Review of "The Lawyer and His Community: The Practicing Bar in a Middle-Sized City"

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mary emphasis of corporate leadership is on ‘getting around’ regulation, the interest in lowering costs through efficient management or through the development of new techniques shifts into second place.’” (p. 236) Does it? Maybe so. But for the sociologist this should be an empirical question. In this “fresh and individual view of societies,” the author presents as fact that hoary piece of folk wisdom about regulation strangling managerial motivation.

In sum, the student of sociology may find this book interesting reading, but he will not find much contribution to his discipline.

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The study of the legal profession has developed at a rapid pace in recent years with results of considerable practical and theoretical significance. Empirical studies have focused so far, however, on the metropolitan bar. Even counting a few unpublished dissertations, little was definitely known about the legal profession in smaller communities. Handler’s book on the bar in a Midwestern metropolitan area with a population of about 120,000 begins to fill this gap. Its value is enhanced because the author, a law professor, undertook as close a replication as possible of Jerome Carlin’s study of the bar in New York City (Lawyers’ Ethics). Thus, in analyzing the interrelations between ethics and the social structure of the legal profession, Handler contributes to the accumulation of knowledge rather than merely supplying new data.

Most of the findings confirm impressionistic notions about the bar in smaller communities. The bar in “Prairie City” is far less internally stratified than its New York counterpart; specialization and complementary division of labor within the law firms are less developed; recruitment and education are more homogeneous. In consequence, the professional community is more cohesive and adherence to professional standards is at a higher level, although divergences from official norms are still pronounced. The small size of this local bar—99 lawyers in private practice, of whom 83 were interviewed—set limits to the exploration of the relationships between different aspects of legal practice and ethical behavior. In a good many tables, the number of cases in single cells is so small that the differences might well be due to chance.

Still, the author’s conclusions gain credence since his major relationships are very similar to patterns found in New York. Throughout the book, findings are carefully compared with the results of Carlin’s study. What is different in Prairie City are the conditions rather than their consequences for professional behavior.

A sociological study of legal ethics by a law professor raises special expectations. One would look for a detailed appreciation of the concrete circumstances in which the behavior in question occurs as well as for an evaluation of the findings in terms of public policy and the requirements of the administration of justice. Handler does discuss in some detail the meaning of hypothetical situations and the relevant norms in the context of small-city legal practice, but his broader evaluation is limited to stating the contrast between official ideals and the facts about attitudes and behavior. When it comes to questions of theoretical sociological import, the book also stays close to the findings uncovered without venturing into broader interpretation and explanation. As it stands, however, the volume is an addition of great value to the research literature on the legal profession in America.

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The Demonics of Bureaucracy is an attempt to analyze the “pathologies” or “demon-like” activities of a public employment agency which was part of the same larger organization that Peter Blau studied ten years earlier. Thus, Professor Cohen’s work is semi-comparative to Blau’s Dynamics of Bureaucracy and stands alone as a case study of a government employment agency located in a large urban area, serving the clothing industry. Data for the investigation were collected from 1956 to 1959 while Cohen was an employee in the agency. After this period he attended graduate school in sociology. Demonics represents further development of his Ph.D. Dissertation. It was prepared by analyzing his past experiences along with additional interviews and correspondence with employees of the agency.

The style of the book is very similar to Blau’s in that it traces the causes and consequences of minute elements of behavior upon organizational operations. This factor is one of the book’s strengths, yet also one of its weaknesses. For in concentrating on the intricate, unintended, and disruptive consequences of small particles of behavior, the author did not pay enough attention to the major theoretical consequences of his keen observations. Furthermore, the theory in-