

Embourgeoisement or Proletarianization?

Stan Marshall

Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other; bourgeoisie and proletariat.¹

Marx and Engles' proposition that the system of capitalist relations would inevitably result in a polarization of the two main classes - the bourgeoisie and the proletariat - is and has been under considerable debate. The rise of a new middle class which appears to be located between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat has sparked speculation that the expected polarization of the class structure would not occur. The debate, of course, centres around whether there are any processes in operation which will have such a polarization as its end result. Two theoretical propositions have been advanced. The first, the proletarianization thesis, asserts that the old and new middle classes are being drawn into the proletariat or working class. The second, the embourgeoisement thesis, argues that the upper levels of the working class are being assimilated into an ever increasing middle class.

This paper will endeavour to examine critically these two hypotheses in order to determine the merits of each in studying the class structure of capitalist societies. In order to accomplish this task it is necessary to allow for the examination of society at the level of production relations as well as at the level of distributive relations. More specifically, the aims of this paper will be (1) to identify the

processes of embourgeoisement and proletarianization in terms of their operation in capitalist society, (2) to determine the composition and location of the "new middle class", and (3) to formulate a basis from which to look at the middle classes of modern capitalist society in order to determine if there has been or will be a significant change in the class structure.

Before this can be accomplished, it is necessary to look at both proletarianization and embourgeoisement in order to determine the emphasis of each thesis. At first glance, it appears that these propositions are polar opposites. However, it is not the case when one looks at the arguments at different levels of analysis. As will be seen later on, G. Carchedi² and Harry Braverman³ both attempt to look at the proletarianization of the middle classes from the level of the economic substructure and changes in the relations to the means of production. On the other hand, the embourgeoisement thesis is primarily concerned with changes in the superstructural elements resulting from a change in consumption patterns and life styles within the working class.⁴

Embourgeoisement has as its major focus the perceived increasing affluence of the western working class.⁵ These changed material conditions and increased opportunities for workers are seen as resulting in a general homogeneity of lifestyles and values. In other words, the traditional working class is seen as developing middle class lifestyles. The argument rests on the increase in the affluence of workers and the perception that material conditions are better for western workers today

than they have ever been at any other time. These improved conditions are seen as being paramount in stifling any development of a working class consciousness. Thus the embourgeoisement process is seen as operating upon the traditional working class in a manner which has changing material conditions resulting in changing values and lifestyles.

Proletarianization has as its major focus the economic or objective conditions which perpetuate the traditional working class and adds to its number by forcing segments of the middle class to become working class. These segments are proletarianized only in an economic sense i.e., their economic identification is with the working class. This does not mean that at any given point in time, their values or behaviour will be the same as production workers. G. Carchedi is one author who recognizes that a proper class analysis must take into account all the analytical components.

...there is no automatic correspondence between the economic identification of classes and their definitions. This is so because classes must be defined in economic, political and ideological terms.⁶

The proletarianization process is seen as operating upon the middle classes in a manner in which the economic (objective) identification of the middle class is changed. Once the economic condition is changed we can expect a corresponding change in the superstructural elements. It is recognized that changes in the political and ideological spheres are not necessarily immediate. However, at its limit, the proletarianization process will result in the middle classes "becoming proletariat".⁷

It is clear that proletarianization is not necessarily opposed to the embourgeoisement thesis. Its basis does not rest entirely upon the assumption that workers are becoming less affluent. Proletarianization refers to a structural transformation in the relation of the worker to the means of production. The embourgeoisement thesis, on the other hand, rests upon the assertion that workers are becoming more affluent and is concerned mainly with distributive relations.

One area where the two theses tend to make opposite projections is in the development of a working class consciousness. Proletarianization supporters claim that changing economic conditions set the stage for a rising working class consciousness while embourgeoisement supporters claim that the material affluence of workers militates against the development of a working class consciousness. These are questions worthy of examination but due to the limited scope of this paper, they can be touched upon only superficially here. It is now necessary to examine each of these processes individually.

Embourgeoisement

The thesis of working class embourgeoisement in its simple formulation is no longer in fashion. But its political corollary has come in again by the back door, with these newer and more sophisticated interpretations of the situation of the "affluent worker".⁸

The studies concerning the "affluent worker" that are the most well known are those of John Goldthorpe, David Lockwood, F. Bechhofer and J. Platt at Luton in Britain.⁹ These authors set out to determine if workers are becoming "bourgeois". The locale which they chose, they believed to be one in which the conditions would lead to the

embourgeoisement of the workers. For Goldthorpe et al., the test to prove embourgeoisement would be to prove that the acquisition of incomes and living standards by manual workers similar to white collar workers would lead to the adoption of a new social outlook and new social norms that are middle class. The acquisition of this new outlook and these new norms would then have to lead to an acceptance of the manual worker by the middle class on the basis of equality.¹⁰ In this way it was to be a stiff test of the embourgeoisement thesis.

Goldthorpe et al. concluded that the affluent worker is not becoming bourgeois but is becoming a new type of worker whose work is no longer central to his life and whose orientation is "instrumental". This "instrumental" worker is concerned primarily with making money which he can spend on his family. In other words, his "outside of work" activities become his central life interest. Goldthorpe et al., call such a worker the privatized worker and as such he is not middle class. However, this privatization militates against collective organization by the worker and in this way hinders the development of a class consciousness. Privatization does not preclude militancy or radical action but it does decrease the probability that radical action will occur.¹¹

J.H. Westergaard criticizes these studies from both a theoretical and methodological viewpoint. His main criticism is that the authors of these studies do not recognize that the workers' monetary orientation to the job is remarkably similar to Marx's "cash nexus". Marx recognized this "cash nexus" as the binding force in capitalist society.¹²

The interpretation of these studies

...underplays evidence [strikes, industrial sabotage, work stoppages] to indicate the precariousness of the balance between attitudes of cooperation and "societal resignation" on the one hand, and on the other hand those conflicting attitudes involving a generalized social discontent which may be released once the single stranded "cash orientation" becomes strained or broken.¹³

In other words, at any one point in time, the workers may be cooperative and resigned to the workings of the existing society but the cooperation and resignation does not preclude the possibility of action resulting from the continuing conflict once the cash nexus is broken.

Although Goldthorpe et al., make a case for the inaction of the working class, their case is not strong enough to say that workers are becoming bourgeois. In addition, their argument is not strong enough to say that becoming affluent or privatized, eliminates the possibility of some radical action in the future.

For while the affluent workers' "instrumental" orientation to work militates against any radicalization stemming from his employment situation, new and more radical demands may well be engendered by the clash between steadily rising aspirations and the barriers to their achievement in the world outside work.¹⁴

In addition to the possibility of action resulting from the strain on the cash nexus, there is also a possibility of action resulting from the inability of the system to maintain and increase the workers desire for individual upward mobility. If these aspirations are stifled then

the potential for radical action may be stimulated. Up to this point, the possibility of such events taking place are mostly speculative based upon a few isolated labor disputes which have resulted from similar conditions. However, such a possibility cannot be dismissed offhand.

An integral part of the affluence thesis is that blue collar or manual workers' incomes are converging with those of white collar workers. This convergence results in increased consumption by the working class from which results a corresponding identification with the middle class. Richard Hamilton points out that people tend to assume that there was a wide gap between manual and non-manual incomes in the past and that the tendency today is for incomes to converge and overlap.¹⁵ Hamilton disputes this convergence. He maintains that those workers viewed as well-off are in those families in which there is more than one wage earner and that the pattern of work for families of non-manuals is different from that of families formed by manual workers.

Affluent working class families are not like equivalent middle-class families. The majority of well off working-class families achieve "affluence" through a greater expenditure of effort.¹⁶

There are several other differences between so called affluent working class families and middle class families. For example, in middle class families, wives and children are more free from work. In this sense, the determinants of income for middle class are linked to the head of the family's job and career; while working class "affluence" is dependent upon the wife's job and career.¹⁷ In other words, the wife's

income augments the husband's and accounts for the "extras" that the family may buy. One can see that the expenditure of effort in the working class family is significantly different from that of the middle class family.

The acceptance of the idea that incomes are converging i.e., that manual wages are increasing, provides the basis for a theory of general satisfaction in society. However, there are some misconceptions about increasing incomes. Hamilton notes three in particular:¹⁸

- (1) The frame of reference is usually past experience, therefore people perceive that their wages are increasing. They are perceiving an absolute increase as opposed to a relative increase.
- (2) Incomes estimates are often based on hourly rates of pay and people assume full employment at that specific rate. However, they do not consider that many jobs which have high hourly pay rates are not jobs which guarantee year round employment. In many fields, construction for example, year round employment is a rarity.
- (3) The third misconception is related to the first in that there is a perceptual distortion due to continuing inflation. For example, the minimum wage keeps increasing. People remember when the minimum wage was much lower and draw a conclusion that incomes are increasing. This is obviously true in absolute terms but is questionable when viewed in relative terms.

Due to the increasing incomes (in absolute terms), living standards are also assumed to be increasing for the working class and converging with the middle class. Hamilton measured living standards

in terms of home ownership and automobile ownership. He found that the lower middle class¹⁹ and the working class shared a similar life condition, that is, a lower percentage own homes in comparison to the upper middle class and the homes that they do own are less expensive. Similarly, the upper middle class are significantly differentiated from the lower middle and working classes in automobile ownership. The ability to buy new cars varies directly with social class. Hamilton concludes that convergence in income and consumption theses are not well founded. It might appear from Hamilton's work that there is some convergence between the lower middle class and the working class. Associated with this is a problem of definition and identification of the middle class.²⁰

Related to Hamilton's work and corroborating it to some extent is the work of Andrew Levison.²¹ He purposely sets out to dispel some of the myths associated with the embourgeoisement thesis. He attacks the assumption that the majority of Americans²² are white collar workers by pointing out inaccuracies in the census categories researchers use to determine the number of people who make up the white collar or blue collar ranks. He notes especially two instances (1) the lumping of large numbers of clerical and sales occupations into white collar categories and (2) the contention that service categories are something other than blue collar. By rectifying these two situations, he estimates that 60% of America is in the working class.

A second myth which Levison attacks is the myth that blue collar workers earn as much as white collar workers. His procedure for

determining this is directly related to the work of Richard Hamilton. He corrects for inaccuracies in categories used to show the distribution of income. His conclusion is that the working class earns less. Related to the distribution of income is the condition of lifestyle. The myth maintains that blue collar lifestyle is similar to white collar lifestyle. Levison dispels this by noting differences in the lifestyles of working class and middle class families especially in the location of working class areas vis a vis middle class areas. He makes a valid criticism of this myth by saying that the working class and the middle class very seldom come into contact with each other. In other words, the working class are not being assimilated into the middle class. He elaborates by looking at community life. Blue collar life is permeated by economic insecurity and a lower quality of life.²³ In other words, the blue collar worker is not "affluent" in that he does not have job security. In addition the "affluence" of the blue collar worker often refers to the ability to buy a house. It is questionable whether being able to meet such an essential need as shelter constitutes "affluence". There is also a problem of comparability in that working class communities tend to have less expensive homes and their neighborhoods are seldom given the priority that middle class communities are given with regard to services or development.

Even the educational system which was to have opened up opportunities for the working class has failed to do so. There have been many studies documenting middle class bias in the school system, discriminating against working class children.²⁴ At the same time higher

education has become more universal, the educational requirements for jobs (even manual jobs) have shifted upwards. Coincident with this, there are not enough jobs available for those who have a university education. In other words, an increase in education has not resulted in an increase in opportunity within the upper and middle levels of the occupational structure.

Obviously, this paper has not taken the position that the workers are becoming bourgeois. It supports the position that the working class has not decreased and has not become more affluent relative to other segments of society. It is optimistic that the working class is becoming more aware of their objective class condition and that the potential for radical action is reflected in high absenteeism, shoddy workmanship, sabotage, use of drugs, periodic refusals to accept the authority of the foreman, strikes, increasing incidences of rejecting settlements, wild cat strikes, and challenges to incumbent union leaders. In this sense, the working class is alive and retaining its revolutionary potential.

Up to this point, the discussion has revolved around the embourgeoisement or "affluent worker" thesis. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the central focus of the embourgeoisement thesis lies in the distributive relations in society. This fact is obvious in light of the works discussed here. Although they formulate an effective refutation of the embourgeoisement thesis, the works of Hamilton and Levison tend to be descriptive rather than explanatory. They tend to focus upon a descriptive account of the distribution of surplus in

society rather than those factors which underly changes in the class structure. Moreover, to refute embourgeoisement is not to illustrate proletarianization for the two, as I have argued, are not completely antithetical. With this in mind, it is now necessary to turn to the proletarianization thesis.

Proletarianization

One of the main obstacles to a study of proletarianization has been an inadequate understanding of the class position of those who appear to be in contradictory class positions. This lack of understanding of the class position of the middle classes has led to the criticism that the process of proletarianization is inadequately or improperly defined. In other words, if the criteria for placing individuals in the middle class are not clear, then it is impossible to understand how any process could lead to a deterioration of that class position. However, the work of G. Carchedi has gone a long way to identifying the class location of those who seem to be neither wholly in the bourgeoisie nor wholly in the proletariat. Harry Braverman also acknowledges that this is a problem and both he and Carchedi come to a similar type of conclusion. The most important problem in locating the "middle class" is not that they are a class unto themselves but that they take on characteristics from both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Braverman comes to the conclusion this way,

The complexities of the class structure of pre-monopoly capitalism arose from the fact that so large a proportion of

the working population, being neither employed by capital nor itself employing labour to any significant extent, fell outside the capital-labor polarity. The complexity of the class structure of modern monopoly capitalism arises from the very opposite consideration: namely that almost all of the population has been transformed into employees of capital.²⁵

This quotation suggests that it is necessary to make a distinction between the "old" middle class and the "new" middle class. The old middle classes are the petite bourgeoisie - the small businessman and the independent commodity producers. The new middle classes are the managers and supervisors. For Braverman the old middle class is neither bourgeoisie nor proletariat because they lie outside the dominant relations of production i.e., capital-labor-polarity. On the other hand, the new middle class is situated between capital and labor. Their class location becomes difficult to define because they are both manager and worker.

...there is a range of intermediate categories, sharing the characteristics of worker on the one side and manager on the other in varying degrees.²⁶

Implicit in this statement is a recognition that managers and workers carry on different functions and that there is a group of people who are both manager and worker. As such, they must carry out the functions of both these positions. Carchedi makes it very clear that there is a definite distinction between the old and the new middle class. His conclusion is similar to Braverman's in that the new middle class seems to be both bourgeoisie and proletariat. However he introduces specifically that component which we extrapolated implicitly from

Braverman - the idea that functions are important in determining class position.²⁷

Carchedi's main contribution to the controversy surrounding the middle class and whether this sector of the labor force is being proletarianized, is the introduction of the two functions - the function of global capital and the function of the collective worker. It is necessary to try to understand exactly what Carchedi means when he speaks of these two functions and how they enable us to understand the economic identification of the middle class. It is unnecessary to go through the rather lengthy and complex derivations of these definitions as given by Carchedi. Instead the definitions will be borrowed as he finalizes them.

...to perform the function of the collective worker means to take part in the capitalist production process as a whole ... from the point of view of the labour process and thus of the surplus labour producing process. Conversely, to perform the global function of capital means to take part in the capitalist production process as a whole exclusively from the point of view of the surplus labour producing process.²⁸

Put more simply "there will be those who will collectively perform the labour process and those who will supervise".²⁹

Returning to the distinction between old and new middle class, Carchedi makes his distinction very clear. The old middle class (1) owns (legally and economically) the means of production, (2) performs the function of capital and the function of the collective worker, (3) is laborer and non-laborer and (4) is exploiter and exploited.³⁰

However, Carchedi maintains that at the level of production relations, the role of ownership is dominant over the functions performed and thus the old middle class belongs to the capitalist class. However, in the monopoly stage of capitalism, the function of capital becomes the global function of capital which can be performed by agents outside the capitalist class. These agents are the new middle class and are characterized by (1) not owning (legally or economically) the means of production, (2) performing the global function of capital and the function of the collective worker, (3) being laborer and non-laborer and (4) being exploiter and exploited.³¹ Thus the differences between the new middle class and the old middle class according to Carchedi are substantial. The old middle class perform the function of capital individually while the new middle class perform the function in conjunction with the capitalist and with other members of the new middle class. In the old middle class the function of capital is always dominant but in the new middle class either the global function of capital or the function of the collective worker could be dominant at any given time. These are the key points to understanding the new middle class.

...that the new middle class performs the global function of capital even without owning the means of production, and that it performs this function in conjunction with the function of the collective worker, is the basic point for an understanding of the nature of this class.³²

Carchedi claims that the new middle class can perform the two functions (not simultaneously) in varying degrees. The range is from performing exclusively the function of global capital to performing any combination

of the two functions. Any definition of proletarianization formulated at this point must be composed of two elements (1) a change in function performed and (2) a devaluation of labor power. From a completely economic standpoint, proletarianization for Carchedi becomes

...the limit of the process of devaluation of the new middle class' labour-power, i.e., the reduction of this labour-power to an average unskilled level coupled with the elimination of the global function of capital.³³

The phenomena which are associated with proletarianization (lower level of living, unemployment, lowering of lives' conditions degradation of the work process etc.) are manifestations of the devaluation of labor power in conjunction with the stripping away from the new middle class of the global function of capital.³⁴

Carchedi makes one final remark which is central to understanding the process of proletarianization. It is a remark which relates to the beginning of this paper where it is noted that proletarianization has a different focus than embourgeoisement. It was noted that the analysis may focus on the economic, the political or the ideological. Proletarianization is generally focused on the economic while the embourgeoisement thesis is generally focused on the political and the ideological. Carchedi makes it clear that the processes operating in this limited sense will not be sufficient to change the definition of a class.

...we should be careful not to confuse proletarianization with "becoming proletariat". The former term only refers to the economic sphere which, as we know, is not enough to classify groups and strata within one or another class. When the

process of proletarianization has been completed we have only the objective conditions for a certain stratum to become part of the proletariat. There are, however, also political and ideological conditions which must be met before that stratum or group will actually become part of the proletariat.³⁵

With this in mind, we can see that any definition of proletarianization taken from Carchedi will be limited exclusively to the economic sphere and will give us only one dimension to examine in trying to ascertain any changes in the class structure. This is not a criticism of the excellent work Carchedi has done, but is a plea for a more comprehensive definition of proletarianization at both the political and ideological levels as well as at the economic level.

As mentioned previously, Carchedi has opened up a new avenue in the research of proletarianization by introducing the two functions. Previous research, especially that done by Leo Johnson³⁶ and Harry Braverman has provided some empirical substantiation of the devaluation of labor power in Canada as a condition of becoming proletarianized. However, further research is needed in the area to determine if there are changes in the functions performed by the middle class in Canada i.e., changes in the balance of functions performed as described by Carchedi. The devaluation of labor power is adequately documented in many places in Harry Braverman's book Labor and Monopoly Capital.

He highlights the processes of change in the economic sphere which had a resultant change in the objective identification of workers. The introduction of Samuel Taylor's techniques allowed the capitalist to extract far greater surplus value from the worker than ever before.

The advancement of technology allowed the capitalist to usurp control of the work process from the worker. It separated the worker from the conception and planning portion of the labor process. Increasing division of labor in the workshop further removed the worker from engaging in the entire production process. Thus the worker was further degraded.

Braverman indicates that the same processes were occurring in the offices of the capitalist enterprise. The clerical workers were undergoing a process of change as well. The meaning of "clerk" has changed in the transformation from early capitalism to monopoly capitalism. In Carchedi's terms, office workers have had the global function of capital removed from them. Many office jobs are no longer associated with management but with manual labor and have been mechanized in order to increase efficiency. The clerical portion of the new middle class is becoming increasingly proletarianized.

...The process in the course of which the body of salaried employees becomes a mass group rests on the successful attempt to replace the personal experience of the individual by a rational scientific business administration, so that an increasing proportion of the workers can be changed without danger to the efficiency of the enterprise... the salaried employees as a whole are being subjected to a process of decreasing social esteem.³⁷

An excellent example of this process is documented by Joan Greenbaum in Monthly Review, "Division of Labor in the computer field". In this article she documents the rise and fall of computer related occupations.

In a short twenty-year span, work in the computer field has been transformed by capitalism to suit its needs, through carefully planned division of labor.³⁸

Greenbaum describes this rise and fall as the degradation of a technical work force into a "white collar assembly line where control of knowledge is concentrated"³⁹ In addition to the down grading of skills, the situation outlined by Joan Greenbaum also highlights another consequence of the process of the increasing division of labor. This consequence is the formation of a surplus labor force as there is an increasing centralization of computer companies. The centralization compounded the other consequences by continuing the lowering of wages and by further reducing task definitions. The end result seems to be

...lower salaries relative to the cost of living, expansion of clerical like jobs, and a shift away from computer specialists. Technological skill has been removed from all but a handful of workers.⁴⁰

It seems obvious from the foregoing discussion that the devaluation of labor power is integral to any definition of proletarianization and so we must accept it as part of the definition used here.

It is necessary to make a distinction between proletarianization as it affects the "old middle class" as opposed to how it affects the "new middle class". Because of the differences between the two segments of the middle class, proletarianization is going to have a different consequence for each. According to the definition of proletarianization at the economic level, there must be a devaluation of labor power plus a change in the function performed i.e., a shift from the global

function of capital towards the function of the collective worker. However, the proletarianization of the old middle class would have to entail an elimination of the function of capital and thus an elimination of that occupational grouping. This is necessarily so because in the old middle class the function of capital is always dominant as they own the means of production.

The shift away from employment classified as petite bourgeoisie in this century would be an indication that this proletarianization is taking place. The decreasing proportion of the income allocated to the petite bourgeoisie is another indication and is a factor involved in the elimination of those employment sectors.

Leo Johnson documents the decline of the petite bourgeoisie in Canada. This decline is illustrated in a drop in their relative numbers from 14.7% of income earners in 1948 to 10.9% in 1968. In addition the petite bourgeoisie have become relatively more impoverished in terms of income during that period. The petite bourgeoisie income as a percentage of the average income decreased from 120% in 1948 to 94% in 1968.⁴¹ This decline occurred for both the small independent commodity producer, especially the small farmer, and the small independent businessman, although for each of these subgroups the decline was at different rates. We have already documented the tendency of capitalism to erode the new middle class and now we see an even more startling erosion of the old middle class.

Thus far the paper has dealt with the emphasis of both the embourgeoisement and proletarianization theses. In doing so it has highlighted

and refuted the embourgeoisement thesis as being an inaccurate and incomplete assessment of the changing class structure. This paper has accepted the proletarianization thesis as being infinitely more amenable to empirical research which would allow for a complete and indepth analysis of the class structure. The embourgeoisement thesis is deficient in that it concentrates on the distributive relations and the superstructural elements in society. This deficiency is a fundamental one in that it neglects changes in the production relations and it is these changes which are determinant and dominant over changes in the superstructure.⁴² Conversely, the proletarianization argument uses this as its very starting point. If any criticism can be made of this approach, it is that it rarely progresses past this starting point i.e., it is concerned almost entirely with the economic level of analysis. What needs to be developed is a more comprehensive definition and examination of proletarianization which would account for the political and ideological levels as well.

Basically the conclusion which must be reached at this time is that it is an empirical question as to whether the formation of the "new middle class" is a class with middle class characteristics or a class with traditional working class characteristics. Either way, the most appropriate way to analyze it is to prove or disprove the increasing deterioration of the old and new middle classes in conjunction with the continuing proletarian condition of the traditional working class. What follows is a very brief outline of how this may be accomplished.

As mentioned earlier the new and old middle classes have to be

treated somewhat differently. A deterioration in the old middle class will be detected by an absolute decrease in the percentage of the population making a living in the petite bourgeois occupations. However, this in itself is not sufficient in that a corresponding increase must be found in occupations which are traditionally working class or are devalued new middle class occupations. In this way there must be a change over time in the occupational groupings. There are several indicators which can be used to detect these changes. The devaluation of occupations can be tested by analyzing the income (including benefits) changes over time. A devaluation in labor power will lead to corresponding devaluation in income of that group relative to the incomes of other occupational groupings. This analysis could be used to check the embo-urgeoisement thesis as well by checking the incomes of traditional working class occupations relative to other occupations.

Another aspect which has to be examined in the changing class locations of occupations is the innovation of technology. It is necessary to look at how diversified jobs have become as a result of the implementation of technology. The result could have either of two consequences (1) routinization i.e. a more complex job is broken down into two or more additional, more routine, less skillful jobs or (2) technological rationalization i.e. several jobs are brought together into one job which does not demand as much skill as the original jobs. Either way, it is an indication that the labor power of those performing the jobs has been devaluated. The most obvious consequence should be a reduction in the relative income of those occupations.

Not unrelated to the above is the degree of unemployment in occupational sectors. Rationalization of jobs due to technological change can result in large numbers of unemployed. Before an occupation is devalued there should be a high demand for workers in that area. As devaluation takes place the supply of workers capable of filling devalued positions should outstrip the demand. Therefore, an indication of devaluation should be a large number of unemployed who are qualified to work in that occupational sector.

Other variables which have to be considered include trade union activity, male-female occupations, and education and experience. The trade unions could have the effect of obscuring some of the obvious differences in income differentials. At the same time, increased trade union activity in occupational sectors where there has been little activity previously may be an indication that the workers are becoming aware of the deterioration of their position. It matters not whether the activity is a result of their becoming proletarian or a reaction against their becoming proletarian. The same obvious indicator, increased trade union activity, is still there. The sexual differentiation among occupations is important in looking at proletarianization. One must determine whether occupations with a high proportion of female manpower are more prone to deterioration than those with mainly male manpower or whether women are drawn into jobs where the deterioration process has already begun. The amount of experience and education required for performing jobs must be analyzed to determine if there is a deterioration of these qualifications in certain sectors relative to other sectors.

The brief discussion given above states some of the factors which may be examined in a study of the devaluation of labor power. However, if one follows Carchedi's definition, then the functions which the agents perform must be analyzed as well. In this case the operationalization is somewhat more difficult. The function of global capital may be related to the work of supervision and control. The function of the collective worker occurs when the agent takes part in the labor process.⁴³

If over any two time periods the function of the job shifts from that of global capital to that of the collective worker then the occupation is becoming more proletarian. In order to research this type of change it is necessary to look at such variables as (1) supervisory duties of the job and (2) the amount of control over other employees the job requires.

Obviously the investigation of the changes occurring in the middle classes is an exceedingly difficult and imposing task. This task has been touched upon only very superficially in this paper but it is a topic worthy of much more intensive scrutiny.

NOTES

1. Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. The Communist Manifesto, New York: International Publishers, 1st published 1848. p.9.
2. Carchedi, G. "On the economic identification of the new middle class" in Economy and Society, 1975.
3. Braverman, Harry. Labor and Monopoly Capital, Monthly Review Press 1974.
4. These superstructural elements are the political and the ideological.
5. The embourgeoisement thesis was most popular in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of its major proponents were Kurt B. Mayer, Class and Society, New York: Random House, 1955; Ferdinand Zweig, The Worker in an Affluent Society, London: Heinemann, 1961; and Gerhard Lenski, Power and Privilege, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.
6. G. Carchedi op. cit. p.59.
7. The difference between "proletarianization" and "becoming proletariat" will be expounded upon later in this paper.
8. Westergaard, J.H. "The rediscovery of the cash nexus" in Socialist Register, 1970, p.113.
9. This study is published in three volumes. (1) The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes and Behavior, Cambridge University Press, 1968, (2) The Affluent Worker: Political Attitudes and Behavior, 1968 and (3) The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, 1969.
10. Goldthorpe, J.H. et.al. The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, 1969, p.24. Also see J.H. Westergaard. op.cit. p.113.
11. Studies conducted by W.G. Runciman, Relative Deprivation and Social Justice, 1966 and R.T. McKenzie and A. Silver, Angels in Marble: Working Class Conservatives in England, 1968 lend support to the conclusions of Goldthorpe et.al. pertaining to the development of the working class. Workers are described as "secular and pragmatic" "instrumentally oriented" and "privatised".
12. J.H. Westergaard. op.cit. p.120.
13. Ibid. p.121.
14. Ibid. p.132.

15. Hamilton, Richard. Class and Politics in the United States, New York: Wiley, 1972, p. 378.
16. Ibid. p.369.
17. Ibid. p.371.
18. Ibid. pp.380-381.
19. By using this type of designation for classes, Hamilton differs somewhat from the conception of classes used in this paper. A more fully developed definition of class will be attempted later in a discussion of the middle class which is integral to the proletarianization thesis. However, for the purposes of illustrating the problems of the embourgeoisement thesis, Hamilton's concept of class can be accepted here.
20. Harry Braverman, op. cit. and G. Carchedi, op. cit. address themselves to this problem and lend support to the thesis of proletarianization of certain segments of the middle class.
21. Levison, Andrew. The Working Class Majority, New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc. 1974.
22. Levison uses strictly American data gathered from the U.S. census and the Dept. of Labor statistics.
23. See also Richard Sennett and Jonathon Cobb, The Hidden Injuries of Class, New York: Vintage Books, 1973.
24. For example, see Marion R. Porter, John Porter and Bernard Blishen, Does Money Matter? Prospects for Higher Education, Toronto: Institute for Behavioral Research, York University, 1973.
25. Harry Braverman, op. cit. p.404.
26. Ibid. p.405.
27. André Gorz, in an earlier article "Technical Intelligence and the capitalist division of labor" in Telos, 1972, points out that functions are important in the process of capital accumulation.

...we shall not succeed in locating technical and scientific labor within the class structure of advanced capitalist society unless we start analyzing what functions technical and scientific labor perform in the process of capital accumulation and in the process of reproducing capitalist relations. (p.27).

Gorz's statement, although it is speaking specifically of scientific and technical employment, could be applied to all those middle levels of employment which seem to be both proletariat and bourgeoisie.

28. G. Carchedi, op. cit. p.43.
29. Ibid. p.43.
30. Ibid. p.50.
31. Ibid. p.51.
32. Ibid. p.51.
33. Ibid. p.65.
34. Ibid. p.66.
35. Ibid. p.66.
36. Johnson, Leo. "The development of class in Canada in the twentieth century" in Gary Teeple (ed.) Capitalism and the National Question in Canada, University of Toronto Press, 1972.
37. Harry Braverman, op. cit. pp.350-351.
38. Greenbaum, Joan. "Division of labor in the computer field" in Monthly Review, vol.28, July-August, 1976, pp.40-55. See also John and Barbara Ehrenreich, "Hospital workers: a case study in the 'new working class'" in Monthly Review, vol.24, #8, Jan. 1973.
39. Ibid. p.41.
40. Ibid. p.42.
41. Leo Johnson, op. cit. p.148, table 1. These figures are for the total petite bourgeoisie. Also Harry Braverman, op. cit. notes these same changes in the occupational structure especially in the drastic reduction in the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture.
42. The political and ideological can react back upon the economic in a form of overdetermination. However, they react back upon the economic only within the limits set by the economic substructure.
43. This may be either productive or unproductive work. Both Carchedi op. cit. and Leo Johnson op. cit. allow that non-productive workers can be part of the working class and thus perform the function of the collective worker. However, Nicos Poulantzas, "On Social Classes" in New Left Review, 1973 assigns non-productive workers to the middle class specifically on the grounds that they are unproductive. Thus for both Carchedi and Johnson the proletarianization of non-productive workers in the middle class is possible without changing their unproductive nature, while for Poulantzas this proletarianization is not possible save for a change from unproductive work to productive work.

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