THE PEOPLE MAKE THE PLACE

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A framework for understanding the etiology of organizational behavior is presented. The framework is based on theory and research from interactional psychology, vocational psychology, I/O psychology, and organizational theory. The framework proposes that organizations are functions of the kinds of people they contain and, further, that the people there are functions of an attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle. The ASA cycle is proposed as an alternative model for understanding organizations and the causes of the structures, processes, and technology of organizations. First, the ASA framework is developed through a series of propositions. Then some implications of the model are outlined, including (1) the difficulty of bringing about change in organizations, (2) the utility of personality and interest measures for understanding organizational behavior, (3) the genesis of organizational climate and culture, (4) the importance of recruitment, and (5) the need for person-based theories of leadership and job attitudes. It is concluded that contemporary I/O psychology is overly dominated by situationist theories of the behavior of organizations and the people in them.

This talk is about people and places: about how the kinds of people in a place—a work organization, for example—come to define the way that place looks, feels, and behaves. My main thesis is that the attributes of people, not the nature of the external environment, or organizational technology, or organizational structure, are the fundamental determinants of organizational behavior. I will try to persuade you that we have been blind to the role of person effects as causes of organizational behavior because the fields of I/O psychology and organizational behavior have been seduced into the belief that situations determine behavior (see also Schneider, 1983a, 1983b, 1983c; Schneider & Reichers, 1983; Staw & Ross, 1985).

To convince you of the correctness of my thesis I need to draw on theories and findings from different areas of psychology, including personality theory, vocational psychology, and I/O psychology. From personality theory some recent debates over whether behavior is situationally, personally, or interactionally caused will be summarized. From vocational psychology,

I will review some of the literature on vocational choice, including extensions of vocational choice theory and data for understanding organizational choice. Finally, from I/O psychology I will offer some new interpretations about the meaning of biodata prediction studies, the importance of research on turnover, and the importance of understanding the etiology of organizational goals for understanding organizational behavior.

In following the ideas I present, you will have to think about how whole organizations look, feel and behave—your focus must shift from the individual to the organization as the unit of analysis. You must view organizations as situations containing patterned behaviors, as environments that are characterized by the coordinated activities of interdependent parts, including interdependent people (Barker, 1968; Schein, 1980). My basic thesis is that it is the people behaving in them that make organizations what they are. My thesis suggests that Kurt Lewin may have overstated the case when he hypothesized that behavior is a function of person and environment, that is, $B = f(P, E)$. My thesis is that environments are function of persons behaving in them, that is, $E = f(P, B)$.

Interactional Psychology

Interactional psychology, a subfield of contemporary personality theory, grew out of debates in the late 1960s and early 1970s between Mischel (e.g., 1968, 1973) and Bowers (e.g., 1973), among others (cf. Endler & Magnusson, 1976; Magnusson & Endler, 1977; Pervin & Lewis, 1978). In a sense, the debate was long overdue. For almost 100 years more individual- or trait-oriented psychologists—including such diverse people as Freud and Raymond Cattell—had pursued their person-based theories of behavior while the situationists, following in the traditions of Watson and Skinner, focused on environmental determinants of behavior. Each group established itself as a community of scholars, and each camp established ground rules about issues of importance and the kinds of problems appropriate for investigation.

Mischel (1968) opened the door to overt criticism of one group by the other when he published his book, *Personality and Assessment*. The book was a work of clarity and persuasion, supporting the situationist position. The problem for personologists was that the book cast great aspersions on their camp. Mischel's social behaviorist position argued, for example, that:

Although it is evident that persons are the source from which human responses are evoked, it is situational stimuli that evoke them, and it is changes in conditions that alter them. Since the assumption of massive behavioral similarity across diverse situations no longer is tenable, it becomes essential to study the difference in the behaviors of a given person as a function of the conditions in which they occur (1968, p. 295).

In other words, situations cause behavior.

Most of the criticisms of Mischel that followed were attacks on the extremeness of his social learning perspective. Some of the early critiques were neither as scholarly nor as persuasive as Mischel's book. The paucity of effective rebuttal was solved by Bowers (1973), who, in one of the most insightful papers of the 1970s, presented the interactionist perspective. My perspective, one influenced both by cognitive psychology and the developmental epistemology of Jean Piaget, argues for the inseparability of person and situation. While Bowers presented many sides of the interactionist perspective and many reasons why Mischel's conclusions were suspect, his most telling argument concerned the data base Mischel drew on for his conclusions. Bowers showed that Mischel's conclusion that situations dominate traits and cause behavior was based almost exclusively on experimental studies conducted in laboratory settings.

Bowers noted that one problem with laboratory experiments as a way of studying the relative contribution of traits and situations to behavior was that experimentalists play with experimental treatment conditions until the different conditions have their desired effects. To set up conditions to have an effect, and to then argue for the dominance of situations over traits, seemed to Bowers an unwarranted inferential leap. The problem here was that precisely when the laboratory study does what it should (i.e., demonstrates an effect) it presents enormous constraints on the display of individual differences, making it appear as if traits were irrelevant for understanding behavior.

A second problem with laboratory experiments that Bowers noted was that *the* major feature of the experiment, random assignment of participants to treatments, violates a basic reality in understanding real-time human behavior—humans, at least in Western societies, are not randomly assigned to settings. Humans select themselves into and out of settings.

Finally, Bowers presented some logic to suggest that persons cause human environments at least as much as environments cause persons. What he meant by this was that persons are inseparable from environments because environments only exist through the people behaving in them *knowing* them. In our own field, Weick (1979) has made a similar point.

This logic suggests that it is the kinds of persons in environments who determine the kinds of human environments they are. This point becomes critical in what follows because Bowers' and subsequent commentaries on the situationist position in personality research (cf. Aronoff & Wilson, 1985; Epstein & O'Brien, 1985) appear to be equally appropriate for questioning the overwhelming tendency in contemporary I/O psychology to assume that situational variables (groups, technology, structure, environment) determine organizational behavior.

By way of summary, I offer the following propositions for what research and theory in interactional psychology has shown:

Proposition 1: Experimental laboratories mask the display of individual differences. This method, then, is inappropriate for studying the relative contributions of traits and situations to understanding behavior.

Proposition 2: People are not randomly assigned to real organizations; people select themselves into and out of real organizations.

Proposition 3: People and human settings are inseparable; people *are* the setting because it is they who make the setting.

I want to build on these propositions to offer an alternative to the situationist perspective in I/O psychology. My perspective rests on the idea that people are not randomly assigned to settings. It argues that it is the people who are attracted to, are selected by, and remain in a setting that determine the setting. As I will show, it follows from what I call the attraction-selection-attrition, or ASA, framework for understanding organizations that technology, structure, and the larger environment of organizations are outcomes of, not the causes of, people and their behavior (Schneider, 1983b).

The Attraction-Selection-Attrition Framework

The focus, or level of analysis, of what follows is on the organization as a location for human activity; it is not on the individual. Thus, the review of interactional psychology yielded the idea that environments and people are not separable and that the people in an environment make it what it is. We are, then, unconcerned with the individual differences *within* an organization; our gaze shifts to understanding the differences *between* organizations through a focus on the attributes of people.

I am going to show that it only *looks* like organizations determine behavior; it looks that way because we typically only study organizations after they have been in existence for a while (cf. Kimberly & Miles, 1980). When an organization has been in existence for a while it looks like the people there are behaving as they do because of its (seemingly) nonpersonal attributes. In reality the way it looks is a result of the people there behaving the way they do. They behave the way they do because they were attracted to that environment, selected by it, and stayed with it. Different kinds of organizations attract, select, and retain different kinds of people, and it is the outcome of the ASA cycle that determines why organizations look and feel different from each other.

These conclusions yield a fourth proposition:

Proposition 4: Attraction to an organization, selection by it, and attrition
from it yield particular kinds of persons in an organization. These people
determine organizational behavior.

Attraction. One of the most consistent findings in psychology comes
from vocational psychology. It concerns the fact that people are differen-
tially attracted to careers as a function of their own interests and personality.
The theoretical position that dominates the vocational psychology literature
is one proposed by Holland (1985).

Holland's perspective is that careers are conveniently and empirically
groupable into six major types: Intellectual, artistic, social, enterprising,
conventional, and realistic. Literally hundreds of studies support Holland's
classification, and the most recent version of the Strong-Campbell Interest
Inventory (Campbell & Hansen, 1985) employs his scheme for grouping
occupations. For present purposes Holland's most important contribution
is his idea that not only can careers and career interests be grouped into
six categories, but that career *environments* can also be so grouped. As
Holland (1976) put it: "Vocational choice is assumed to be the result of
a person's type, or patterning of types *and* the environment" (p. 533) and
that "the character of an environment emanates from the types [of people]
which dominate that environment" (p. 534). In brief, Holland showed that
the career environments people join are similar to the people who join
them.

There is also evidence in the organizational choice literature to support
this match of person and environment. Tom (1971), for example, showed
that people's most preferred environments are environments that have the
same "personality" profile as they do. Vroom (1966) showed that people
choose an organization in which to work that they believe will be most
instrumental in obtaining their valued outcomes.

Theories like Holland's, findings like those of Vroom and Tom, and
the abundant evidence that has accumulated about the utility of interest
measures for predicting eventual occupational entry lead to the conclusion
that similar kinds of people are likely to have similar kinds of personalities,
are likely to choose to do similar kinds of things, and are likely to behave
in similar kinds of ways.

Certainly the biodata research of Owens and his colleagues (cf. Neiner
& Owens, 1985; Owens & Schoenfeldt, 1979) leads to this conclusion. In
his programmatic research over the years Owens has shown that people
can be clustered into types based on their profiles of personal character-
istics. More importantly, he has shown that once the cluster to which
persons belong is known, it is possible to make accurate predictions about
what they will do. Indeed, predictions based on cluster membership are as
accurate as those made by knowing a person's individual characteristics!

More specifically, students' college majors, grade point averages, achievement imagery, memory capacity, leadership roles on campus, vocational interests, and even job choices are predictable; all by simply knowing the biodata cluster to which they belong. In fact, Owens (personal communication, June, 1985) is following up his samples of college students to see if the broad range of kinds of job and job environments to which they go is predictable by relating biodata cluster membership to PAQ (Position Analysis Questionnaire; McCormick, 1979) job clusters. It seems perfectly clear to me that Owens will be able to show that people who are of a similar type will be attracted, not only to jobs, but to organizations of a particular sort. It is this attraction of similar types to the same place that, I believe, begins to determine the place—but there is more to it than just attraction.

Attrition. The opposite side of attraction is attrition. It is a dependent variable of great interest in I/O and OB as well as in vocational psychology (Staw, 1984). For our purposes, the important finding from turnover studies is that people who do not fit an environment well will tend to leave it (cf. Mobley, 1982). So, while people may be attracted to a place, they may make errors, and finding they do not fit, they will leave. This kind of logic is what Wanous and his colleagues (cf. Wanous, 1980) have used as a basis for their research on the realistic job preview (RJP). That work shows, as demonstrated quite convincingly in recent meta-analyses (Premack & Wanous, 1985), that the better the fit between individual expectations and the reality of organizational life, the higher the job satisfaction and the longer the tenure.

The importance of this finding for my thesis is that if people who do not fit leave, then the people who remain will be similar to each other. But the critical point is not just that they will be similar to each other, but that they will constitute a more homogeneous group than those who were initially attracted to the setting. The conclusion that particular kinds of people are attracted to particular settings, combined with the finding that those who do not fit leave, produces restriction in range—the range of variance in individual differences in a setting is much less than would be expected by chance—or by the random assignment of people to settings.

Recall that when laboratory studies artificially suppress variability in behavior, it looks like the situation determines behavior. I think the same kind of phenomenon exists in our field. That is, we look at organizations and the people behaving in them and see somewhat similar kinds of behavior from the individuals there. We conclude, quite erroneously I would argue, that this similarity in behavior is caused by situational influences. An alternative explanation is that because of attraction to organizations and attrition from them, similar people are there, and they behave similarly because they *are* similar not because of some external factors. This restriction in range yields people who not only are similar in kind but who will

be similar in behavior, experiences, orientations, feelings, and reactions. This line of reasoning suggests a fifth proposition:

Proposition 5: Attraction to an organization and attrition from it produce restriction in range in the kinds of people in an organization. This restriction in range of people yields similar kinds of behavior from the people there, making it appear as if the organization were a determinant of their behavior.

Goals. To this point it is clear that thinking in interactional psychology contributes useful ideas for conceptualizing how people make a setting what it is and that theories and findings regarding attraction and attrition yield the conclusion that similar types of people are prone to end up in similar places. Here I introduce the idea that it is goals to which people are attracted, it is goals with which they interact, and if they don't fit, they leave.

Organizations are systems that are activated and directed by goals (Aldrich, 1979; Katz & Kahn, 1978). These goals are not actively chosen or consciously dictated goals. Rather, they emerge initially from the kind of person or persons who establish (found) the organization (Schein, 1985). As organizations evolve into maturity, it is the behavior of all of the people in them that defines organizational direction. But, more importantly for my present thesis, the behaviors of people in pursuit of organizational goals determine the processes and structures that evolve in organizations (Kimberly & Miles, 1980).

By this I mean that as an organization confronts both its larger environment and its internal environment, the processes and structures that are appropriate for survival will emerge and evolve. The processes and structures that emerge in a bank will differ from those in a YMCA— the environments they confront will be different because the people who formed them were different.

In any organization, then, structures and processes emerge out of day-to-day necessity, but the form and content of those structures and processes are ultimately traceable to the founder. This is true because the founder who starts a YMCA is different from one who founds a bank. As a consequence, the environments in which they operate will differ. The combination of differences in people and differences in environments produces differences in structures. Indeed, Miller and his colleagues (cf. Miller & Droge, 1986) have shown that, other things being equal, it is the founder's personality that determines organizational structure and strategy.

This line of thinking suggests a sixth proposition:

Proposition 6: The goals, structures and processes that attract people to organizations are determined by the founders' choices, that is, by his or her choices to found a particular kind of organization. The processes and

structures that emerge in an organization evolve from people meeting the
daily demands associated with survival.

Selection. Through formal and informal selection processes, the goals
of organizations have another influence on the kinds of people there. When
organizations exist in particular environments and have particular tech-
nologies, they need people with particular kinds of competencies (Aldrich,
1979). One thing we know about competencies is that different kinds of
people tend to have different kinds of competencies (Campbell & Hansen,
1985). It follows that organizations further restrict the range of types of
persons in them through the recruitment and hiring of people with the kinds
of competencies needed for effectiveness.

But organizations require people with many different kinds of compe-
tencies if they are to survive. How can it be that organizations can be
"typed" if people with many kinds of competencies are required? This is
possible when people are conceptualized as profiles of personal attributes:
people are not defined by a single characteristic, they are multidimensional
(Owens & Schoenfeldt 1979).

Organizations can be typed, then, by people sharing many common at-
tributes and differing only with respect to specific competencies. Holland
(1985), for example, types people by not only their dominant career inter-
ests, but by their secondary and tertiary interests as well. I hypothesize that
through recruitment and selection procedures organizations actually end up
choosing people who share many common personal attributes although they
may not share common competencies. In other words accountants in YM-
CAs should share many personal attributes with YMCA social workers,
while they share only some very specific competencies with accountants in
banks.

The addition of selection to attraction and attrition as forces to restrict
the range of types of people in an organization yields the following propo-
sition:

> *Proposition 7*: As an outcome of the attraction, selection, and attrition cycle,
> organizations will have severely restricted the range of types of people in
> them.

Summary. Figure 1 summarizes the theoretical framework. At the hub
of the framework is goals. It is important to remember that goals here are
in the head of the founder, becoming manifest through his or her behavior.
Thus organizational goals become operationalized via behavior, and that
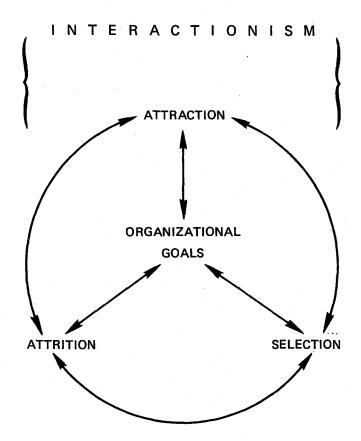behavior, in turn, yields structures and processes. These manifestations of

INTERACTIONISM

Figure 1: **The Attraction-Selection-Attrition Framework** (From "An interactionist perspective on organizational effectiveness" by B. Schneider in *Organizational Effectiveness*, edited by K. S. Cameron and D. S. Whetten, 1983, New York, Academic Press. Copyright 1983 by Academic Press. Reprinted by permission.)

goals determine the kinds of people who are attracted to, are selected by, and stay with a particular organization. Over time, persons attracted to, selected by, staying with, and behaving in organizations cause them to be what they are.

Over time, in fact, an organization can become so ingrown in type that it begins to occupy an increasingly narrow ecological niche (Aldrich, 1979). When this happens, the organization can fail—its people, structures and processes may become so appropriate for a particular segment of the environment that, when the environment changes, the kinds of people,

processes, and structures are no longer viable. Organizations's may then experience what Argyris (1976) calls dry rot.

Organizations grow and die and usually do not have someone around to keep the environment from changing or, as in the Government's protection of Chrysler, to give them time to adapt to the environment. The ASA framework for understanding how people make the place suggests that the natural cycle portrayed in Figure 1 can be dangerous to long-term organizational health.

Implications of the Framework

1. Organizational survival and organization change. A first implication of the attraction-selection-attrition framework, then, concerns organizational survival. The framework indicates that unless organizations consciously fight restriction in the range of the kinds of people they contain, when the environment changes they will (1) not be aware that it has changed and (2) probably not be capable of changing.

In fact, the ASA framework is quite grim with respect to how organizations will cope with the requirement to change. They are likely to have great difficulty because they do not contain people with the appropriate inclinations. For example, suppose an organization that was basically a service business—the customer comes first—encounters an environmental change such that it needs to be more market- and profit-oriented. In this case the inclination towards good service can be self-defeating and the organization could fail. It could fail because, over time, it has attracted, selected, and retained persons with service inclinations.

A tendency in situations like this is to seek new "right types" (Argyris, 1957). This is a serious mistake if the new "right types" do not have secondary or tertiary inclinations that fit the old "right types." This is true because without some sharing of inclinations, ways of viewing the world, and so forth, the newcomers won't fit at all and the old-timers will force them out (Alderfer, 1971). So, the motto from the model is to be sure that newcomers brought in to turn around an organization (i.e., to change the old-timers' inclinations) share some attributes with those they are expected to change.

One last caution follows from the ASA framework regarding changing an organization: Changes in structure and process are not likely to be useful. This follows from the idea that structure and process are outcomes of the behavior of the kinds of people in the organization rather than the determinants of their behavior. Structures and processes will change when the behaviors of people change, and the behaviors of people will change when different kinds of people are attracted to, selected by, and stay in an organization.

2. The use of personality and interest measures. I have emphasized constructs variously labelled "personality," "interests," "type," "kind," "inclination," "profile of attributes," and so on. These terms are used here to connote a macro, organizational-level issue; they do not refer to individual differences within organizations. A second implication of the ASA framework is that I/O psychologists have erred in their use of personality and interest kinds of measures. We have erred in using them when the goal has been to only predict which of a number of persons being considered for a specific job in a particular company is more likely to succeed. Although this has been more successful than some have claimed (Schneider & Schmitt, 1986), the fact is that these kinds of measures were not designed to make fine-grained distinctions among people who are relatively similar to begin with.

Using typical personality or interest tests to make fine-grained distinctions among applicants for a particular job in a particular company is like employing a yardstick when a micrometer is required. These measures have typically either been designed to make gross distinctions between normals and non-normals or to cluster the population into relatively homogeneous subgroups. As such they should be useful for identifying the types of people who cluster in different organizations.

In fact, an early idea in climate research, that organizations have a personality, may have been closer to the truth than early theoreticians imagined (Gellerman, 1959). I believe that the use of measures of individual personality and interest to conduct research across organizations would be interesting from a scholarly point of view and practical from an organizational change standpoint.

We have lived too long now with the idea that organizations are what their structures and processes are and that the latest fad in structure and process change is best for all organizations. Somehow the early work by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) showing that no one structure is best for all organizations has been forgotten. We live with the myth that people are infinitely adaptable and changeable, can work under any new structure or set of procedures, and that the one best system is the holy grail.

The ASA framework makes it very clear that we need to know much more about the kinds of people in whole organizations prior to reaching conclusions about a best structure. Good consultants try to figure out an organization's style (personality?) each time they enter a new setting; it is time for I/O psychology to document the data on which they focus. The ASA framework suggests that a useful set of data could be generated by the use of existing personality and interest measures administered to the members of entire organizations.

   3. Organizational climate and organizational culture. Climate here refers to the ways by which organizations indicate to organizational participants what is important for organizational effectiveness. As I have indicated elsewhere (Schneider, 1975; Schneider & Reichers, 1983), by what they reward, support, and expect, organizations can indicate that customer service or safety or product quality is an organizational imperative (Schneider & Bowen 1985).

   Culture is an even more amorphous topic than is climate, and like Jello, it seems difficult to nail to the wall (I used to say the same thing about climate). Organizations are said to have certain cultures when the people there share a common set of assumptions, values, and beliefs. Culture is said to be transmitted through myths and stories, and when large groups within organizations share the meanings of these myths, a culture is said to exist (Schein, 1985; Schneider, 1985).

   Obviously climate and culture are complimentary topics. Climate focuses on how the organization functions (what it rewards, supports, and expects), while culture addresses the assumptions and values attributed to why particular activities and behaviors are rewarded, supported, and expected. Culture focuses, then, on why thing's happen as they do, on the meaning or reasons for what happens.

   The ASA framework provides a new vantage point from which one can understand the genesis of both climate and culture. As noted earlier, the processes and structures that emerge in organizations are functions of the kinds of people in them behaving in ways that facilitate the accomplishments of the goals of the founder. The attraction, selection, and retention of certain kinds of people yield people who are similar to each other and who will be interpersonally attracted to each other (Festinger, 1954). As a result of this interpersonal attraction, people will naturally share their views of why things occur the way they do. Given that the attribution of cause is a basic human tendency, when we share our attributions of cause with others they become the very stories and myths by which culture is transmitted (Bolman & Deal, 1984).

   4. The importance of recruitment. Compared to personnel selection, the research on personnel recruitment is relatively sparse (Rynes, in press). The ASA framework suggests that the major way organizations can actively determine the pool of candidates from which they will choose their members is through recruitment activities. Thus, if organizations are to make active choices to increase the range of the types of people they select, then it will be primarily through a focus on increasing the pool of candidates that this will happen. Haphazard recruitment and/or faith in the selection process, either self-selection or organizational selection, cannot be expected to yield the non-right types required for long-term viability.

Other implications of the ASA framework. These four implications barely begin to scratch the surface of this person-based model for understanding why organizations look and feel the way they do. For example, the model has some interesting implications for research on leadership, motivation, job attitudes, and socialization to work, among others (Schneider, 1983a, 1983b). Here I only summarize some issues regarding leadership and job attitudes as my fifth and sixth implications of the ASA model.

With respect to leadership, for example, the ASA model predicts that different kinds of people are likely to be effective leaders in different kinds of organizations. This means that different dimensions or traits will be predictive of leadership effectiveness as a function of the kinds of people to be led. When Stogdill (1948), almost forty years ago, discovered that no single trait predicted leadership across settings, he drew the conclusion that personality measures would not be useful in the prediction of leadership at work.

Subsequent research on the prediction of leadership effectiveness, of course, substantiates the ASA prediction. For example, Miner's (cf., 1978) sentence completion measure seems to be effective in more bureaucratically structured organizations but not in the more free-floating world of high tech. Yukl (1981) interprets this finding in structural terms, but the ASA framework suggests that different kinds of people are attracted to, selected by, and stay with old-line manufacturing organizations, so the kinds of people who will be effective in leading them will be different. We desperately need some research on leader attributes. This kind of research is needed because almost all of the current leadership theories are situational theories in the extreme; they tell a leader what to do, given a certain situation, and make the assumption that leaders are infinitely flexible and that followers from setting to setting are all the same.

From an ASA perspective, theory and research on job attitudes really are very depressing. The history of job attitude research leads us to believe implicitly that the attitudes of people at work are caused by the conditions of the work place. In the past ten years, this implicit belief has been made explicit through the social construction of reality perspective (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). In this perspective it is argued that people's job attitudes are really only social constructions of reality; that people's attitudes are a reflection of the social milieu in which they work.

The problem with this approach to job attitudes is that it assumes a group phenomenon wherein the group somehow or other takes over the minds of individuals and causes them to see things differently than they would if alone. Let us suppose that people in a setting *do* have the same job attitudes. The ASA model says they probably will, not because they are constructing a false reality, but because they are similar people experiencing similar conditions.

In other words, the sixth implication of the ASA model is that people in a setting *will* have the same job attitudes. In fact, the ASA model makes an even more interesting prediction. It predicts that the "same" organizational conditions will be differentially satisfying to people in different work environments and, conversely, that different work conditions can be equally satisfying to the people in different settings. So, the ASA framework predicts that a level of pay that may be very satisfying to community mental health center employees may be quite dissatisfying to stockbrokers. Or conversely, a considerate boss may have greater impact on a community mental health worker's attitudes than on a stockbroker's.

In other words, the ASA framework cautions against a situationist interpretation of what makes for positive job attitudes. It says that positive job attitudes for workers in an organization can be expected when the natural inclinations of the persons there are allowed to be reflected in their behaviors by the kinds of processes and structures that have evolved there. In fact, there is some evidence now that people's job attitudes may come with them to a setting (Pulakos & Schmitt, 1983; Staw, Bell & Clausen, 1986; Staw & Ross, 1985). These kinds of data indicate the need for an alternative to situationism in the study of job attitudes.

Summary

The main thesis of the ASA perspective is that organizations are the people in them: that the people make the place. I have presented the idea that I/O psychologists have failed to incorporate people types into our theories of organizations. Failure to understand organizations as people has resulted in at least the following:

1. We have tried to change organizations by changing their structures and processes when it was the people that needed changing. With changes in people, the necessary changes in structure and process will occur. We have also probably oversold the speed with which organizations can change; change will be slow.

2. We have assisted organizations in their inadvertent slide into decline by implementing selection systems that might further restrict the range of their adaptive capability.

3. We have accepted situationist interpretations of clearly psychological phenomena such as job attitudes, organizational climate, and leadership. In addition, we have implicitly accepted the idea that organizational forms and functions are determined by phenomena outside individuals' attributes; we have accepted environmental determinism.

4. We have erroneously accepted the idea that personality and interest measures are not useful; they can be tremendously useful in understanding organizations. But even in more micro studies, we have passively accepted

criticisms of personality measures when, at least in leadership research, we have good evidence to show that different kinds of people are likely to be effective leaders in different kind of settings.

In short, we have been seduced into thinking that organizational processes and structures are the causes of the attitudes, feelings, experiences, meanings, and behaviors that we observe there. We attribute cause not to the people attracted to, selected by, and remaining with organizations, but to the *signs* of their existence in the organization: to structure, process, and technology.

Enough is enough. We are psychologists and behavioral scientists; let us seek explanation in people not in the results of their behavior. The people make the place.

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