Negotiated Order and Structural Ordering

Chapter 11
I would quote, 

"..."
Negotiated Order and Structural Ordering. Negotiated Order
between structure and process. Or said another way, we were signaling that structural, including immediately contextual, conditions affected interaction but also the reverse. (See the discussion on the conditional matrix in Chapter 2.)

The either/or theorists of this sociological tradition still write in the same way about the relationship of structure and process, of stability and instability, of order and disorder. And these terms refer to an interplay among societal, communal, organizational, suborganizational, and even interpersonal processes.

In 1963, my colleagues and I published a paper (Strauss, Bucher, Ehrlich, Sabshin, and Schatzman 1963) about the "negotiated order" that we had noted in two mental hospitals. A year later we offered a more detailed version of this concept (Strauss, Bucher, Ehrlich, Sabshin, and Schatzman 1964). It is not surprising that the concept was quickly taken up by interactionists, especially those interested in organizations. I will quote some remarks about negotiated order made by astute interactionist theorist, David Maines, in order to emphasize the concept's continuity with the Chicago tradition, begun around the turn of the century by Thomas's interest in "social organization" and later spelled out in monographic form by him and his collaborators.

The traditional source of strength in the symbolic interactionist perspective has been in the realm of social psychology. By comparison, symbolic interactionists generally neglected the realm of social organization until the 1950s. To be sure, some interactionist works within this tradition focused on problems of social organization prior to the 1950s, but a basic conceptual scheme consisting of organizing concepts and statements about how organizations operate was lacking. Anselm Strauss' publication of Mirrors and Masks (1959) may have marked a turning point. He candidly advocated the merging of social psychology and social organization, arguing, for example, that identities cannot be understood independently of the organizational context in which they exist and that social organization cannot be fully comprehended without an appreciation of the interpersonal dimension of human conduct. The merging of these two areas has been a central theme in the work of Strauss and his collaborators. As a result of their work, a more coherent perspective on social psychology and social organization began to emerge in the 1960s. By the end of the 1970s, that perspective had evolved into a systematic framework for the study of organizations.

The original formulation of the concept owed its origins to an interpretation of detailed field observations made in these institutions. A decade later, I summarized the essence of action in these institutions by the expressive, expressive/knowledge effect. While in the hospital we noticed that the everyday life of the patients involved a lot of interaction. In the normal hospital, a typical day would be organized around activities that made up the daily routine. A medical setting would provide a framework for understanding the nature and context of these negotiations. The original formulation of the concept owed its origins to an interpretation of detailed field observations made in these institutions. A decade later, I summarized the essence of action in these institutions by the expressive, expressive/knowledge effect. While in the hospital we noticed that the everyday life of the patients involved a lot of interaction. In the normal hospital, a typical day would be organized around activities that made up the daily routine. A medical setting would provide a framework for understanding the nature and context of these negotiations.
Implications Concerning Order and Change

1. Implications for Social Order. The various interactional processes—negotiation, persuasion, manipulation, education, threat, and actual coercion—will have different salience, be of greater or lesser significance for particular instances of any social order. Thus, governments of some nation-states rely principally on various types of force and the threat of force, but even so they make much use of persuasion, propaganda, and education, including socialization of children. Also, certain forms of negotiation are absolutely requisite for the governance to be maintained with relative stability. Conversely, even a "nation of laws" and relative democracy, such as the United States of America, obviously is not free of government use of coercion or manipulation of citizens and institutions like the press. As is well understood by those who have battled to maintain the Third Estate of America's Bill of Rights, the inevitably changing conditions of national and local life necessitate strenuous efforts and shrewd interactional strategies in order to maintain civil rights—let alone to extend these rights to groups previously denied or shortchanged: blacks, women, children, and the recently disabled. What is true about the salience of different interactional processes for nations is also so at other levels of organization.

2. Implications for Arrangements and the Shaping of Conditions. In the nation's interorganizational processes—those between organizations or between organization and the environment—actors often manipulate their environment as they may for other reasons. This is also so within organizations—where these processes are, as a result, more interdependent. The implications of these interactional processes for organizations are enormous, and so is the need to understand them. The core of any organization is its interactional processes, and understanding these is essential to understanding the organization as an entity. In his book "Intergroup Relations" (1961), R. Bales has shown that the interactional processes of any organization are often as important as its structural processes in determining its success or failure. The implications of these processes for organizations are immense, and so is the need to understand them.

3. Implications for Body Processes in Relation to Social Order and Symbolization. Although most readers may not have realized it, the importance of personal freedom common to all human societies is as dependent on personal freedom as on personal freedom. Thus, the implications of these interactional processes for the shaping of conditions are immense, and so is the need to understand them.
Implications Concerning Order and Change

1. Implications for Meeting Friends or in the Exchange of Gaming Strategies, Among More and More People, Some Political Voters Were Able to Transform Partisan Democratic and Republican Preferences Prior to 1974. The National Voter was, in the Masses, a Citizen's Sense of the Absence of Significant Structural Changes in the World Economy That Would Result in New Political and Socio-economic Outcomes. These People Skew the National Media's Coverage of International Events, of Course, and These Changes Influence the Perception and Interpretation of Order and Disorder in the World Economy, the Existence and Evolution of Political Parties and Representative in Contemporary Society, the Parts-

2. Aspects of the External Ones

3. The Importance of the Several General Orders. In these same chapters, I... processes are necessary for shaping any of these clusters and subclusters of conditions.

4. Implications for the Multiplicity of Perspectives and Resulting Continuities

5. Implications for Social Worlds and Their Members. With respect to perspectives and representativeness in contemporary society, the participation of social worlds and subworlds is particularly significant. Organizations are usually composed of members who are drawn from more than one social world or perhaps even more than one subworld. As we have seen, the social-world bases are often explicit, but they can also enter into interaction implicitly, silently, unnoted. This is all the more so, since each interactant belongs to and is oriented toward various social worlds and subworlds, some of which may be unknown to the other interactants. It follows that arrangements and modes of interaction can be deeply influenced by these memberships and the corresponding identities of the members.

6. Implications for Order and Disorder. The existence and evolution of multiple perspectives and consequently of arenas does not imply a totally changeable social unit. Order and disorder exist concomitantly. Of course, order can be perceived from different standpoints, so that one person’s order can be another’s breakdown of order (“disorder” or “disorganization”). While some perceived disorder in American society is “free-wheeling,” others perceive disorder as a breakdown of order in the social world, that is, a loss of control over the public sphere of social life and a corresponding rise in individual and group control. In this book, I have explored the concept of “interaction,” or “interactional order,” or “interactional equilibrium,” or “interactional order.” These perspectives derive from different standpoints, so that different interactants can have different perceptions of the same interactional event. Of course, interactional order is likely to bring about discussion and debate, if not outright argument. When disagreements are on a large scale, with many issues open to controversy, the interaction is likely to be treated as an arena. When disagreements are on a large scale, the interaction is likely to be treated as an arena. When disagreements are on a large scale, the interaction is likely to be treated as an arena.

7. Implications for Actors. Multiplicity of Perspectives about Courses of Action

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Negotiated Order and Structural Ordering: The Role of Matrix Conditions

The processual ordering of negotiated orders is fundamental to the functioning of organizations. This concept, as developed by the symbolic interactionists, has been crucial in understanding the dynamics of social order. The emphasis on creativity and innovation, as well as flexibility and adaptability, is central to the concept of processual ordering. This section will consist of a simple example that is designed to illustrate this concept.

This concept of processual ordering is meant to embrace the idea of creativity by the American pragmatists and the early symbolic interactionists. The concept of negotiation has been influenced by the works of prominent thinkers such as Charles Cooley, G. H. Mead, and John Dewey. These thinkers have emphasized the importance of negotiation in social interaction and the role it plays in the development of social order.

II ROCESSUAL ORDERING

What then does all of this discussion amount to in terms of the concepts of order and change? Is order only "negotiated order" or is there something more? A quick review of the original usage of this term will show that it was intended to capture the essence of the processual ordering of negotiated orders. It may be useful to substitute a new one but I will attempt this in a later section.

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The role of matrix conditions, especially those of which symbolic interactionists are sometimes accused, and to the contrary, Symbolic Interaction... has created a negotiated approach to social order, at all levels of organizational scale, that fundamentally has changed the way we conceive of all institutions (see especially Strauss 1978). (Farberman 1991, p. 48)

Given the rhetorical history of the concept of negotiated order, it may be too late to substitute a new one, but I will attempt this in a future section. The concept of processual ordering is one of the central ideas of the symbolic interactionists.

Apropos, the structural bias of which symbolic interactionists are sometimes accused, it is clear that order and structure are not necessarily in conflict. The concept of processual ordering is designed to capture the essence of the interplay between order and change, as well as flexibility and adaptability. It is intended to embrace the idea of creativity by the American pragmatists and the early symbolic interactionists. The concept of negotiation has been influenced by the works of prominent thinkers such as Charles Cooley, G. H. Mead, and John Dewey. These thinkers have emphasized the importance of negotiation in social interaction and the role it plays in the development of social order.

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Negotiated Order and Structural Ordering: The Role of Matrix Conditions

The role of matrix conditions in shaping negotiated order is a complex interplay of various factors. These conditions are not merely external constraints but also internalized norms that influence decision-making processes. Understanding the dynamics of matrix conditions is crucial for comprehending the complexities of organizational behavior.

In the context of the operating room, matrix conditions are particularly evident. The interdependence of different departments and their respective responsibilities creates a unique environment where negotiation and cooperation are essential. The presence of cross-functional teams, each with distinct priorities and expertise, necessitates a structured approach to ensure smooth operations.

The implications of these matrix conditions extend beyond the immediate procedural aspects. They also shape the underlying values and beliefs that permeate the organization. For instance, the expectation of mutual respect and collaborative problem-solving is a cornerstone of effective matrix management.

Negotiated order, therefore, is not merely about finding a common ground in decision-making. It is about creating a shared vision that aligns with the strategic objectives of the organization. In essence, matrix conditions are the foundation upon which negotiated order is built, influencing the nature of interactions and the ultimate success of any project or procedure.
This book, then, is an attempt to explore the interplay of action, order, and change. The basic interactionist assumptions' foundations are rooted in the idea that individuals act in response to the social and cultural contexts in which they find themselves. Understanding and explaining social phenomena requires an appreciation of the ways in which individuals construct and interpret social reality. This approach is rooted in the works of sociologist Erving Goffman, who emphasized the importance of social interaction and the role of individuals in shaping social reality. The book will explore how these assumptions can be applied to various aspects of social life, including social institutions, organizations, social problems, and social change.
Schatzman suggests that the idea of social order is so significant because of the nature of the stake people have in it—a stake in position and power. The irony is that the call is almost always for particular changes which might affect an uncomfortable aspect of order that appears to exist. On the one hand, order is ubiquitous: we live in it, find comfort, predictability or relative certainty in it. Change occasionally threatens my stake in it, my sense of familiarity, knowing and control over my stake. On the other hand, ideologically, I see order as affording low quality of life for self or others and so I want some change, but only the right kind. So I try occasionally to ferment change or steer ongoing change in the right direction. (Personal communication)

Return now to the semiotics of the usual pairing of the following sociological terms: stability—instability (or change) and order-disorder (or in Thomas and Znaniecki’s lexicon, social organization and social disorganization). Is there only one dimension, running from very stable (order) to very unstable (disorder)? If so, where does change belong? Is it always destabilizing? Does it vary between only slightly destabilizing to very much so? Does it never promote stability? And is a high degree of order not also somewhat changeable in some of its components? Conversely, do so-called disorder (as during a social revolution) retain no elements of stability? (To quote Schatzman again: “If I can anticipate change and feel predictive [about it] then change is part of order.” If I am unhappy with some aspects of order, I “call” for change—[but] only on my terms: “If I’m unhappy with some aspects of order, I can change it.”)

Where an interactionist theory of acting appears to lead is not merely to a social constructivist, and certainly not to a radically relativistic view of social order and social change. However, where it takes us needs to be clearly stated. At any level of analysis, from classical sociology’s social order to Goffman’s interactional order, order refers to relatively predictable events. These turn are predictable because routines are created and maintained by those who have enough power or influence to do so. These routines are part of the social environment created and maintained more or less thoughtlessly by the actors involved. The routines themselves can change by events, either unpredictable or not; hence the potential for disorder. Whether or not the change is characterized as disorder depends on the contextual and situational factors and on the perspective of the observer. Whether or not the change is characterized as disorder depends on the observer’s perspective. Therefore, it is not surprising that the concepts of order and disorder are so often used to describe social phenomena.

Now, the usual statement about social disorder and social change is that where one exists, the other will have to be there. This perspective on order—arather commonsense one—implies that disorder is a useful analytic concept, but I do not believe it. There is a great deal of debate in the literature about the usefulness of order and disorder as concepts. However, change and lack of change are perceived by actors as more important than the mere presence of order or disorder. Contributions to the debate about the meaning of the term “order” include contributions by sociologists such as Simmel and Goffman, and contributions by social scientists such as Parsons and Giddens.

Anonymous literary critic: A note to Shakespeare’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”
...the character and structure of the world, the answers to the questions "Who am I?" and "What am I part of?". The answer to the question "Who am I?" is related to the answer to the question "What am I part of?". The answer to the question "What am I part of?" is related to the answer to the question "Who am I?".

NOTES

1. A graphic illustration of the web-spread model of diffusion portrayed in Figure 2, page 11 of the document, suggests that the diffusion of knowledge and understanding can be visualized as a network of interconnected nodes, each representing a piece of information or a concept. The nodes are connected by lines, representing the relationships between the concepts. The nodes are arranged in layers, representing the different stages of diffusion.


21. References