucracy or poor organization, strike likelihood is magnified considerably. Where conflict is low, in contrast, union presence is negatively associated with strike action (albeit these effects are not statistically significant).[13]

What remains unclear is the extent to which the configurations reported above foster or subdue more individualized forms of worker resistance. That is, does the copresence of worker-manager conflict and unions also heighten the likelihood of individual resistance? Might well-run, bureaucratic work contexts mitigate, through the control of workers, individual resistance strategies such as theft, sabotage, and work avoidance? And, might unions and strike history diminish the need to express grievances through more individual routes? It is to these questions that we now turn.

INDIVIDUAL RESISTANCE

In this section we examine individual forms of resistance that workers have at that disposal and embed our understanding of their extent and forms in the organizational and social attributes of workplaces. Table 7 reports a QCA analysis of five discrete resistance strategies, namely social sabotage, work avoidance, playing dumb, absenteeism, and theft. Like the modeling of strike occurrence, our use of the first step in QCA allows us to logically reduce configurations by removing redundant and non-necessary configurational components. We then rely on quantitative comparative techniques to delineate significant associations for cases within a given configuration relative to those that fall outside of the configuration. For reasons of brevity, our results here report only the configuration, the percent of cases in the configuration that experienced the particular form of resistance, and (in parentheses) the ratio of the configuration mean relative to the mean of cases not in the configuration.

Patterns for informal resistance indicate considerable similarity with those pertaining to strike prevalence, particularly in the configurations toward the top of the table. One pattern that differs significantly relative to strikes, however, has to do with the seventh (conflict * goodorg * hist) and eighth (bureau * goodorg * hist) configurations toward the bottom of the table. Prior results suggested that these configurational patterns reduce, on average, the likelihood of collective worker resistance in the form of strike action. Here, however, we see that lack of collective mobilization history combined with poor organization and a lack of systematic conflict leads to more individualized forms of resistance, with relative consistency across our indicators. Workplaces characterized by little bureaucracy, poor organization, and no collective mobilization history, for instance, are nearly twice as likely to experience social sabotage (1.83), playing dumb (2.15), absenteeism (1.86), and theft (1.86). They are

[13] The following equation denotes reduced configurations that theoretically exist, but do not exist in our data:

unions HISTORY +
HISTORY conflict GOODORG +
unions CONFLICT BUR +
HISTORY ABUSE conflict +
unions ABUSE BUR GOODORG +
UNIONS ABUSE CONFLICT bur GOODORG +
UNIONS history CONFLICT bur GOODORG +
HISTORY abuse CONFLICT bur goodorg

Although the absence of cases in our data with these configurational attributes sets some limits on our conclusions and ability to generalize, we suspect that the actual existence of such cases in the real world are limited, at least relative to the configurations that do exist in our data and that are reported here. We nevertheless take issues of generalizability seriously, and temper our conclusions keeping in mind our inability to establish the consequences of these missing configurations.

Table 7. Reduced Configurations and Variations in Individual Resistance

Configurations	Percentage of ones in configuration (ratio of configuration mean to non-configuration mean)				
	Social Sabotage	Work Avoidance	Playing Dumb	Absenteeism	Theft
CONFLICT * UNION * BUREAU	44.4 (1.053)	66.7 (1.220)	11.1 (.356)*	66.7 (1.707)*	11.1 (.508)
CONFLICT * UNION * ABUSE * goodorg	66.7 (1.678)	66.7 (1.187)	00.0 (.000)*	55.6 (1.267)	22.2 (1.154)
CONFLICT * UNION * HIST * GOODORG * abuse	00.0 (.000)*	25.0 (.424)	25.0 (.929)	75.0 (1.721)	25.0 (1.300)
UNION * conflict * hist	40.9 (.944)	59.1 (1.043)	27.3 (1.022)	45.5 (1.010)	22.7 (1.240)
UNION * conflict * abuse * goodorg	62.5 (1.543)	62.5 (1.101)	37.5 (1.460)	62.5 (1.447)	37.5 (2.134)
conflict * abuse * hist	37.9 (.838)	44.8 (.699)*	27.6 (1.044)	34.5 (.677)	17.2 (.831)
conflict * goodorg * hist	50.0 (1.333)	64.7 (1.242)	41.2 (2.470)*	38.2 (.765)	29.4 (2.353)*
bureau * goodorg * hist	65.0 (1.832)*	70.0 (1.315)	45.0 (2.146)*	55.0 (1.860)	30.0 (1.860)
bureau * unions * hist	56.3 (1.428)	50.0 (.846)	37.5 (1.547)	43.8 (.963)	18.8 (.952)

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed test): denotes statistically significant difference between configuration mean and mean of cases not captured by the configuration.

also about 30 percent more likely to suffer from high levels of work avoidance by their employees (1.32). A generally similar pattern holds for poorly organized workplaces, without conflict or strike history, with the exception of absenteeism. Four of the associations across the two configurations being described reach statistical significance. Unlike conflict-ridden union contexts, where individual resistance can be interpreted more easily as being directed against management, workers in unorganized workplaces may be venting their more general frustrations toward the disorganization of the labor process itself.

The amplified patterns of individual resistance in poorly organized, nonbureaucratized work settings can be attributed to lack of organizational control over workers' time, movement, and interactions, and a sense of frustration over the poor organization of work that employees may experience daily in their work lives. Combined with a lack of collective response history, one can envision a scenario where these other forms of resistance become workers' only recourse. Such possibilities are exemplified in the following passage, where workers in a poorly run and organized workplace engage in social sabotage and disparagement of managers in their free time.

> We spent the better portion of the next two weeks slurpin' bad coffee, chain-smoking and concocting this ridiculous idea for a short film. . . . Even though the line was only budging out about one truck per hour, we were required to stay put near our jobs. . . .
>
> The movie we were discussing was to be a violent blue-collar docudrama called *No Need for a Grievance Procedure.* It would be a collection of short pieces that chronicled the systematic executions of our least favorite shoplords. . . .
>
> In one scenario Dave [one of the workers] snuck up to the glassed-in office where Henry Jackson [a hated foreman] sat and shrewdly welded the door shut from the outside. Dave then commandeered an abandoned fork truck and bore down on the tiny office, scooping it right off the factory floor. Raising the office several feet above the ground, he jostled the cubicle violently. Inside the office, Henry Jackson was slammed to and fro like a mannequin in a cyclone. (Hamper 1991:125)

Conversely, it may be the case that well-organized establishments keep workers tied to particular work stations and limit their capacity to engage in social sabotage, theft, or work avoidance. Take, for instance, this account of an

assembly line worker's job in an automated steel mill.

> I have to *watch* my two strippers and make sure bar and pipe get kicked into the right trough for the stripper. I have to *watch* the conveyor down to the reheat furnace to make sure we don't pile up or let a pipe hit the bumper. And sometimes if the bar doesn't strip, it will go down into the furnace. I also *watch* the inserter. . . . There just isn't a chance to talk or walk around; I have to keep *watch* all the time (Walker 1977:32; emphasis in original).

The remaining configurations speak somewhat to these possibilities, although the patterns are mixed. Bureaucratized workplaces characterized by conflict and the presence of a union (CONFLICT * UNION * BUREAU) experience relatively high levels of absenteeism (1.71) and work avoidance (1.22), but average social sabotage (1.05) and lower levels of theft (.51) and playing dumb (.36). It seems that in such contexts, previously shown to be positively associated with strikes, more extreme forms of individual resistance may be controlled by bureaucracy or siphoned into collective expression. Remaining individual options for workers include general avoidance of work tasks or absence from the workplace altogether.

Mixed patterns are also observed in our third configuration (CONFLICT * UNION * HIST * GOODORG * abuse), which likewise couples conflict and unions with specific organizational features (and also strike history and little individualized abuse). Within workplaces characterized by these attributes, social sabotage, work avoidance, and playing dumb occur less than in other workplaces, while absenteeism and theft are more pronounced. Interestingly, the likelihood of social sabotage and work avoidance mounts when poor organization prevails and when conflict is coupled with individualized abuse by supervisors (CONFLICT * UNION * ABUSE * goodorg). Work avoidance and reprisals in response to earlier conflict with managers are evidenced in the following worker interaction, which occurs at a bar near the factory, during the shift's dinner break:

> "What happens if we just don't go back on time? They can dock us, but I bet they wouldn't fire us all."
> "Couldn't even start the line," Alfred says. "We got the briner, the capper, and the pasteurizer all right here. Right?"
> Carl then points out that he is assigned as backup to all three machines. We think about it for a moment. Then Johnson T. turns and yells, "Hey, at the bar—send us another pitcher."
> It is the best beer I will drink all year. (Turner 1980:57–58)

Patterns, both similar and varying, among the first, second, and third configurations suggest that individual resistance strategies primarily involve direct response to managers (social sabotage), response to managerial orders (avoidance), or escape from the situation entirely (absenteeism). Such responses are most likely to occur when there is also some solidarity in the form of union presence, limited bureaucratic control, or simply poor organization on the shop floor. And, as the configurations toward the bottom of the table (particularly the seventh and eighth) suggest, poor organization and little bureaucracy in and of themselves, even without conflict, can open the door to a plethora of individual resistance strategies.

CONCLUSION

Sociological theorizing on worker resistance and class action has highlighted the importance of workplace organizational structure and, to a lesser extent, social relations on the job. Moreover, prior analyses have been concerned largely with collective rather than individual resistance strategies that workers may use. Such modeling often downplays the importance and possibility of agency on the shop floor—agency that may be exercised by managers in their daily conduct and that is often used by workers as they combat the harshness of their jobs on a day-to-day basis. This article has addressed these issues, along with limitations in the literature, by (1) offering a broader theoretical conception of resistance, (2) simultaneously considering organizational and interpersonal contexts within which workers are embedded, and (3) doing so with a configurational and case-oriented logic that also considers the potentially conditioning role of union presence and collective action legacy.

Our analyses, which use a unique integration of QCA reduction techniques and quantitative comparative methods, reveal interesting organizational configurations—configurations that appear to vary in their associations with both collective and individual resistance. Findings also suggest three broad clusters of workplace

types, defined by both their configurational commonalities and the relations of those commonalities to the various forms of resistance we examine.[14] *Contentious workplaces*, captured by the first, second, and third configurations reported in our results, are characterized by systematic and ongoing interpersonal conflict with management on the shop floor, worker solidarity and resources in the form of union presence, and, sometimes, bureaucratic structure. *Cohesive workplaces* (captured by the fourth and fifth reported configurations), are similarly characterized by worker representation, but with limited or little conflict/abuse. Finally, *unorganized workplaces*, which are apparent in the remaining configurations toward the bottom of Tables 5 and 7, are workplaces with generally poor if not chaotic organization on the shop floor and little worker representation either contemporarily or historically.

Each of the three workplace typologies—contentious, cohesive, and unorganized—as we suggest below, hold unique implications for understanding and interpreting worker resistance. Although our construction of "types" and our conclusions about them are tempered by the potential representativeness of the data we analyze, the considerable variation and representativeness of these data across lines of industry, organizational structure, and workplace interpersonal dynamics provide reasonable confidence. Moreover, the unique data we use and the methods employed have allowed us systematically to examine important questions and issues that neither large organizational survey designs nor single ethnographic analyses can address alone.

Within contentious workplaces, the co-joined attributes of manager-worker conflict and union presence (along with bureaucracy or poor organization) appear to have simultaneous and strong associations with both collective resistance in the form of strike action and certain individual resistance strategies, most notably social sabotage, work avoidance, and absenteeism. Conflict in conjunction with union presence and bureaucracy, in fact, appears to increase the likelihood of strike action more than sixfold. Strikes are more than four times more likely where conflict and union presence exist, where abuse and poor organization prevail, and where bureaucratic organization is weak. In both scenarios, we find higher-than-average levels of sabotage, work avoidance, and absenteeism, and lower-than-average levels of playing dumb—an interesting contrast perhaps related to the presence of unions and the security and confidence it affords to workers in what are obviously volatile contexts. Clearly, collective and more individualized forms of resistance are not mutually exclusive in terms of their emergence or the factors that drive them.

One important insight that emerges in light of these results is that social relations on the shop floor play a meaningful role in prompting both collective and individual manifestations of class resistance. Here, the importance and fluidity of social relations with management as well as workers' abilities to respond to those relations is made quite explicit. Especially important is systematic and ongoing conflict with managers, which seems to be associated with a lack of management competence and appears to prompt both striking and certain individual resistance behaviors. To interpret these relations as simply consistent with traditional social relations perspectives on worker satisfaction or action, however, would be problematic. Conflict's role in prompting resistance behaviors, as we suggested in our earlier theoretical development and as confirmed by our results, can only be interpreted or understood within a particular organizational, union, and historical context.

Bureaucracy appears to have little effect on collective resistance in and of itself; a fact that runs counter to well-known and commonly accepted assumptions within the workplace organization tradition. Even in the first configuration, where bureaucracy appears, it is its joint presence with

[14] Others in the literature have similarly generated typologies of organizations as theoretical framing tools for helping to understand workplace change, organizational variations, and their implications for workers. Hodson (2001b) for instance, denotes the importance of *disorganized*, *unilateral*, and *participative* organizations, while Adler and Borys (1996) distinguish between *enabling* and *coercive* bureaucracies. While we find these quite useful especially for thinking about the organization of work and variations in bureaucratic potential, we believe the typologies of workplaces we define here, generated from modeling of both organizational and interpersonal processes in relation to resistance, better incorporate the relative importance of social-interactional dynamics.

conflict and union presence that magnifies both strike potential and individual resistance aimed particularly at managers. And, it is within unorganized workplaces that a plethora of more individualized resistance strategies also seem to be realized. As our final table reports, all forms of individual resistance are magnified in such a context, although configuration differences are only statistically distinct for two individual resistance outcomes. Such findings seem to suggest that it is not necessarily organizational constraint that matters, as is typically assumed, or even only conflict with managers to which workers may respond, as in the case of contentious workplaces. Rather, doing one's job in a disorganized workplace environment invokes stress and uncertainty, to which individual workers also clearly react. Individual resistance may thus appear in both contentious and unorganized workplaces, although the processes that invoke it seem to be quite distinct.

Beyond the analysis of organizational structural, social relations, and their conditional effects on resistance, our findings also reveal some noteworthy patterns pertaining to union presence and strike history. Union presence appears in five of the reported configurations. In contentious workplaces, where unions coincide with conflict on the shop floor, associations with strike action are positive. Notably, two of these associations remain robust using traditional logistic techniques and with the inclusion of potential influential controls. And, as noted previously, certain forms of individual resistance (i.e., social sabotage, work avoidance, and absenteeism) are more prevalent as well in these workplaces. In contrast to these patterns are those pertaining to cohesive workplaces, within which there is similarly union presence but with limited or nonexistent interpersonal conflict on the shop floor. Here, associations with strike activity are actually negative. This suggests to us a quite contingent effect of unions, certainly with regard to worker collective action. Others have made the case, and we concur, that the effect of unions will vary geographically and historically depending upon the mobilization campaign, union strategy, elite response, and internal worker divides (e.g., Brown and Boswell 1995; Brueggemann and Boswell 1998). We extend this contingency argument by suggesting that union influence will also be fundamentally tied to the lived experiences of conflict on the shop floor (Fantasia 1988).

Unions, in and of themselves, can certainly bring resources to bear on organizing and mobilizing workers. Yet, if a union's appeal does not resonate with the organizational and interpersonal realities of the shop floor, as experienced by workers themselves, union potential for mobilizing workers will be mitigated. And, it would be erroneous to assume that union presence has causal priority in this process. It may very well be the case, as suggested in recent historical analyses of worker mobilization campaigns, that shop floor conflict and resulting critical consciousness on the part of workers is a precursor to effective union involvement (e.g., Kimeldorf 1999; Roscigno and Danaher 2004; Rubin, Griffin, and Wallace 1983). Our results, while admittedly limited in their ability to uncover dynamic aspects of these situations, suggest rather straightforwardly that collective action is most likely to emerge in situations where shop floor experiences and union presence align.

Union presence and a historical legacy of collective action are associated with individual resistance strategies as well, and in informative ways. As was the case with strike occurrence, union presence coupled with conflict tends to be positively associated with individual resistance, particularly social sabotage, work avoidance, and absenteeism. This pattern holds, perhaps even more so, in poorly run, unionized workplaces without significant conflict or abuse. Clearly, the identity dynamics that unions and union membership may afford workers may be playing a role in fostering these associations. Even more notable and consistent, however, is individual resistance within unorganized workplaces, including those that have no apparent strike history. Given the general lack of union presence and collective action in such contexts, it makes sense that informal resistance will be at the core of workers' protest repertoires. Again, rather than such resistance being solely an effort to regain dignity in the face of personal insult and conflict with managers, resistance in such settings may be as much a function of frustration, boredom, and personal stress resulting from organizational chaos.

Both organizational structure and social relations in the workplace are meaningful for worker resistance, but almost always in an interwoven manner. Moreover, the interplay of these workplace attributes will be conditioned by union presence and collective mobilization history. Differences in organizational structure and orga-

nizational structural constraint may open the window to collective or individual forms of resistance. However, ultimately, how workers respond also will be conditioned by more proximate and systemic interpersonal conflicts with managers and by resulting worker interpretations of the problems they are facing. In this regard, union presence and a history of collective action may afford workers a behavioral repertoire that is more, although not exclusively, collective in form.

The challenge for future research, given the arguments and findings presented in this article, lies in acknowledging some of the variability and flexibility in how managers interact with workers under varying organizational structures, and the grievance outlets available to workers. Crucial as well will be the broader conceptions of resistance—conceptions that systematically include the possibility of worker agency and that theoretically incorporate the broader tool kit of resistance strategies at collective and individual levels that workers may, and indeed do, draw upon. Future efforts to delineate relevant processes, configurations of organizational characteristics and social relations, and worker actions across union, historical, or geographic contexts will no doubt require a blending of case study insights and comparative analytic techniques.

Appendix: Table 1. Truth Table for Configurations

Explanatory Measures							Distribution of Resistance Measures within Each Configuration					
B	G	C	A	U	H	Cases (n)	Strike	Social Sabotage	Work Avoidance	Play Dumb	Absenteeism	Theft
0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	2	1	2	0
1	0	0	1	1	0	4	1	2	3	1	3	1
1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	1	0	5	1	1	2	1	2	1
0	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	2	3	1	3	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	2	3	1	3	1
0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	5	5	4	5	3
0	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	0
0	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	5	5	5	5	3
1	1	0	0	1	0	4	0	2	3	2	3	0
1	0	1	1	0	0	3	3	2	2	0	2	1
0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	3	1	3	0
1	1	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	2	1	2	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
1	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	1	0
0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
1	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	1
1	0	1	0	1	1	4	3	2	3	0	3	0
0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	1
1	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1
1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	1	1	1	1
0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

B = Bureaucracy; G = Good Organization; C = Conflict; A = Abuse; U = Union Presence; H = Strike History.

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