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# Inhuman Relations: Quality Circles and Anti-Unionism in American Industry

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easily require a book-length manuscript. Of value is the fact that each chapter begins with a statement of the learning objectives and addresses each of these objectives. There is a good deal of unevenness in the writing style and scope of the chapters. Regrettably, one of the weakest of the chapters is that which deals with the psychosocial aspects of AIDS. Perhaps this material could have been better presented if separate chapters on psychological and sociological aspects of AIDS had been addressed. This would not necessarily have added more than thirty to thirty-five pages to the work.

It is unlikely that this work would be the sole text for a course. It would, however, make an excellent supplement to a course dealing with psychosocial aspects of health care and health care services. It would serve as a valuable text for a "short course" or a continuing education course as a self-contained topic.

The second work, *The Psychosocial Aspects of AIDS: An Annotated Bibliography*, is an extremely accurate, comprehensive, and valuable research tool. This is particularly true for the scholar just beginning to conduct research in this area. The six sections are well organized and apparently thorough. Clearly, a work such as this that deals with a phenomenon about which so much research is ongoing is destined to become dated almost before the ink is dry. Nevertheless, this work can be of tremendous value in bringing the researcher "up to speed" in this voluminous and rapidly expanding literature.

Of the works with which I am familiar and from reviewing a sample of the citations with which I was not familiar, the citations were accurate and, perhaps more importantly, the annotations rightly described the content and context of the work, even if the author(s) used titles that did not. It would have been of greater value if the list of bibliographic data bases used had been included and if "key words" used in computer searches for compiling this bibliography had been included.

**Inhuman Relations: Quality Circles and Anti-Unionism in American Industry**, by Guillermo J. Grenier. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988. 323 pp., \$34.95 hardbound, \$16.95 paperbound.

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This is a story of a social scientist coming of age. It tells of Guillermo Grenier's experiences at the Ethicon subsidiary of the Johnson and Johnson Company in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Grenier's experiences took place during a nine-month period while he was an unpaid graduate assistant to Ethicon-Albuquerque's social psychologist. Grenier's objective was to collect data for his graduate research on teams in the work force, which is how Ethicon-Albuquerque

had divided its labor. During this time the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union tried to establish itself at Ethicon-Albuquerque. The author eventually became a pro-union activist.

Grenier's book has eight chapters. The book did not flow well at first, but the last chapters were more "story-like" and easier to read. The first three chapters described the company's image and the management's view of teamwork. They also introduced the use of quality circles and the concept of "new humanism." A quality circle (QC) is a small group of workers, usually led by a foreman, who "shares with management the responsibilities for locating and solving problems of coordination and productivity" (4). New humanism was defined as "a vision of unity, cooperation, purpose, and inspiration, of managerial wisdom operating unfettered in an expanding union-free utopia" (xiii). The company planned to let the workers participate in this new humanism by following Japan's idea of the "quality circle."

The next four chapters presented the beginning of union organizing and the company's strategy for dealing with the union. Grenier explained the psychological tactics and firing practices used by the company to control union support, along with descriptions of how the employees worked against themselves by the company's use of participatory (QC) management.

In the last chapter the author reviewed the history of participatory management in America, and examined Ethicon-Albuquerque's use of human relations. Grenier was aware of the QC approach before he began his research and thought it was a good program, for both industry and labor. His attitude changed as he became involved with the company and attended some QC meetings. He came to realize the QC emphasis was on increased productivity and that any improvement in the quality of work life for the employees was incidental. Grenier reports that Johnson and Johnson publicly said it was not anti-union, but, in fact, the firm had a covert plan of action to keep the union out. The QC was the main weapon. The company planned to use the workers themselves, through participation, to bust the union.

The author noted that forms of control could be found throughout the QCs at Ethicon-Albuquerque, and there were three interrelated methods that could use participation as a form of control. First, by having the workers involved in a QC, they were more apt to see things from management's point of view. Second, workers had some power of decision, but management made sure the workers' decisions only dealt with unimportant areas of the workplace. An example of this form of control was to encourage peer pressure in the groups. The workers felt they had a voice in the hiring and firing process of their peers. This obscured the fact of who actually made decisions. Third, management had set up the QC to intimidate workers who seemed not to be doing what management considered

to be good for the group. Favors were granted to workers who would "rat" on their fellow QC members who mentioned the union during working hours. Working conditions became very difficult for pro-union workers, "time off" became almost impossible to get, and their breaks were monitored to the second.

The QCs were also a form of control because they fragmented the work force. They promoted a sense of belonging to the small group, but decreased the feeling of membership in the larger community of the plant. These small teams made it easier for management to recognize deviants. Even though the work force was fragmented, the power structure of management remained intact and in control.

Toward Grenier's last month at Ethicon-Albuquerque, the workers voted to determine if the union would be allowed to come into the plant. The author gave some examples of his personal experiences and feelings of that time. Grenier said he was now actively involved in pro-union activities, yet continued to gather data for his research. The company had become suspicious of him. He reported that as a result of his pro-union participation, he received threatening phone calls, his files and notes were subpoenaed (illegally), and his house was watched for weeks. On two occasions he and his family were forced to leave their home because of threats.

Grenier mentioned that stepping outside his role of a neutral social scientist bothered him. I was surprised by his reaction. I also do not understand why he appeared so unprepared to deal with, or was taken aback by, the tactics of a capitalist organization's manipulation of workers. Grenier's training should have made him more aware of the workings of the personnel system. This naivete may reinforce the idea that academia is an "ivory tower" and perhaps does not prepare some of its students to confront the realities of the outside world.

Grenier's book will be a useful tool for educating social scientists about the relationship between sociological practice and academic sociology. I recommend this book for students, teachers, and practitioners who are concerned about management and labor issues and those conducting research on organizational programs.

The following review was originally published in volume 8 of CSR and is reprinted here with author corrections.

**Personal, Marital, and Family Myths: Theoretical Formulations and Clinical Strategies**, by Dennis A. Bagarozzi and Stephen A. Anderson. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989, 321pp., \$32.95 cloth. **Family Evaluation**, by Michael E. Kerr and Murray Bowen. New York: W.W. Norton, 1988, 400pp., \$29.95 cloth.

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