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The modern university reflects many of the tensions and stresses of the wider society of which it is a part. The conditions generating conflict are related to the ambiguity and mulplicity of academic goals. Within the context of a political model of the university, various strategic and tactical methods for dealing with conflict between students, faculty and administrators are considered. Methods of control include the strengthening of information networks, increased participation of all academic constituencies in policy-making processes, the development of new forms of academic organization, and a heightened leadership role of the university president.

JAMES B. HARTMAN

Change and Conflict in the University

Stress and conflict, as necessary accompaniments of human interaction, grow out of the dynamics of competition between individuals and groups and from the collision incompatible, mutually exclusive interests, desires, and values. Since universities are subject to the same growth and change as other social systems and organizations, it is inevitable that they should exhibit the conflict and tensions of the larger society they inhabit. The weakening of the traditional autonomy and isolation of the universities, the complexity of their evolving objectives, specialization, environmental involvement, and cosmopolitanism in response to the information explosion has been accompanied by an increase in stress and conflict, both with regard to internal processes and relationships with the larger society. In fact, much strife, political action, tension, and disruption lie behind the apparent routine of academic affairs.

The University as a Social Organization

One of the most prevalent forms of human association in modern society is the bureaucratic organization. Power relationships in this context are relatively rigid and predictable, so conflict can be minimized and contained, for the most part. The literature on the subject of conflict within and between organizations is considerable,[1] and the topic has been approached, both conceptually and empirically, from the various viewpoints of economics,[2] political science,[3], industrial relations,[4] social theory,[5] organization theory,[6] psychology,[7] and game theory.[8]

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*James B. Hartman was trained in social sciences at the University of Manitoba and in philosophy at Brown University and Northwestern University. He has held teaching appointments at several universities in Canada and the United States and is the author of a number of articles dealing wih issues in higher education.

[1]A fairly extensive bibliography is given in L. R. Pondy, "Organizational Conflict: Concepts and Models," *Administrative Science Quarterly, 12*, 1967, pp. 296-320.

[2]K. Boulding, "A Pure Theory of Conflict Applied to Organizations," in *Power and Conflict in Organizations*, edited by R. L. Kahn and E. Boulding (New York: Basic Books, 1964), pp. 136-145; *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory* (New York: Harper, 1962).

[3]R. A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963); S. M. Lipset, *Political Man* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1960).

[4]C. Kerr, *Industrialism and Industrial Man*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964); *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963).

[5]R. Dahrendorf, "Toward a Theory of Social Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2*, 1958, pp. 170-173; J. Barnard, T. H. Pear, R. Aron, and R. C. Angell, *The Nature of Conflict* (Paris: UNESCO, 1957).

The task of describing and analyzing conflict in the academic setting would be much easier if the university was a straight-forward species of bureaucratic organization, but it is not. A notable difference is that many important committees and other decision-making bodies cut across the hierarchical network of the president, deans, and department chairmen.[9] Unlike the typical organization, in which power conforms to rank in the hierarchy on the assumption that rank and ability are correlated, the university harbours a double standard of ranking, one internal, the other external. Within the university, instructional rank is conferred on staff members by the institution, while disciplinary prestige is conferred by other members of the particular profession. Universities differ from typical bureaucratic organizations in other important ways as well: the intangible nature of the task of the advancement of knowledge and the discovery of truth; the complexity, variability, and perishability of the product; the inability to define precisely the nature of the academic goals, objectives, and mission; vague or incomplete rules or procedures; a decentralized form of organization within which various sub-units participate in the academic enterprises; and the fact that the staff is comprised largely of professionals, chosen for their expertise rather than their amenability to authority and supervision. In a community composed, theoretically at least, of equals, power relationships are loose and ambiguous and the possibilities for conflict are great.[10]

Within the universities themselves, there are many forces at work which contribute to the generation of conflict. The nature of the complex bureaucratic structure itself, with its institutes, colleges, schools, divisions, and departments, is a contributing factor. Since there is a good deal of autonomy within these various sub-units, it might be supposed that this arrangement would serve an integrating function, protecting them from outside interference and insulating them from conflict-producing situations. However, it is equally plausible to argue that this same organizational arrangement fragments the whole and is therefore productive of conflict. The specific source of this type of conflict lies in these dual and often incompatible requirements: the demand for individual autonomy and academic freedom for professional personnel, on the one hand, and the need for organizational efficiency, control, and accountability, on the other. The corresponding ambiguity and looseness of power relationships flowing from this "organizational dilemma" produces conflicts which cannot readily be resolved within the existing organizational structure.[11]

Disputes over academic priorities are a constant feature of transactions between the various academic divisions, departments, and disciplines. Therefore,

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[6]V. A. Thompson, *Modern Organizations* (New York: Knopf, 1961); J. D. Thompson (ed.), *Approaches to Organizational Design* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966), *Organizations in Action* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967); P. M. Blau and W. R. Scott, *Formal Organizations* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1962).

[7]K. Lewin, *Resolving Social Conflict* (New York: Harper, 1948); N. Sanford, "Individual Conflict in Organization Interaction," in *Power and Conflict in Organizations*, edited by R. L. Kahn and E. Boulding (New York: Basic Books, 1964), pp. 95-104.

[8]A. Rapaport, *Fights, Games, and Debates* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960).

[9]For a discussion of other similarities and differences between bureaucratic organizations and universities, see W. E. Moran, "The Study of University Organizations," *Journal of Higher Education, 39*, 1968, pp. 144-151.

[10]For some general discussions of faculty and student power, see: H. O. Brogan, "Faculty Power: Pretense and Reality in Academic Governments," *Journal of Higher Education, 40*, 1969, pp. 23-30; L. B. Mayhew, "Faculty Demands and Faculty Militance," *Journal of Higher Education, 40*, 1969, pp. 337-350; D. B. Johnstone, 'The Student and His Power," *Journal of Higher Education, 40*, 1969, pp. 205-218.

[11]S. O. Ikenberry, "The Organizational Dilemma," *Journal of Higher Education, 43*, 1972, pp. 23-34.

it is not surprising that there is so little agreement about the goals and missions of university education. However much lip service is paid to the desirability of preserving and transmitting the cultural heritage and furthering intellectual values generally, and however great the consensus on the mission of the university to advance human knowledge, there is little agreement concerning the best methods to secure these ends, and it is on this instrumental level that competition and conflict originate.

At this point, it is appropriate to sharpen the suggestion implicit in the preceding discussion that there are two different sources of conflict, structural and functional.[12] On the structural side, a good deal of the tension affecting the academy is simply a result of the bureaucratic and administrative arrangements that have evolved over the history of the university to implement particular policies, but are either inadequate to the task for which they were designed or obsolete in terms of present conditions. These conflicts may co-exist with substantial agreement concerning the ultimate function of the university as the chief repository of accumulated learning and culture, the agent for the advancement of knowledge for the benefit of society through teaching, research, and public service. However, this generalized goal is so broadly defined and vaguely stated as to be almost useless for settling differences of opinion as to the policies best suited to achieve it. In short, statements of universal goals are more likely to serve as inspirational, exhortatory devices than operational or functional guides. Thus it is likely that certain types of conflict which emerge within the internal structure of the university may be symptomatic of the multiplicity, ambiguity, and confusion of goals that the university *actually* pursues, as compared with the unitary goal which it *professes* to pursue.

Areas of Conflict: Students

In terms of outward appearances, the most obvious form of campus conflict is the student-related tensions that have seen the rise of militant student movements on university campuses in the United States in the 1960s, accompanied by occasional outbreaks of violence.[13] Observers have devised a range of hypotheses to account for student unrest.[14] From the point of view of the social system, student-related tensions have been linked to the problems of wider society, generally of a political, military, or racist variety. Also it has been supposed that student unrest is a symptom of a more general challenge to legitimate authority as unworthy of respect, or that it is a result of a sense of frustration or general feelings of alienation produced by the generation gap. Needless to say, there is little agreement among the variety of psychological, sociological, economic, or political explanations that have been offered.

At most universities and colleges, students form a relatively cohesive group in virtue of similarity in age, location of residences, subjection to administrative rules, and the like. Apart from variations in attitude produced by psychological, social, economic, political, or religious backgrounds, there are certain typical issues which separate them from faculty, administrators, and governors. Against the faculty, the chief complaint is obsolete teaching techniques, both with regard to content and method. Claims of incompetence in the classroom, irrelevant curricula, and unfair evaluation procedures rank high among items of student

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[12]H. D. Aiken, "How Late Is It?" in *Value Change and Power Conflict*, edited by W. I. Minter and P. O. Snyder (Boulder, Colorado: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1969), pp. 30, 34.

[13]For world-wide coverage, see the special issue "Students and Politics," *Daedalus*, 97(1), 1968.

[14]*Campus Tension: Analysis and Recommendations.* Report of the Special Committee on Campus Tensions. Washington, D.C., American Council on Education, 1970, pp. 12-15.

dissatisfaction. Against administrators, the list of grievances ranges over the forms of disciplinary action and penalties, the rigidity and unresponsiveness of the institutional machinery generally, and confidentiality of records and other official sources of information. Against both faculty and administrators, resentment of their neglect and indifference in respect of student desires in both procedural and instructional matters is expressed. While student demands for parity in decision-making processes have not been met universally, substantial reforms providing for their representation on governing bodies have been achieved in recent years. As far as relations with governing boards are concerned, they are likely to be free of direct conflict since trustees are relatively invisible to students. Whenever students do become aware of trustees and members of boards of governors, the predictable radical student attitude is to scorn them as agents of evil capitalism and to consign them to outer darkness accordingly.

Areas of Conflict: the Faculty

Compared with students, there are fewer factors contributing to the solidarity of faculty, considered as a whole. Like any heterogeneous group, the faculty are often divided through differences in attitudes, interests, associations, and social backgrounds. Moreover, there is reason to suppose that some of the conflict between faculty members of different departmental or disciplinary groups is rooted in a pluralism of truth strategies or epistemological rules which guide the search for knowledge and therefore govern the thought and action of various faculty subcultures.[15] It is conceivable that these factors, in part, may account for the perennial ideological disagreements and disputes over the goals and objectives of the university that make educational reform so difficult to achieve.[16]

In addition to disagreement over substantial academic issues, department members frequently are in conflict over such material amenities as funds, materials, class hours, office space, and other symbols of status and prestige. Within academic departments, there are numerous possibilities for the development of stresses between the following groups: young and old, teachers and researchers, generalists and specialists, conservatives and liberals, pro-administration and anti-administration, humanists and scientists, inbred and outbred.[17]

The individual faculty member may experience internal conflict resulting from various dilemmas: one imposed by the alternating demands of non-social behaviour in the independent search for knowledge and the social requirement of intellectual interaction, another derived from the need to adopt an attitude of cultural conformity in the preservation of tradition while at the same time indulging in creative non-conformity in the concern for the future, and yet another the result of the conflicting appeals of abstract, universal knowledge

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[15]J. D. Thompson, R. W. Hawker, and R. W. Avery, "Truth Strategies and University Organization," *Educational Administration Quarterly, 5*, 1969, pp. 4-25.

[16]Different conceptions of the proper goals are said to be responsible for recent upheavals at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, N.J. Should the Institute constitute an assembly of eminent, celebrated savants in various fields, working in solitary splendour in pursuit of "useless knowledge?" Or should it be a community of scholars engaged in co-operative search for "useful knowledge?" The conflict was heightened by disagreement over appointments and the role of the director in this matter. For a full account, see L. Y. Jones, Jr., "Bad Days on Mount Olympus," *The Atlantic Monthly, 223(2)*, February 1974, pp. 37-53.

[17]T. Caplow and R. J. McGee, *The Academic Marketplace* (Garden City, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1965), p. 165. See also S. M. Lipset and E. C. Ladd, "The Divided Professoriat," *Change, 2*, 1971, pp. 54-59.

and concrete controls or limitations.[18] Much of the internal conflict experienced by the individual faculty member arises from a further dilemma imposed by the often incompatible demands of the academic reward system that favours research, on the one hand, and accountability to students and to personal conscience which requires dedication to effective teaching and innovative curriculum development, on the other. The split in faculty allegiance between teaching and research produces, in sociological terms, a classic instance of "inter-positional role conflict."[19] From another point of view, this academic schizophrenia-producing situation may be reflected in two types of faculty subcultures, often in conflict: the cosmopolitans who identify with external reference groups in the specialized-knowledge disciplines, and the locals who reject this orientation in favour of institutional loyalty.[20]

Since students occupy a position of low power in the academic scheme of things, overt faculty-originated conflicts with them are likely to be few. In general, however, the faculty may fear the loss of such power as they already have to students as a consequence of increasing participatory democracy. Faculty complaints relate to student attempts at interference in academic programs and to the demands students make on their time in joint student-faculty committee deliberations.

Much of ths discord between faculty and administration is attributable to genuine differences of opinion over academic matters and the simple desire of faculty for more direct involvement in administrative decision-making processes. Differing perceptions of faculty roles may also account for a good deal of the conflict with administrators regarding professional tasks and promotion factors, for example.[21] Also, much stress may be the product of a doctrinal anti-administration attitude, based on a belief in irreconcilable values, which often leads faculty to side with students against administrators on certain issues. Furthermore, the dual lines of professional and bureaucratic authority, referred to earlier, are productive of recurrent tensions: the faculty member operates on professional or disciplinary expertise in his pursuit of intellectual excellence, while the administrator imposes constraints on academic activities in the name of budgetary efficiency. Since the conflict of academic freedom and bureaucratic authority takes a variety of forms related to role ambiguity, such as teaching versus research, personal versus organizational accountability, individual capacity versus organizational control, and the like, it is not surprising that considerable attention has been paid to this matter.[22] Different person-to-organization perspectives, then, account for much academic stress between faculty and administrators.

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[18]F. A. Shull, Jr., "Professorial Stress as a Variable in Structuring Faculty Roles," *Educational Administration Quarterly, 2,* 1972, p. 50.

[19]T. W. Martin and K. J. Berry, "The Teaching-Research Dilemma: Its Sources in the University Setting," *Journal of Higher Education, 40,* 1969, pp. 691-703. See also J. B. Hartman, "Teaching and Research: Their Relation in the University," *Stoa, The Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 4,* 1974, pp. 31-42.

[20]A. Gouldner, "Cosmopolitans and Locals: Toward an Analysis of Latent Social Roles," *Administrative Science Quarterly, 2,* 1957-1958, pp. 281-306, 444-480.

[21]Shull, *Op. cit.,* p. 58, reports the results of a study in which college deans weighted teaching 50 per cent as a promotion factor, while full professors weighted it as only 37 per cent.

[22]Ikenberry, *Op. cit.,* p. 24; Shull, *Op. cit.,* p. 61; D. W. Leslie, "Conflict Management in the Academy: An Exploration of the Issues," *Journal of Higher Education, 43,* 1970, pp. 707- 708; J. V. Baldridge, *Power and Conflict in the University* (New York, Wiley, 1971), p. 114.

Areas of Conflict: Administrators

If administrators — presidents, vice-presidents, deans — can be regarded as a more homogeneous group with respect to their social, political, and educational outlook than the faculty, then cleavages between administrators turn out to be fewer than those which divide the faculty. At the same time, however, the possibilities for conflict with student and faculty groups, whose socio-political orientations are different from those of administrators, is increased, particularly when administrators issue value-laden directives.

In terms of his fiscal responsibilities, a dean frequently berates those below him for lack of commitment to standards of budgetary efficiency, while at the same time competing with other divisional deans for scarce financial resources. In academic matters, his direct interference in personal matters is rare, but when he is required to rectify too many departmental blunders, his level of participation in faculty affairs is sure to increase.

Like the deans, the president also wears two faces, one to the governing board, the other to the deans and faculty members below him in the academic pyramid. In addition to his leadership role, his dual task is to maintain peace among the diverse academic units of the university, while satisfying the board of the financial efficiency of the whole operation. While presidents feel the imperatives imposed by the board on behalf of society and the government for economical and efficient operation of the academic enterprise, a distinct form of conflict arises when governing boards interfere directly in campus matters or impose excessive limitations on academic alternatives and future options. Besides transmitting public needs to the university and fulfilling their function of public accountability, governing boards should exercise a protective role as well, isolating the institution from potential sources of conflict arising from political interference or manipulation by special interests.

Conceptual Models of University Organization

In the attempt to understand the nature of academic organizations, a number of theoretical models have been proposed. Each of these conceptual approaches provides a unique viewpoint for the study of the university system, and each fits a certain set of facts, but not all of them. The epistemological model, which attempts to explain the behaviour of academic individuals and groups in terms of basic strategies employed in the acquisition of truth and the search for knowledge, is most useful in understanding the differences which separate academic cultures. However, since it presents only a static picture of academic existence, it cannot successfully account for change within the system and the conflict that so often accompanies it. The economic or bureaucratic model views the university as analogous to a commercial organization, with its hierarchical structure of authority, formal chains of command, and fixed channels of communication. The decision-making model, which focuses on organizational problem-solving from the point of view of the rational attempt to order alternatives in such a way as to maximize utility, may be regarded as a close relative of the bureaucratic model. However, the emphasis in these models on the principle of legal-rationality, with its formal, legitimate forms of power and authority, neglects the informal, illegitimate variety characteristic of a developing organization like the university, particularly in the way that informal power relationships affect policy formation. The collegial model, which describes the self-management of scholarly affairs through the principle of consensus is also inadequate, for this form of round-table democracy characterizes only a few small colleges at best and is essentially a wishful utopian concept. It is more satisfactory to regard the university from the point of view of the political model,

sometimes called the conflict model.[23] This model assumes that the incompatibility of goals, or of the means of attaining them, of two or more sets of agents unavoidably produces conflict. The appropriateness of aspects of political analysis, such as the existence of power blocs with diverse interests and values, the restrictions on formal authority by the relative bargaining power of different constituencies, the necessity of negotiation and compromise among competing groups, and the recognition of other groups external to the academic organization and their effect on internal policy-making activity, all indicate the utility of the political model. Other aspects of university life that strengthen the political interpretation include the similarity of distribution in power relationships in universities and domestic politics, the parallels in leadership styles of university presidents and politicians, the existence of academic freedom and rights for the professional staff, and the preoccupation with constitutional forms of power among the governors. The chief attraction of the political model, which has its sources in sociological conflict theory, community power studies, and the role of interest groups in organizations, is its adequacy to deal with conflict in the academic setting through a description of the dynamics of change. It also provides a useful framework for the description and analysis of decision-making processes and policy formation in university organizations.

With regard to specific forms of conflict, L. R. Pondy distinguishes three conceptual models to describe the relations between organizational sub-units: the bargaining model, which deals with problems of competition between interest groups whose demand for scarce resources generates conflict, as exemplified in budgeting processes and labour-management relations; the bureaucratic model, which deals with problems of control, is applicable to the analysis of conflicts in the vertical dimensions of organizational hierarchy, such as superior-subordinate relationships; and the systems model, which deals with problems of co-ordination and lateral conflicts among parties to a functional relationship.[24] Although Pondy does not consider the problem of conflict in universities, it is clear that the systems model is most appropriate to the academic setting, insofar as it describes organizations of interdependent sub-units having divergent multiple goals, different preference orderings for the same goals, and involving interpersonal friction in a chronically conflictful setting. One of the more important features of all models, however, is that conflict relationships exhibit fairly predictable phases of development, having five stages: latency, feeling, perception, manifestation, and aftermath.[25] The forms of latent conflict are reflected in the primary conditions which underly the three basic models: competition for scarce resources, drives for autonomy, and divergence of goals. Role conflict experienced by faculty members is an important form of latent conflict. On the other hand, suppression and attention-focus mechanisms often limit the perception of conflict. Generally, however, conflicts are perceived when they relate to the basic values of individuals. Felt conflict involves the whole personality of the individual when, for example, the demands of the organization are inconsistent with the individual's personal requirements. Manifest conflict, although rare in universities, consists in open agression, verbal or physical, which serves to block the goal achievements of others. Failing a genuine resolution

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[23]A comparison of the bureaucratic, collegial, and political models is given in Baldridge, *Op. cit.*, Ch. 2, and in his *Models of University Governance* (Stanford, California: Stanford Center for Research and Development in Teaching, School of Education, 1971). See also: J. F. S. Foster, "A Political Model for the University," *Educational Record, 49*, 1968, pp. 435-443; G. B. Markus and R. Tantner, "Conflict Model for Strategists and Managers," *American Behavioral Scientist, 15*, 1972, pp. 809-836; J. B. Hartman, "Complementary Models of University Organization," *Journal of Educational Thought, 8(1)*, 1974, pp. 15-28.

[24]Pondy, *Op. cit.*, pp. 297-298, 312-319.

[25]*Ibid.*, pp. 300-306.

of conflict, an aftermath consists in the reappearance of latent conditions which signal the recurrence of a conflict episode.

It is worth noticing that conflict in the university setting is neither complete nor total, for no universities in recent times have been completely disintegrated by the results of internal conflict, although temporary general disruption has not been uncommon. On the other hand, the situation of complete calm, peace, and co-operation exists only as an ideal, within the context of the collegial model. It is more accurate, therefore, to incorporate into the description of the political model the idea of "strategic conflict,"[26] which includes both the elements of conflict and co-operation. While complete conflict is postulated on the zero-sum concept that one person's loss is another's gain, and complete co-operation holds that no one wins unless both do, strategic conflict stresses negotiation, in which each side wins some and loses some. Academic disputes and tensions are best characterized in the latter way because, for the most part, protagonists are chiefly interested in gaining concessions, advantages, and favours through mediation, the success of which frequently depends on the identification of common interests, however temporary these may be.

Methods for Dealing with Conflict

It is unrealistic to expect the total elimination of conflict, for this cannot be achieved in the academic setting, by its very nature. Rather, the problem is how to devise methods for reducing conflict to tolerable levels along with ways of directing it into constructive channels. This question cannot be answered apart from some system of values, either personal (emotional well-being) or organizational (productivity, stability, adaptability).[27] The attempt to assess the effects of conflict is clearly complicated by the possible relations of compatibility or incompatibility between these two value systems, and by the recognition that conflict may simultaneously be good and bad in the same institutional environment.

The desire to reduce or eliminate conflict is undoubtedly the chief motivation behind attempts to understand the phenomenon. However, is conflict entirely an unmitigated evil? There is a sense in which conflict may have some beneficial aspects: the expression of feelings associated with substantial issues (the safety-valve effect), the restoration of self-esteem, the completion of a previously interrupted aggressive response sequence, the strengthening of group solidarity, the formation of unifying ties where none existed before, the provision of an element of moral satisfaction in the involvement in activity perceived as legitimate, and the stimulation to productivity and constructive action. Although conflict may be instrumentally good in these respects, it is more probable that the costs in disruption, isolation, and hardship will outweigh these doubtful gains.[28]

First, it will be desirable to consider some proposed methods for dealing with conflict which, for various reasons, are likely to be unsuccessful. Faculty mobility and the redistribution of authority comprise the major methods of resolving conflict in the university, according to Caplow and McGee.[29] Exodus of a defeated faction, they observe, may be the best solution, although losers often leave sympathetic supporters to their cause behind. At any rate, this solution is both

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[26]T. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 84ff, cited by Baldridge, *Power and Conflict, Op. cit.*, p. 202.

[27]Pondy, *Op. cit.*, p. 308.

[28]R. C. North, H. E. Koch, Jr., and D. A. Zinnes, "The Integrative Functions of Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 4*, 1968, p. 335; Markus and Tantner, *Op. cit.*, pp. 819ff.

[29]*Op. cit.*, p. 175.

partial and evasive, since it is only directed to the prevention of an aftermath and it fails to confront the issue of conflict control and reduction in an on-going situation. As far as the redistribution of authority is concerned, this proposal appears inconsistent with their description of the vagueness and ambiguity of power relationships in the university. Given the increase in participatory democracy in academic affairs, much power which formerly resided with administrators, in such areas as budgeting, program development, and long-range planning, even now is distributed throughout various committees and governing bodies responsible for the daily affairs of the university, so the exact nature and direction of this proposed redistribution is unclear. If institutional survival is at stake, such changes may be tolerable, otherwise the threat to prevailing attitudes and procedures would be substantial. This proposal also ignores the effect of external forces in the resolution of internal conflict.

Another unfruitful suggestion has been advanced by "human relations" theorists, who suppose that conflict is largely due to blocks in communication, a situation which can be remedied by psychological openness and "reasoning together." This view has been termed the "communications fallacy."[30] Openness in communication may usefully counteract the suppression of conflict but it can hardly be expected to resolve it, for many of the issues that produce stress and tension are real and substantial disagreements about goals or the means of attaining them. Some conflicts are *not* generated by misunderstanding alone, for example, competition over financial resources, disputes over tuition fees or disciplinary action, the teaching-research controversy, tenure and promotion criteria — in short, the major issues which concern students, faculty, administrators, and trustees. Moreover, it is conceivable that greater communication could exacerbate conflict when more information relating to the probable gains and losses of participating parties is made available.

Turning now to constructive methods for dealing with conflict having a greater probability of success, there are two sorts: one is anticipatory, designed to detect potential sources of conflict with the view of forestalling it, the other managerial, aimed at reducing, channeling, or resolving specific instances of conflict. For the sake of convenience in terminology, the former may be designated "strategic" methods, the latter as "tactical."[31] Strategic methods are applicable to latent, perceived, and felt conflict, and tactical methods are appropriate to manifest conflict.

Strategic methods include various "mechanisms of segregation"[32] which are thought particularly suitable for minimizing the kind of conflict occurring between administrators and other professionals in the university. One of these is role separation, in which some decisions are left to sub-units while others remain with central offices. An example of this is found in the administrative practice of allocating a fixed budgetary sum to a department, leaving the department free to decide how it shall be used to meet its specific needs.

Tensions due to incompatible values may be minimized by interposing an intermediary; this is the method of transferral occupation. A student personnel administrator or a director of student affairs, for example, functions as a mediator between liberal attitudes and avant-garde styles of students and the pragmatic or conservative orientations of the administration or faculty. Teaching assistants in the classroom also play a similar role, serving to diffuse potential conflict

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[30]Baldridge, *Power and Conflict, Op. cit.*, p. 200.

[31]Leslie, *Op. cit.*, pp. 711ff.

[32]E. Litwak, "Models of Bureaucracy Which Permit Conflict," *American Journal of Sociology, 67*, 1971, pp. 181-182.

between students and professors over such controversial matters as evaluation procedures, teaching methods, and the like. Persons in transferral occupations, such as departmental administrative assistants, can deny responsibility for unpopular rules and policies which they are required to follow, while at the same time providing a focus for the real dissatisfactions or imagined grievances before they evolve to the stage of manifest conflict.

A final method of segregation is the use of evaluation procedures to determine the utility of shifting from one set of social relations to another, for example, a change from hierarchical, formal relations to lateral, informal ones, or *vice versa.* Sometimes a change from bureaucratic authority to committee-based authority may avoid conflictful confrontation, while in other situations a reduction of the numbers of persons involved in decision-making processes may facilitate more peaceful relations.

Occasionally, a strategic approach may be advocated by a non-segregating mechanism which allows participation on a high level of all parties to a dispute. Special councils, committees, or even unicameral systems of university government, which bring together representatives of students, faculty, and administration, are examples of this strategy. General agreement on some issues may establish the necessary attitudes of trust and co-operation for achieving incremental progress on others, and encourage a realistic appraisal on all sides of the various benefits and costs accruing to certain forms of action.

Tactical methods of dealing with conflict relate chiefly to manifest conflict, although they may equally be applied to the perceived or felt phases. The informal role of a campus ombudsman, in virtue of his receptivity, visibility, and access to aggrieved individuals or groups, may effectively diminish perceived or felt conflict, some of which may be the result of inadequate information. However, this avoids the issue of whether the existing rules and structures are just or unjust. If the ombudsman is simply a listener, advisor, and information dispenser, then he may in fact be nothing more than a spokesman for the administration. Moreover information-giving may only inflame the conflict, rather than reduce it. On the other hand, if his review of the problem results in the establishment of just rules and more effective formal procedures, his role in removing the causes of conflict may be enhanced.[33]

Formal mechanisms, considered as restraints on the power of administrators or other groups in authority in large and growing organizations, are conceded to be the major tactical methods for achieving isolation and control of manifest conflict within approved channels. If conflict cannot be eradicated entirely, then a neutral forum must be provided for the orderly analysis of the conditions of the conflictful situation. Ipartial hearings, objective interpretations, and equitable settlements constitute the ideal.[34] While a detailed consideration of the utility of the specific types of formal mechanisms would be beyond the scope of the present discussion, it will be sufficient to mention them briefly. Grievance

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[33]See K. A. Friedman and B. M. Barber, "Ombudsmen in Universities," *CAUT Bulletin, 20(3),* Spring 1972, pp. 43-60, and critical reaction by D. C. Savage, "Ombudsmen," *CAUT Bulletin, 21(1),* October 1972, p. 29.

[34]Several varieties may be distinguished: authoritarian, in which administrators or executives hear cases judged according to standards derived from the organization's value system; legalistic (internal), which ensures unbiased application of organization rules by the inclusion of an outside participant; legalistic (external), in which internal standards are applied with a view to their congruence with external democratic standards; and democratic, which adopts liberal, humanitarian criteria within the framework of due process of law. W. G. Scott, *The Management of Conflict* (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin and the Dorsey Press, 1965), Ch. 5. An analysis of the application of these varieties to the matter of academic conflict management would be a complex undertaking, but all types may be thought to be represented, from time to time.

and appeal procedures of various sorts are now a common feature of campus life. Their aim is to rectify the complaints of the various constituencies of the university against one another or within themselves. Campus tribunals are established to deal with faculty-student conflict (academic matters, grading standards), student-administration conflict (discrimination, discipline, governance), and faculty-administration conflict (promotion, tenure, salary). Not only are individual and group rights thought to be preserved by such mechanisms, but they may also provide a deterrent to the further abuse of power on the part of any one of the constituencies against others or contrary to the conceived purposes of the university. Appeal to arbitration by an external agent is not unknown among the available formal provisions: the National Center for Dispute Settlement of the American Arbitration Association in cases of student discipline, and the appropriate committees on academic freedom and tenure of the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the American Association of University Professors. Recently faculty have exhibited a strengthened interest in collective bargaining. The inertia of administrations and their neglect to consult faculty on questions of job security, economic benefits, and faculty welfare, have increased feelings of alienation. This factor, among others, coupled with the desire of faculty for a greater share in decision-making and the impact of the current economic austerity, has hastened the spread of faculty unionization.[35] The ultimate source of formal appeal is to the courts, a method which lies open to those who have exhausted other internal or external avenues of appeal.

To this list may be added a miscellaneous collection of informal and formal methods of dealing with tension and conflict, such as discussion sessions, *ad hoc* committees, public hearings, and governmental commissions of inquiry.[36] For the most part, they are preliminary devices, falling somewhere between strategic devices, designed to prevent conflict, and tactical ones, intended to control it.

Concluding Recommendations

To insist that all conflict should be eliminated is unrealistic and undesirable. It is unrealistic insofar as it fails to acknowledge the essentially competitive nature of human society in general and the disputatious nature of academic relationships in particular. It is undesirable, for the absence of conflict would deny the possibility of change. Since it can hardly be denied that change and improvement in higher education are necessary, conflict must therefore be accepted as a way of life. The problem is how to devise ways to ensure that it is directed in constructive ways for the achievement of overdue reforms. The major areas of inquiry should relate to information networks, political representation, organizational structures, and the university presidency.

A pre-condition for the equitable treatment of conflicting viewpoints is the maintenance and strengthening of information networks. As noted earlier, not all conflicts are caused by lack of information, but the grounds upon which issues can be clearly stated must be known before any reasonably satisfactory

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[35]For a more complete account, see J. B. Hartman, "Collective Bargaining in the University," *Interchange, 6(1)*, 1975, pp. 32-43.

[36]Early in 1976, Ontario's Ministry of Colleges and Universities initiated a Royal Commission of Inquiry into all aspects of the operations and management of Algoma University College, an affiliate of Laurentian University. The College previously had experienced periods of internal tension in the course of its brief history. The 1975-76 academic year, one of a series marked by declining student enrolment and deficit financing, was characterized by intense conflict between the faculty, on the one hand, and the board of governors and a new principal, on the other, and saw the certification of the faculty as a collective bargaining unit. On the recommendation of the Royal Commission, an interim administration was set up for the 1976-77 academic year, under the guidance of a new board of trustees, chaired by an outside academic, and a citizens' advisory council, in preparation for the establishment of new administrative and governing structures.

decisions can be made. The most obvious information gaps which need to be bridged are those between the various constituencies: students, faculty, administrators, and governors. Student and faculty demands, for example, are often made in ignorance of financial and budgetary facts withheld by administrators or governors. Similar failures of communication of essential information can be blamed for conflicts over such matters as teaching versus research(administration-faculty-students), curriculum, grading (faculty-students), social and political needs (governors-administration-faculty), and so forth. Also, information about available resources for redressing grievances through internal or external appeals should be widely circulated.

It is not sufficient simply to advocate the improvement of information networks if no provision is made for the direct participation of all constituencies in the formulation of policies affecting them. Various changes in political structures will be required to ensure equitable representation on various academic bodies. The kinds of different questions which must be asked concern such matters as the place of students and faculty on boards of governors (should beneficiaries be legislators?) or other budgetary bodies; the function of students and faculty on admissions committees; the role of students on departmental personnel committees dealing with appointment, promotions, and tenure, and on committees dealing with curriculum development.

Many of the academic ventures of the future university, such as the development of new forms of intellectual inquiry, alternate modes of teaching and learning, work-study and community-development programs, and the like, will generate unforeseen forms of stress and conflict. However, traditional bureaucratic structures seem ill-adapted to new conceptual developments and academic programs of an interdiscplinary nature, for example. The increase of task-oriented and mission-oriented projects which, at least for the present, must coexist along with the discipline-oriented programs, demands a consideration of new forms of academic organization. Some form of matrix structure is required, in which vertical discipline-oriented elements are arranged with the horizontal project-oriented elements in such a way as to preserve an optimum relationship between autonomy and dependency. The matrix model, since it is better suited to the realities of evolving organizations, is more adaptable to the complex contemporary environment, and allows a greater variety of relationships between elements and decision strategies appropriate to their diverse nature.[37]

With the increasing erosion of older pyramidal structures of authority, the role of the university president becomes crucial. The university presidency is no longer an accolade for meritorious academic service, but is a difficult and demanding assignment carried out in a continual high-risk situation in the face of constantly diminishing autonomy and power. Faced with the prospect of slow growth or no growth in the immediate future, the university president today does not occupy an enviable position. Financial and retrenchment problems associated with a tight budget situation, increasing faculty unionization, student unrest, dissatisfied boards of governors, the demands of competing constituencies within the university, and heightened critical pressures from government and other interest groups from without: these and other problems plague the daily existence of the president.[38]

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[37]Shull, *Op. cit.*, p. 64. For a full account of the matrix model, see F. A. Shull, Jr., A. L. Delbecq, and L. L. Cummings, *Organizational Decision Making* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), pp. 187ff.

[38]See Claude Bissell, *Halfway Up Parnassus: A Personal Account of the University of Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).

The role of the president has altered remarkably in the past two decades of academic change. Those hired to build in the '50s and early '60s had to shift their style of operation in accordance with the demands of militant student activism in the late '60s and early '70s. The current trend is to favour financial skills with the ability to economize in both programs and budget. The present concern for organizational survival has encouraged the development of a life-boat mentality in the administration of academic affairs.

The decline of educational leadership among today's university presidents might be attributed, in part, to the selection of crisis managers in the late '60s. At the present time, it is safe to say that university presidents no longer exercise the influence they once did in broad scale educational affairs or in matters of public concern. For the present and in the short-run, the university president must be one who can manoeuvre effectively among the diverse constituencies and their pluralistic goals and objectives without sacrificing either freedom or quality. In the long-run, however, the present vacuum in leadership demands that the president of the future abandon the role of the politician-bureaucrat-manager for that of the statesman-leader, possessed of the necessary vision, energy, and drive, not only for the creative control or resolution of campus conflicts but for the determination of educational priorities in the years of change ahead.

Finally, all constituencies need to be provided with recurrent opportunities to review institutional goals in the light of changing conditions, rather than accepting the imposition of educational goals by vested interests, either from within the university or from the outside, in terms of pressures from business, industry, and government. Without proper provision for mechanisms of re-examination and renewal, the university will fail to meet its obligation to itself and to the changing society, of which it is in so many ways a microcosm.

RESUME

L'université moderne reflète beaucoup de la tension et de l'agitation de la société entière dont elle fait partie. Les conditions qui engendrent le conflit se rapportent à l'ambiguité et à la multiplicité des buts académiques. L'article considère, dans le contexte d'un modèle politique de l'université, plusieurs méthodes stratégiques et tactiques pour faire face au conflit entre les étudiants, la faculté, et les administrateurs. Parmi les méthodes de contrôle sont le renforcement des réseaux de renseignements, une plus grande participation de tous les collèges électoraux académiques dans la formation de la politique, le développement de nouvelles formes d'organisation académique, et, pour ce qui concerne le président de l'université, un plus grand rôle de directeur.

James B Hartman a poursuivi ses études de sciences sociales à l'université de Manitoba et de philosophie à Brown University et à Northwestern University. Il a eu des postes dans l'enseignement à plusieurs universités au Canada et aux Etats-Unis et il est l'auteur de plusieurs articles qui traitent des problèmes dans l'énseignement supérieur.