

**WORKING FOR TIPS IN RESTAURANTS:
PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS OF THE ACHIEVEMENT PRINCIPLE**

by

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ABSTRACT

In capitalist economies, wages are rationalized by the achievement principle. Managers do the assessing. In restaurants, tips are the main reward of a server's performance. Customers do the assessing. In both cases, there are problematic assumptions that there can be just and ascriptive-free criteria for assessing performance or "capable" authorities for those assessments. Tipping makes those assumptions even more problematic because of the transfer of the assessing authority to the customer.

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INTRODUCTION

Although restaurants have a history dating as far back as the foodstalls of ancient Sumer (Tannahill 1973:62), the origins of restaurants, as we understand them to be today, can be historically located in late eighteenth-century France. A Paris decree of June 8, 1786 authorized public rooms to serve meals (Revel 1982: 206). Through the years restaurants have become a part of our lives. Certainly we have all, at one time or another, eaten at a restaurant. We have also, in our restaurant experience, had some encounter with a server and, at the end of the meal, left that server some form of tip. In that respect, we share the general sense that the tip is a reward for what we deem to have been "good" or "bad" service. That assumption also implies that we have assessed, through a set of criteria from our own experience, a server's performance and rewarded that performance with a tip.

This thesis examines the achievement principle as it is applied to servers' work and the tips they make. Such a principle presumes that there is a "just" way of quantifiably valuing a worker's performance. It also presumes that there is an authority capable of making those valuations, and that those assessments are free of ascriptive criteria, like gender. These assumptions are particularly problematic in the case of servers' work and the tips they make where the burden of assessing that performance is shifted from management to the customer. Not only is the server assessed twice (by management, as part of their duties in the overall assessment of a worker's performance, and the customer, in determining the tip valuation), but it is also questionable how "fair" those assessments might be.

Chapter 1 lays out the problem within a critique of the theoretical assumptions of the achievement principle. Chapter 2 reviews some of the

relevant literature. Chapter 3 places the reader in the domain of servers and attempts to convey a sense of what they do, while also raising the question of what the links are between what they do and the tips they make. Chapter 4 deals with the assessment problems that come with those links. Chapter 5 analyzes the authority relations in those assessments. Chapter 6 discusses the problems of gender discrimination as ascriptive assessment criteria.

This thesis suggests that there are practical and ideological problems in the wage arrangements for servers in restaurants. In the main, these problems come out of the assumptions of the achievement principle. However, those arrangements continue to function because all parties, in one way or another, benefit from the system.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this chapter is to locate the analysis of the wage structure of restaurant servers within the components of the performance-reward principle. The focus is on the *recruitment* and *income* aspects of the four status dimensions in the sphere of work and production (Offe, 1969:42). Recruitment examines management hiring policies and management allocation of job functions. Income addresses the problems in the relation between individual input and output aspects of work and how wages get distributed (Offe, 1969:104). These aspects are considered in the particular context of the income structure of restaurant servers; hourly wage plus tips.

Elements of The Achievement Principle

According to Claus Offe (1969:40-42)), the "achievement principle" underpins work and wages in late capitalist societies. This principle presumes that social status can be equitably distributed in line with performance. Performance determines wages. Wages act as status markers. If we perform well, we will do well. This principle legitimizes success and failure, equality and inequality. Performance becomes the "overarching value category in industrial societies" (Offe, 1969:40).

Offe describes the structure of work organization as having four status dimensions: (1) being hired (recruitment), (2) being paid a wage (income distribution), (3) being promoted (status mobility within the organization), and (4) being given the power to supervise other workers (authority) (Offe, 1969:42). Within this structure, the worker is to function by fulfilling a standard of performance based on a set of objective criteria.

The achievement principle also claims to fulfill four main functions: a

compensatory function, an *equivalence* function, a *productivity* function, and an *allocative* function (Offe, 1969:43).

The compensatory function addresses how workers will be compensated for their efforts and knowledge of the work tasks. These include the elements of stress in the workplace, energy spent, and required skills. These criteria are usually mediated by the standards set by each organization. Variances are job specific. These standards are also affected by the socialization processes particular to that culture. The assumption is that expenditures of energy, skills and knowledge, and so on, are correspondingly recompensed by those standards.

The equivalence function makes the claim that it is possible to prevent discriminatory distribution of income based on ascriptive categories like gender, age, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities and so on. It facilitates equal pay for equal work. It assumes we all start from a level playing field.

The productivity function claims to remove exploitation of the worker. It serves to "justly" distribute the results of labour. Allegedly, it also functions in moderating social conflicts. Based on the wages theory of economics, it is assumed that there is a correlation between wage levels and labour productivity. It also assumes that everyone has equal access to the labour market.

The allocative function claims to motivate workers to optimum labour productivity. Supposedly, occupational choice and the labour market will ensure the most rational allocation and distribution of productive labour. Everything is subsumed to the "forces" of the market economy.

The compensatory and equivalence functions are meant to address the subjective costs of work; the individual outlay of the work tasks. The

productivity and allocative functions address the economic yield from work. The former might be considered the input elements of work, the latter, the output.

The "achievement principle" makes three problematic assumptions. First, there is the belief that there can be a "just" system of objectively measuring and assessing the differential value of work performance. Secondly, that there are authorities capable of making those assessments. And thirdly, that these processes can be free of ascriptive categories (gender, race, age, and so on). Still prevalent, and institutionally protected, these notions are more often a way of justifying inequality. This makes the achievement principle "factually debatable" and "politically and morally untenable" (Offe, 1969:137). Two issues require more detailed discussion. First, what are the criteria for assessing the reward for performance? Secondly, who chooses and applies those criteria?

Assessing Work Performance

Offe suggests that in large work organizations we can no longer assess work performance by input and output criteria. Instead, differential income distribution is more likely to be explained by "normative" criteria. Input criteria refer to training costs, work stress, expended energy, and so on. Output criteria refer to a measurable quantity of production. These technical criteria are mediated by "normative" factors such as cultural definitions of the prestige of different types of work and their requirements, socialization in the workplace, and pre-job socialization processes. For Offe (1969:114-118), it is "normative" elements that determine the distribution of wage levels rather than any technical criteria. For instance, pay equity debates raise the question whether a nurse and a truck driver should have

equal pay based on criteria like skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions (Cuneo, 1990:17). Truck drivers often get paid more than nurses. Such a value differential is more the result of normative factors than technical ones.

Assessment criteria for wage differentials fall into three main categories: input, output, and normative. Offe considers *input* criteria as consisting of stress, responsibility, effort, and training (1969;107-114). All jobs have some element of stress. Some are more stressful than others. This includes those jobs that have factors of physical danger and those that create mental stress. The logger is an example of the former and the corporate executive, the latter. Reconciling their wage differentials by attaching value to the different types of stress experienced by both groups is a problematic assessment exercise. As with the hierarchy of jobs in capitalist societies, the differential values of stress are culturally determined.

Responsibility, as an assessing component, presents other problems. Offe suggests that attempts to attach values to varying degrees of responsibility results in placing importance on elements of management skills. These include abilities to forestall problems or make decisions on one's actions; skills usually attributed to managers. This results in a "...tautological measure of wage status in relation to management work tasks" (Offe, 1969:114). Attempts to use responsibility as an assessment component also reinforce a value system that places importance in the role elements of dominant groups and positions.

Attempts to measure individual effort as a way of assessing performance remains problematic. Related to the stress component, effort is mediated by elements of technological advancement. For instance, it is difficult to assess whose effort is worth more, the logger felling the tree or

the worker operating the computerized panel that slices the logs into planks. Physical effort is not a clear deciding component. Furthermore, capitalist societies tend to place more importance on mental efforts as a measure of value differentials in wages. This places emphasis on training and education.

However, training and education present their own assessment problems. It is not totally clear to what extent formal education "...is directly functional for the fulfillment of concrete occupational work tasks " (Offe, 1969:108). Therefore, we cannot assume that expenditure on education will be correspondingly reimbursed. Technical training, and more specialized jobs may show a closer correspondence. However, the value of training and education becomes more attached to ideological values. These values are culturally defined in the social system. A hierarchy of jobs is usually the result.

Output may be considered as either physical or economic (Offe, 1969:105). Physical output refers to "units" of production attributable to particular individuals. This assumes that each worker has a measurable "unit" of output. Not all jobs have this characteristic. The economic concept places emphasis on the price given to the results of a worker's labour when they reach the marketplace. This process is subject to market influences and power structures that do not have a clear link to the work performance of the individual.

Normative criteria refer to assessment aspects that are independent of technical elements. Consensus on what constitutes "just" wage differentials is required. Workers tend to accept those differentials as tradition and custom. In this regard, socialization processes, on and off the job, have the most influence. For instance, the degree to which the performance-reward

principle functions well in any system lies in the degree to which we believe that that principle is technically justifiable. In practice, however, it is usually arbitrary mechanisms that facilitate those decisions (Offe, 1969:116). Labour-management relations and negotiations are examples of that process. These are aspects of authority and control that mediate normative criteria.

Offe also argues that because of the complex divisions of labour in capitalist enterprises, management is no longer reliable to make "informed" assessments of a worker's performance (Offe, 1969:23-39). Nonetheless, authorities still rationalize wage differentials by organizing work and production around "ideological" forms of the "achievement principle". Aside from labour disputes mediated by unions, the results are more often arbitrary authority decisions on what constitutes a "fair" wage. Further, formal rules and direct supervisory control can no longer guarantee successful outcomes of work procedures.

Using normative criteria to rationalize income distribution also requires a consensus of what constitutes a "just" or "fair" wage. Since it is no longer clear that authorities are capable of making these "just" or "fair" assessments, Offe suggests that it leaves room for employees to set their own criteria for what makes an "acceptable" wage. This increases the loss of control of authorities. Ongoing disputes between management and labour are examples of the struggle to regain control.

These general components of assessing a worker's wage can now be placed in the context of restaurant servers. It remains to be seen whether similar problems apply to that context. This requires a more detailed look at the "unique" structure of a server's income.

The Structure of a Server's Income

There are two main components to a server's income; hourly wage and tips. In restaurants, tips are monies received from customers in addition to the amount spent on food and drink. The terms "pourboire" (French), "Trinkgeld"(German), or "small debt" (Chinese) all suggest that tips are supplements to a server's wage. Hourly wage is usually also the minimum wage.

Tips are, in its most general understanding, reward for "good service". What constitutes "good service" not only varies with the type of restaurant but is subject to the changing perceptions of each customer. The service standards of restaurants may not coincide with those of customers. A server's adherence to the service standards of a restaurant may not result in a tip reward. A server's performance on which he/she is evaluated for tips is based on a set of varying and uncertain criteria because it is the customer that makes the evaluation. Essentially at the whim of the customer, those criteria might include anything from the degree of obsequiousness to the individual personality of the server. However, servers are also assessed by management. Presumably, that assessment is related to the hourly wage paid to servers. However, that assessment also affects tips. Managers decide who get what shifts and what sections. These decisions have a significant effect on tips. Therefore, while the two assessments appear to be linked to two separate rewards, they are, in fact, interrelated.

That being the case, the first problem is to identify which aspects of a server's input and output are being assessed by the customer and which by management. Since it is possible that customers and management emphasize different assessment criteria, it is difficult to assume that there can be a unifying set of criteria for assessing a server's overall performance.

Applying the performance-reward principle to such a two-tiered income structure makes problematic the whole assessment process.

In addition, the question of a "capable" authority for those assessments becomes even more problematic when it is the customer that has the authority to decide what tips a server gets. Since tips form the major part of a server's income, the shifting of that responsibility from management to customer raises the question about the efficacy of the customer as an "informed" authority on the components of servers' work.

Tips and the Achievement Principle

To understand tip income in the context of the achievement principle we must attempt to locate the links between tips and the input and output elements of the job. Those elements constitute the performance. They will be considered in greater detail later.

Hourly wage forms part of the reward. It is important to consider the hourly wage because it shows how the worker is tied to the authority of management. This authority affects tips indirectly. That link will also show how the achievement principle still guides management's assessment of servers' work, especially on how work functions get allocated. This will address the "recruitment" dimension.

This analysis addresses the relations between tips, what servers do, and management/customer assessments. Are there links between the input and output elements of servers' work and the assessment criteria used by both management and customer? Do those criteria have an affective correlation to the tips servers make? To what extent is it possible to use the achievement principle to rationalize tip income? These questions address the compensatory, productive, and allocative functions of the achievement

principle.

It is likely that customers and management share some, but not all, of the same assessment criteria. However, it is not clear how those criteria correlate with the input and output elements of what servers do. In addition, normative assumptions about servers work, by both management and customer, may affect the whole assessment process. These might include notions on the "value" of service work in general, or norms as to what constitutes a "good" tip, and so on. Other ascriptive dimensions like gender, race, age, or sexual preference also affect the assessment process. This addresses the claims of the equivalence function of the achievement principle.

The analysis of the wage system of restaurant servers will attempt to make two claims. First, that while the achievement principle is present in the wage system of restaurant servers, its efficacy is problematic. Second, that the functions of that principle are made even more problematic because tips are the responsibility of the customer.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on servers' work in restaurants is limited. Even less is found on tips as a form of income. William Whyte's **Human Relations in The Restaurant Industry** (1948) and Mars & Nicod's **The World of Waiters** (1984) seem to be the most significant works done on the subject. However, their focus is not on the problematic aspects of tipping. For that analysis, Claus Offe's critique of the achievement principle is more applicable.

Whyte gives a very good account of the human relations aspect of servers' work. His focus on tips is limited to how servers view the practice of tipping; they take a poor tip personally, they regard tipping as a demeaning form of income, and so on. There is little analysis on the structural components of this type of wage system.

Whyte (1955) has also done work on the piece-rate system; the idea that more units produced have a corresponding increase in reward. In some ways, the tipping system makes similar claims; better service equals better tips. However, Whyte's main interest is in human relations and less in the analysis of the components of that system.

Fred Davis (1959) offers some insights on tipping. His study of the cabdriver locates some of the facets of tipping that also apply to restaurant servers. For instance, restaurant servers have similar typologies of good and bad tippers; women are poor tippers, businessmen are better, and so on. Servers and cabdrivers also use these typologies to identify tip potential. Servers and cabdrivers, in varying degrees, also share a fleeting relation with their customers. Davis' account serves as an introduction to raising problematic questions about the tipping system. What are the assessment criteria and who is the capable assessing authority?

Mars & Nicod give a somewhat scattered account of servers' work. Their focus seems unclear. They drift from descriptive detail of servers' work to their relations to customers to aspects of cheating in the workplace. Their treatment of tips seem to only emphasize the server-customer relation; building on some of Whyte's work. Mars & Nicod are also strongly influenced by Goffman (1959) whose ideas about performances in human behaviour only lend a tangential relevance to this thesis.

Spradley & Mann (1975) offer a good treatment of gender discrimination in bars; men hold the important positions (bartenders and managers), women are harassed by male customers and male co-workers. Similar types of discrimination can be found in restaurants. However, Spradley & Mann do not offer much in establishing links between gender discrimination and the tipping system.

For this thesis, Offe's critique of the achievement principle provides a more useful set of conceptual tools. His treatment of the problematic aspects of the assumed functions of that principle helps to analytically focus on the wage structure of servers. It helps to identify the problems of assessment criteria and capable assessing authorities.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT DO SERVERS DO?

This chapter describes what servers do. It draws from observations, interviews, and personal experience. A composite dramatization of a "typical" work shift for Tom, our "typical" waiter, is used. I use the example of a male server in a semi-formal restaurant. Variations in gender, experience, shifts, and type of operation will be discussed. This description takes an insider's point of view. The question is raised as to what the links are between what servers do (their performance) and the tips they make (their reward).

The Restaurant

The restaurant is a well-established operation of fifteen years. It deals with high volume. This means that it attempts to tap the largest share of the market. To do this it runs on two concepts. The two floors of the building allow for two separate types of operations. The bottom floor, referred to as the Bistro, is designed for casual and lighter fare. The second floor, referred to as the Dining Room, is set up for more formal and fuller fare without being pretentious. Both floors have windows that overlook a popular beach. The location of this restaurant also accounts for its popularity.

The Dining Room seats approximately a hundred and fifty people. Tables line the front windows and overlook the beach. Other tables are located in raised areas so that customers seated in these areas can also have a view of the bay. Since the restaurant faces west, it is also known for its spectacular sunsets. The restaurant is constructed to capture these sunsets as part of the customer's dining experience. The kitchen and food pick-up areas are visible to customers going to the washrooms. The bar is also visible

to certain tables. The back areas of the restaurant are accessed by open doorways that are on either side of the stairway that leads down to the washrooms. In addition, those stairs are also used by all staff members. Prep cooks and bussers bring supplies up from the prep kitchen, dishwashers carry full garbage bins down to the trash compactor, and staff washrooms are accessed by the same stairs. Those back areas are continually visible to the public.

Dining Room customers first enter the main door at the Bistro level. They are greeted by a hostess at a front desk. They are then directed to the Dining Room. Since the Dining Room runs mainly on reservations, the front desk serves as a checking-in point for the customers. Two flights of stairs lead up to the Dining Room. Once there, customers are greeted by a second hostess who takes them to their assigned table.

The Server and The Work

Tom is twenty-eight years old. He is from a white middle-class family. He has worked as a waiter for eight years. He has two years of college education. He dropped out of college while working as a waiter and, aside from brief interludes in sales jobs, he continues doing restaurant work. He likes the people he works with and he likes the fact that he gets to meet and be around people. Tips have also been good.

He arrives for the evening shift dressed in the required uniform. It consists of white shirt, black pants and the company-assigned tie. It is fifteen minutes before his shift. There is a rule that servers arrive early to do their *mise-en-place*. They are not paid for this work. This work involves checking table settings for cleanliness and finding out the necessary instructions for table arrangements that apply to their sections. Sections are the tables

assigned to each server. They range from six to ten tables depending on the type of operation. Usually operations that require more extensive service will assign fewer tables per server. Tonight Tom has seven tables in section A. The tables are numbered according to the seating plan. They include one, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, twenty-two, and twenty-three. One, nine, ten, and twenty-three are tables for two. Eleven and twelve are "fours". Table twenty-two seats six. There are twenty-two seats, or covers, in his section. Twenty-two and twenty-three are smoking tables and the rest are non-smoking.

Tonight there are no special table arrangements for his section. However, Tom has a series of tasks to complete for each of his seven tables. He wipes each piece of cutlery with a damp cloth. He makes sure that the cutlery is laid out in the positions according to the standards of the restaurant. Although there are general industry standards, table settings do differ with each operation, particularly how many forks (small or large), knives (dinner or butter), or spoons (teaspoons or soup spoons) that have to be laid out. He also checks each wine glass for water spots and other residues. He also checks for dirty napkins and tablecloths. Next, he makes sure there are candle holders with candles in them. Tonight the salt and pepper shakers also need wiping. That done, he does a quick scan of his section and proceeds to light the candles.

It is now three minutes to opening. He goes downstairs to the staff washrooms for some last-minute personal grooming. He puts on a restaurant-supplied apron, checks his hair for tidiness, and adjusts his tie. He also makes sure he has his working tools. These include an assigned computer key to access the ordering system, a wine opener, three pens, a pad of paper, and a brush used to pick up bread crumbs on the table cloth after a meal. Returning to his section he finds that four people have been

seated at table twelve. He goes to a computer terminal to "clock" himself into the computer. The procedure is necessary for starting the ordering process.

Table twelve is a non-smoking table at a window. He says to himself in a stage whisper, "It's show time!", and proceeds to the hostess desk to get four special-sheets and a wine list before he approaches the table. He has also noticed that these customers are fairly well-dressed; two white couples in their early forties, the men in suits and ties and the women in what appears to be cocktail dresses. He feels content because these are usually signs of a good tip potential.

"Good evening, these are the specials tonight". He hands each customer a special-sheet. As he places the wine list on the edge of the table by the man in the dark suit, he adds, "May I bring you a drink or cocktail before dinner?" The balding man in the grey suit addresses the women. "Ladies, would you like a drink?" The blond woman in the black dress asks for a Caesar. "I'll have the same," the other woman adds. The man in the dark suit orders a martini on the rocks with a twist. "I'll have the same only straight up with an olive." Tom has taken note of these orders mentally without writing anything down. "Thank you", he says with a nod and proceeds to the computer terminal to ring in the items.

All items have to be ordered through the computer system. Having worked at that operation for two years, he knows the required look-up numbers by heart. Look-up numbers are number codes for items needed to be ordered. For instance, he has to punch in 601 twice for the Caesars that the women ordered. New servers have to refer constantly to the booklet of look-up numbers, kept near the terminals, for the items desired. The system is set up so that most variations, like whether the martini is on the rocks or

straight up, can be coded into the computer so as to minimize any verbal ordering from the bar. Since there are many items available together with their variations, also known as modifiers, the booklet is quite extensive. Of course, knowing those numbers well means doing your job faster and more efficiently. There are five terminals for servers to ring in their items. These are located in strategic areas of the restaurant; one by the bar, one by the hot food kitchen, one by the salad kitchen, one at the main coffee station in the back of the restaurant, and one in an alcove next to table twenty-eight that also serves as a front coffee station.

Having rung in the items he wants, Tom removes his computer key and the items start to print up at the bar printer. Since his is the first table of the evening, the bartender is already in the process of making those drinks by the time he arrives at the bar. After giving the drinks their necessary garnishes, he places them on a tray and delivers them to the table. "Would you like a few minutes to consider your dinner choices or are you ready to order?" The balding man tells Tom that they have to catch a show at eight o'clock so they would like to order right away. As Tom pulls out his writing pad he notices through the corner of his eye that table eleven is being seated.

Both women are having the house salads as starters. The one with the black dress is having the salmon and the other is having the swordfish as main courses. The man in the dark suit is having a clam chowder followed by the rack of lamb done medium, and the balding man is having the appetizer prawns and the veal dinner. Tom uses a common numbering system for customers at a table. Standing at the head of table twelve, he counts clockwise, one, two, three, four. Therefore, the man in the dark suit is position one, the lady in the black dress is position two, the other lady is

position three, and the balding man is position four. This system is important if he is to communicate the needs of those customers to the busser that supports his service duties (tonight he shares his busser with the server that is working the adjacent section D). The system also serves to remind himself of who is having what at each table.

Having written the items in that sequence, he asks if they would like a bottle of wine with their meals. The balding man orders a bottle of Parducci Chardonnay. Tom acknowledges that order and gathers up all the menus on the table and is about to turn to approach table eleven when he notices that tables nine and ten are also seated. He makes a decision to go to the hostess desk first to get the necessary special sheets and wine lists so that he can approach all three new tables in one sweep. He goes through the same routine with each table as he did with table twelve. The four people on table eleven are dressed casually. They are four women in their twenties. They want more time to decide on a drink order. Table nine is seated with an elderly couple in their late sixties. They want two glasses of water. Table ten is seated with a couple in their thirties. They are tourists and have several questions about the restaurant and the menu. Tom is beginning to show signs of being frantic. Normally he would enjoy chatting with the tourists, but he has orders to put in for table twelve. He manages to put their questions on hold and takes a cocktail order from them; a bourbon and soda for the woman and a beer for the man. Aside from the dinner order on table twelve, he has written nothing else down. He now has to organize his thoughts and place the orders in a sequence of importance.

Knowing the production time of each item on the menu is crucial to the successful organization of a server's section. Tom's experience tells him to ring in both appetizers and main courses together for table twelve

because the lamb ordered takes at least twenty five minutes to cook. He also has to ring in the cocktails for table ten. Having done this, he has to tell the appetizer kitchen to go ahead on the prawns. Even though the ordering system is set up to minimize verbal ordering, certain menu items still require verbal communication. In this case the prawns are quick-cooking and in order to ensure freshness, Tom has the responsibility to co-ordinate that item with his other appetizers so that all items can be served to the table at once, and with the desired quality.

Before he returns to his section to approach table eleven and nine, he tells his busser to bring two glasses of water to table nine. On returning, he finds that table twenty-two has been seated with six people. Tom's experience has helped him to develop a sense of when he is going to be in trouble. This could be one of those occasions. However, he also knows that to panic would be even more disastrous. He continues his original plan to try to get an order from table eleven. In the back of his mind he is also aware that his appetizers for table twelve would be ready soon and the drinks for table ten and the bottle of wine for table twelve are probably waiting for him at the bar. The women on table eleven order a carafe of the house white wine. As he turns away from them, he notices that the elderly couple on table nine is trying to get his attention.

They are ready to order their dinner. It is a simple order; two house salads and two grilled salmons. He scribbles the order down quickly, clips the menus from table nine under his arms, and heads off towards the six people at table twenty-two. "I'll be with you shortly." With that, he leaves them for the back area. He is now also sorting out in his mind the tasks he has to do; appetizers to pick up, drinks to ring in and pick up, wine to be opened, appetizers to be ordered, specials and wine list to be brought to

table twenty two. He does not have to worry about bread for table twelve and nine because the bussers will serve bread as soon as they see the menus are no longer on the tables. He rings in the wine and the two house salads. He collects all his bar orders, including the carafe of wine for table eleven. He delivers all drinks first and saves the bottle of Parducci to do last. After he opens the wine and performs all the rituals of tasting and serving, he rushes off to the kitchen to find his appetizers for table twelve. On arriving there he also finds that the two house salads for table nine are also ready. He delivers the four appetizers for table twelve and returns to the hostess desk to get the menus and wine list for table twenty-two.

There are two adult couples and two children about ten years old at the table. After a hurried greeting and presentation of the menus, he finds that they have decided on no alcohol and want to order some soft drinks. They want to know what is available. After a brief discussion, which to Tom seemed to go on forever, they order two Shirley Temples for the kids and Perriers for the adults. After ringing in the drinks, he goes to the salad section and picks up the two house salads and delivers them to table nine. On his return, he notices that table one has been seated with a young couple. He is beginning to find it difficult to retain his composure. He does a scan of his section and goes through the list of tasks he has to accomplish in his head. There are drinks to pick up, food to ring in for table nine, dinners ready for table twelve, orders to be taken for tables one, eleven, and twenty-two, and the hostess seats table twenty-three.

Tom's experience has been crucial in maintaining his composure thus far. He manages to get to all his tables and take and deliver all the items ordered with little problem. He is thinking to himself how smoothly things are going, considering what a busy start it has been. He has had no problem

with the kitchen, the bar, or his busser. He has made no mistakes in ordering and has timed his meals perfectly. He even has time to check on how his customers are enjoying those meals. This is known as the "quality check". It is an important part of his duties as a server. In busy times like this, it can be difficult to do. During these times just taking the orders and delivering them is an accomplishment.

He has also had very little sociable contact with his customers. Sociable contact with customers is an explicit and implicit requirement for his job; implicit in the sense that he has to be pleasant to his customers as a way of currying favour with them to increase his tip potential, and explicit in the sense that management and the customers expect it. However, he also knows that not all customers are interested in a conversation with him. It is up to him to know with whom to be friendly and with whom to maintain a detached server-customer relationship. In industry parlance this is called "knowing how to read your customers". For example, the couple on table one are holding hands and staring into each other's eyes --- an obvious clue not to intrude. The four people on table twelve have been engrossed in a political discussion with some evidence of heated exchanges, clues as to how he should approach them. The tourists on table ten, on the other hand, want to chat incessantly. They have questions about the restaurant, the city, the country, and so on, which Tom is only too happy to answer at this point, because the first round of tasks have been accomplished. In mid-conversation with them, his busser comes up behind him and whispers that table twelve wants him. He excuses himself from table ten. As he approaches table twelve, the balding man hands Tom an American Express card. This is an obvious indication that he wants to settle his bill. They have just finished their dinners and the plates have not yet been cleared. "No

dessert tonight?" "I'm afraid we haven't the time." There is an edge of annoyance in the man's tone of voice. Tom decides to leave it alone and just process the credit card. Besides, most of the tables have finished their dinners and it is time to try to sell some desserts. There are dessert menus to be given to all his tables. This is also when he uses his crumb brush to tidy up the table before he presents those menus.

He only manages to sell four desserts to the women on table eleven. Most of his other tables are ready for their bill except table one who are still engaged in their courtship rituals over cups of coffee and snifters of Grand Marnier. The people on table twelve have left. Tom did not have a chance to say goodnight to them. He picks up the credit card voucher to check that it was properly filled out. The man had left him a twenty dollar tip on a hundred and twenty dollar bill. Obviously the annoyance in his voice was not directed at him.

He returns to the back area to prepare the bills for the rest of the tables. This only requires a simple command on the computer and is done fast enough that he prepares the bills for four tables. He returns to his section and presents the bills to tables nine, ten, twenty-two, and twenty-three. Table twenty-three hands him a Visa card immediately. He turns to go back to process it and notices that table eleven is still eating their desserts and table one is still holding hands. He takes the back-up coffee thermos and refills the coffee on table one. They order two more Grand Marnier. As he leaves table one he notices that the hostess has re-seated table twelve. The cycle begins again.

For Tom, the rest of the evening will consist of the repetition of the cycle of tasks as each table gets re-seated. The second seating usually has customers that are not in a rush to go. This allows Tom to spend more time

with them and, more importantly, allows him more time to organize the necessary tasks for his job.

Doing The Cash

When the last customer has paid the bill and left, it is time for Tom to reconcile his cash and charges with the printout from the computer. This is also known as "doing the cash". It is common practice to order yourself a drink before you sit down at a designated area to complete this task. These areas also vary with each operation. Table thirty-two is usually available if nobody is still sitting on tables twenty-eight to thirty-two.

Tom feels that he has worked hard tonight and orders himself a Heineken. For most servers this is the first time that they can relax from the pressures of the work shift. It is also their moment of truth. This is when they find out exactly how much they made in tips. It should be noted that servers usually have a sense of how well they did before they do their cash since they are also responsible for collecting payments for all their tables.

Tom is working with a computer system that lists all the charge and cash sales he has made. With his computer key he takes a reading of his sales for the evening. He has sold a little over thirteen hundred dollars tonight. Next, he has to fill out a printed form with all the relevant information on the computer printout and list a breakdown of the cash he has to submit. The exercise is to check the computer information against a manual calculation. Although extremely rare, the computer may have had a malfunction. Furthermore, it is an opportunity to make sure he has entered all the charge-card information correctly. On the top right hand corner of the form, he also has to fill out his sign-out time. As a rule, servers are allowed fifteen minutes to do their cash from the time they collect their last

bill. After he has done his cash he has a hundred and eighty-five dollars left over. This is his gross tip income. He now has to allot percentages of his gross sales (not of the tips he actually made) to a tip pool and to his busser.

He gives his busser two percent of his sales (twenty-six dollars) directly, and puts another twenty-six dollars and fifty cents in an envelope. On the front of the envelope he has to write out the breakdown of the amounts to be allocated to the kitchen and hostesses, the bartender, and the D&D fund. The D&D fund is an insurance system, administered by both servers and management, to cover the event of customers leaving the restaurant without paying (Dine & Dash). The incidence of D&D customers is rare in this operation. As a result, there is a yearly ritual of taking a major amount of the accumulated money in the fund and spend it on an extravagant luncheon for the evening servers; a self-congratulatory practice that also strengthens their social bonds.

The breakdown of the tip-pool is as follows; 1.6 percent goes to the kitchen and hostesses (the actual division of these monies between these two groups is done by management), .4 percent to the bartender, and fifty cents to the D&D fund. Management administers the detailed division of the tip pool. Cheques are issued to workers with their share of the tips accumulated weekly. For the kitchen staff and hostesses, amounts are arbitrarily determined by a percentage of the accumulated tip pool for the shift they worked. Detailed records are kept in the office in case of any disputes about the amounts allotted.

Tom puts the tip-pool envelope, his cash remittance (the amount of cash sales minus tips), the charge vouchers, and the cash summary, into a larger plastic envelope and gives it to the manager. He then clocks himself out of the computer. His work is done for the evening. Tonight Tom has

cleared a little over ten percent of his gross sales in tips. This is a "good" night. The tips have made tolerable whatever pressures he has endured during his shift.

Tip Talk

While Tom has been doing this, other servers have joined him at the table to do *their* cash. This is usually the time servers discuss the evening's stories and disasters. "Doing the cash" is not merely a job function but a chance for servers to unwind from the pressures of the evening. The recounting of stories over drinks are important nightly rituals. How the shift went is commonly described as the degree to which one did, or did not, lose control of one's section. Servers often speak of being "in the shit" or "in the juice". The stories boast of how servers, in the face of disasters, manage to save themselves by taking control of the situations and turning them around in their favour. It requires creativity because each table may require a different approach, the ability to organize the myriad of tasks and to manage efficiently, and what servers describe as "people skills". "People skills" are linked to the above mentioned ability to "read your table". Those skills will determine to what extent servers can win over a disgruntled customer or cover their own mistakes.

The servers' preoccupation with being in control of their section is ultimately linked to tips. The story telling eventually comes around to how much one made in tips. Losing control has many meanings. Most importantly, losing control means endangering the tip potential for the evening. There is also a competitive spirit amongst servers over how much they make in tips. Although they may congratulate each other for having a "good" night, there is some envy when someone else has a better night

than yourself. It is a silent competition. The "good" night symbolizes a job well done. The "bad" night is somehow reflective of one's inadequacies.

Servers also recount stories of how they did everything flawlessly for a table only to receive a poor tip (ten percent and under). The criteria for what constitutes a "good" tip will vary with the type of operation and the tip pool system. Nonetheless, "tip talk" is often carried on with such detail, fervour, and emotion that one would suspect it has meaning beyond pecuniary gain. Most servers will admit that they will interpret a bad tip as an insult to their performance. Because tips are their main source of income, servers equate the amount of tips they make with an evaluation of their work.

"Tip talk" also reveals a love-hate relationship that servers have with their customers. On the one hand, servers carry varying degrees of resentment for being dependent on the customer for tip income and, on the other, they also realize that their contact with the customers is the most pleasurable part of their job. Servers have to rationalize these aspects of their relation to the customers as part of the requirements of the job.

When Things Don't Go So Smoothly

Thus far we have looked at a fairly uneventful shift. This is more often the exception rather than the norm. There are a series of situations that occur regularly in a server's job that cause disruptions to an otherwise smooth shift. Here are some examples:

1. When food and drinks are rung in, or timed, incorrectly. Ringing in, or timing, food and drinks incorrectly happens most often during busy periods. One reason may be the inefficiency of the kitchen or bar, or the server making mistakes in timing. Servers consider this the most disastrous

because it has repercussions not only for the table directly affected, but for all the tables in the section. Finding ways to correct the mistake includes not only gratifying the customer or the kitchen (traditionally belligerent to servers in general) or the bar, but also locating a manager to correct the error in the computer, and that takes time that servers do not have when they are busy.

If Tom had rung in a steak instead of the lamb for table twelve, it would have been one of these disasters. It would have had a domino effect on the timing of his other tables. First, the cook would have to start cooking the lamb immediately because it is an item that takes at least twenty minutes. This means that the orders for the rest of the table will have to stay under the heat lamp and most likely dry out. Second, his other tables still require prompt service while he is trying to rectify the problem. Rectifying the problem takes up valuable time.

The experienced server will have strategies to recover from these mishaps. Staying calm is one of these strategies. This is no mean achievement. It is easy to panic in those situations, having only minutes to recover from them. Sometimes one mishap of this nature will ruin the whole evening for the server.

Although rare, a similar problem occurs when the computer crashes and a contingency plan of a written ordering system has to be put in place. A harrowing chaos usually ensues. Orders are lost, and all workers (servers, bussers, cooks, and managers) come under a lot of stress to reorganize themselves to try to continue functioning. Contingency systems like having to manually add up each customer's bill have to be put in place. Servers may have to retake the orders from a table, and so on.

2. Slow or incompetent bussers. The duties of a busser vary in each

operation. In our case, the busser has the following support duties:

(a) Putting bread on the table when the order is taken by the server. This is indicated by the fact that menus are no longer on the table. The server usually informs the busser if bread is needed before the customers order.

(b) Clearing all dirty dishes and empty glasses from the table as the situation requires. Changing dirty ashtrays is also part of their jobs.

(c) Serving coffee or tea when asked by the server. Bussers are also responsible for refills.

(d) Clearing and resetting tables when the customers leave.

Bussers also have other duties that indirectly affect the server. They are responsible for the cleanliness of the restaurant and the maintenance of supplies for the restaurant's, or the customer's, needs. These include making the coffee, stocking the bread, butter, cutlery and side plates. These other duties often come into conflict with the immediate needs of the server, a conflict of concern to the server when things are not going smoothly.

For example, the server may arrive at a table with appetizers only to find that the bread has not yet been served, or the busser has forgotten to deliver the coffee for a table. A slow or incompetent busser has a disastrous effect on a server's timing. The division of labour between server and busser is more defined with restaurants that have more than fifty seats or those that adopt more formal service procedures.

3. Overly demanding customers. Servers have criteria as to what over-demanding means. These range from substitutions on the menu to demanding constant attention at the table. Most servers understand that their mandate is to please the customers as much as possible. However, there are limits to which this can be done. Standards are usually set by management. Managers are called upon to evaluate customer complaints.

This is how the limits are set as what overly demanding means.

For instance, in Tom's situation the rule for menu substitutions is fairly clear. The restaurant will accommodate the customer's needs so long as the ingredients, and the people capable of making that item, are there. Because customers pay more than in lower-scale restaurants, they are allowed to be more demanding. This can be a source of aggravation for the server. In a busy high-volume restaurant, menu variations can significantly affect the server's timing.

Asking for separate bills is another source of aggravation for servers. Although the computer systems used in restaurants allow for this type of customer request, servers, as a rule, regard this as added work to be avoided because it interferes with the overall timing of the other tasks. Although some operations will have policies governing doing separate bills for customers, that decision is usually at the discretion of the server. This, in effect, allows the server to assess the customers and the situation before making that decision.

For servers, how they choose to accommodate a customer's demands depends on certain contingencies. The evaluation of tip potential is based on dress, the amount of money spent or the types of items ordered (presumably customers who order expensive items are potentially good tippers), and discernable accents (Australians, Germans, and British are notoriously bad tippers).

Experienced customers believe they know how to get a server to accommodate them by hinting at a possible increase in the tip at the end of the meal. On the other hand, astute and experienced servers know that those who hint at these promises are seldom good tippers. Servers believe good tippers do not talk about it, they just leave a good tip.

While these factors will affect how quickly servers respond, or whether they refuse the demand with a polite excuse, in the end, the servers will make some form of accommodation regardless of how they evaluated the customers. However, servers may make it appear to the customer, in subtle ways, how they are inconvenienced so as to possibly cull a better tip from them. On the other hand, the server may be just too busy and might show irritation at having to comply with the demands.

4. An uncooperative kitchen. Experienced servers find ways to ingratiate themselves to the key kitchen personnel. They might be grill cooks or sous-chefs who have the power to make things difficult or easy for servers. Ingratiation might take the form of occasionally buying them a drink after work, or impressing upon them your ability to do the job efficiently and show sympathy or understanding of the difficulties that cooks have to endure. This is not dissimilar to the negotiations that servers have with their customers. Unlike the negotiations with customers, however, negotiations with the kitchen can often break down into heated exchanges and even violence.

There are numerous ways a sous-chef or cook can make things difficult for servers. Here are some examples:

- (a) Taking your bill from the front of the line and placing it in the back or putting up the meals faster than usual throws a server's timing off.
- (b) Heating the dinner plate in the oven before the food is placed on it so that servers burn their hands when they pick it up.
- (c) Demanding beer for having to do menu variations for customers.

5. Lack of management support. In Tom's restaurant the floor managers (maitre d's) are required to assist the servers at busy times. Assistance may take the form of opening wine or taking an order from a

table. Managers are also supposed to field all complaints and take that responsibility away from the servers, so that the servers' tasks can continue uninterrupted. Minutes saved are vital to a server's timing. This management support is not always there.

These are some of the factors that hinder the smooth accomplishment of a server's tasks. Problems usually arise at busy times, and the pressures of the job are concentrated in a very short period during a shift. How these problems are handled marks the relative success of what servers do.

This chapter gives a general picture of the elements of a server's job. Presumably, those elements have some relation to the reward. Since the achievement principle assumes that there is a clear link between performance and reward, what might those links be? What are the input and output aspects of performance? Is there a connection between assessment criteria and these aspects? Who are the assessing authorities?

CHAPTER 4

ASSESSMENTS AND THE PERFORMANCE-TIP RELATION

This chapter considers the relation between the input and output of servers' work and the tips they make. Although tips are the reward given only by customers, both managers and customers assess a server's performance. Both assessments affect tips. Both use aspects of a server's input and output as assessment criteria. However, managers and customers do not necessarily apply the same criteria. Therefore, locating a unifying set of components to assess a server's tip-worth remains problematic.

The Input Elements of Servers' Work

For analytical purposes, the input elements of servers' work may be divided into three categories; *physical*, *technical*, and *people skills*.

Physical skills are affected by functional definitions of being "able-bodied". They may be influenced by social or cultural biases. In general, servers have to be able to walk, talk, hear, and use both their arms. Their work requires dexterity. Servers must balance plates of food and trays of drinks while dodging each other getting to their tables. Maladroit servers do not last long on the job. Dexterity also involves manoeuvring between tables and customers while trying to serve a plate of food, or pour a glass of wine. One server referred to this quality as having the dancing talents of a Mikhail Baryshnikov (Shapiro & Wexler, 1990:16-17). While the metaphor may seem exaggerated, it does convey a sense of the type of dexterity required.

A server's grooming and appearance are also part of the physical requirements. This means presenting oneself in a culturally acceptable way. Standards for this vary with each operation. Dress codes will also vary. These may range from tuxedos to shorts and T-shirts. As a rule, norms of

cleanliness and appearance apply to all restaurants. Managers and customers do not usually accept non-conformity and assess a server's performance by appearance.

Technical skills refer to service procedures, product knowledge, command of the spoken and written language, basic mathematics, familiarity with ordering systems that include computers, and organizational abilities not unlike those required of managers.

Service procedures may change with the type of operation. Formal restaurants make more demands on service procedures. These include properly presenting and opening a bottle of wine, or positioning the dinner plate so that the meat or fish sits at six o' clock when it faces the customer, or which side to serve and which side to clear the plates, and so on. In general, few restaurants strictly adhere to these requirements. Different restaurants will emphasize different aspects. The technical components of service procedures can usually be learnt by working in different operations or by taking vocational courses.

Product knowledge involves understanding the preparation of food, particularly items offered in that operation. In licensed restaurants, this includes knowledge of the preparation of bar drinks and an understanding of how wine is made, including the qualities and tastes of the main grape varieties (Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, and so on). Servers are often asked by customers to recommend items of food and beverage. Product knowledge also gives the server the necessary tools to sell the products of the restaurant. As with service procedures, product knowledge is usually emphasized in more formal operations. There appears to be no uniformity in the product knowledge requirements amongst restaurants. Experienced servers bring with them various degrees of

product knowledge from other operations. Some restaurants will organize training sessions to pass on this type of information. In general, it is learnt on the job.

Since a vital part of a server's job is to communicate with the customer, a command of the numerically dominant language of the region, or area, is necessary. Some restaurants might require the knowledge of a second language. For instance, a French restaurant might also want its servers to have some proficiency in French. However, as a rule, only a command of the dominant language is necessary. This includes the ability to write. Smaller operations may still use a written ordering system. However, most restaurants today use some form of cash register or computer for these purposes. Whatever the system, the server has to have the language proficiency to adequately communicate with customers and other workers.

Servers are also required to tally up a customer's bill. This means, at least, a fundamental understanding of arithmetic and a basic knowledge of percentages. Larger operations have computer ordering and tallying systems. They are meant to minimize errors and cheating. For instance, computers process the orders to the various departments so that there is always a record of each order. As a rule, the production areas (kitchen and bar) will only respond to a printed order from their computer terminal. There are varying degrees of sophistication to these systems. Some still require the server to have an understanding of basic mathematics. Recall that Tom's cashout procedures required some reconciling of his sales printout with what he received from his customers in cash or charges.

This also means at least a minimal understanding of how to work computerized ordering and tallying systems. It is the responsibility of the server to learn the use of the system. Some operations will have training

seminars for this purpose. There is no uniformity in training procedures amongst restaurants. Larger operations have better training programs.

By far the most important technical skill required by a server is task organization. Recall the way Tom had to organize his tasks so that all his customers got what they wanted in some logical fashion. Recall also how important timing was in that organization. The skill required can be compared to management skills; the ability to make quick decisions in stressful situations, knowing how to perform the tasks in a logical fashion, being responsible for the smooth functioning of your section.

Some organizational skills are tacit. A server usually brings them to the job. They are seldom found in training seminars. The server either has them or must learn them on the job. Not having these skills means not being able to accomplish the tasks properly.

People skills involve the least tangible aspects of a server's input. Managers have referred to this as the "psychology" of service. This involves the personality and character of the server. The necessary traits include having some acting ability (showing some flair or panache in the service to the customer), being sensitive to the different personalities of customers and responding accordingly (degrees of obsequiousness or degrees of friendliness), being patient with demanding customers (under most circumstances, servers are not allowed to respond rudely to customers), and getting along with fellow workers (servers cannot complete their tasks successfully without the support of fellow workers).

The idea of a performance in interpersonal encounters is not new (Goffman, 1958:17-76). For servers, putting on various "masks" for customers is a required skill. Some are better at it than others. Learning how to act differently for each customer is mostly acquired on the job. Developing such

a skill is seldom found in any training manual. While the skill itself is a crucial part of the input, the performance is the output that the customer assesses. This skill is generally left to the server to develop. Since it is possible that different customers will expect different performances, the server is required to assess each encounter and act accordingly. Customers often expect this acting skill and may use it as a way of evaluating a server's tip worth. Other assessment criteria will be discussed later.

The skill for performance can mean many things. It means not only fulfilling the technical and physical functions of the job but also making sure the customer is kept satisfied. Satisfaction means many things to the customer. For instance, some customers demand constant attention while others prefer less attentiveness. Some might expect the server to be overtly friendly while others find that type of friendliness offensive. A server has to have the skill to know which "face" to put on for each customer. It is not uncommon for servers to have rehearsed opening lines and responses to customers in anticipation of having to suss out the type of customer and the appropriate approach to be used. Experienced servers have amusing or witty responses ready for these occasions. It is only by trial and error that servers find out whether these approaches work. As will be seen later, these aspects of people skills may often have some, but not a clear, bearing on how customers assess a server's tip-worth.

Output Elements of Servers' Work

The concept of output refers to a product, or unit of production, that is the result of a worker's efforts on the job. What does a server produce? There are two ways of analyzing a server's product; sales (monies generated through the sales of the restaurant's products) and service (customer

satisfaction). Sales are the quantity dimension and service the quality. Both do not conform to the common sense notion of a unit of production. A server's product has to be understood in less concrete terms. The full encounter between a server and a table of customers (from the time they first meet to the time the bill is paid) is a way of considering the unit of production.

As mentioned earlier, the well-being of the customers at each table can be considered the product of the skills of the server. This includes the creation of appearances (the acting skill of the server) which is itself problematic as a quantifiable dimension and, therefore, also problematic to the quantification assumptions of the achievement principle. Nonetheless, both the quantity and quality dimensions of output are used as assessment criteria by managers and customers.

Servers can be considered the sales representatives of the restaurant because they work on the principle that the more they sell the more tips they make. This is because tips are usually given as a percentage of the total bill (based on current practices, the average is about twelve percent). Customers are concerned with sales only in respect to how much the meal has cost them. They are not interested in the concept of sales as an output element of servers' work. Sales, as output, are only the concern of servers, managers, and co-workers.

Managers are mainly preoccupied with two things; generating sales and keeping the customer satisfied. The two are not exclusive of each other. For instance, sales cannot be separated from the input elements discussed above. All of those input elements, in one way or another, and in varying degrees, contribute to sales. However, managers often use sales as a gauge of a server's performance. This means that they regard sales as the product

of a server's work. However, as will be seen later, managers will use other criteria to assess a server's performance.

Sales might even be considered less problematic as an analytical tool if servers were rewarded a commission by management. Instead, that commission comes in the form of tips from customers, whose assessment criteria may have nothing to do with sales as an output of servers' work. Instead, it seems more likely that customers will consider service (how they are treated or accommodated) as a server's unit of production.

The idea of service as a unit of production is not unproblematic. The definition of good or bad service may vary with different customers. Degrees of obsequiousness, politeness or rudeness, getting what you want when you want it, are all possible components of a customer's assessment. A customer's mood or temperament, before and during the encounter with a server, will also affect that assessment. Both the server's and the customer's social, economic, or cultural background may affect that encounter. In addition, assessments might be mediated by a customer's bias in ascriptive categories like race, gender, age, and so on.

However, service, as a unit of production, is still a useful way of relating the achievement principle to the tip reward. This will become clearer when the customer's assessment criteria are analyzed. The assumption that if there is good service (performance), there will be good tips (reward) must first be examined in relation to management assessments.

Management Assessments

Restaurant managers have usually come up through the ranks. Most have, at one time or another, worked as a server. This gives them some measure of reliability as an authority to recruit servers and assess their

performances. Recruitment involves finding servers who can fulfill most, or part, of the input and output requirements. However, it is not clear that managers share a uniform set of recruitment criteria.

Aside from differing emphases on a server's input and output, managers may also draw from other factors. Their experience as a server, or as a manager, will decide which aspects they emphasize. Managers also use first impressions of the recruit's personality and appearance. Managers speak of developing the instinct to pick out the right person. Some managers will conduct second and third interviews to confirm these instincts.

In the interview, appearance is usually the first criterion applied by managers. Aside from basic able-bodied needs, a manager might consider what is physically appealing or acceptable to customers, to the requirements of the restaurant, or to his/her own standards. The recruit's personality might be considered as linked to the acting ability discussed above. Outgoing, self-confident, and gregarious individuals are preferred; qualities apparently necessary for good performances (sales as output are not yet considered).

Experience is the next criterion. The recruit's experience will usually tell the manager to what extent facets of input and output might be fulfilled. This is because most of a server's input requirements are learnt from experience. Training programs are scarce.

Recruitment is also affected by the politics of the workplace. This usually concerns questions about being assessed fairly, or objectively, or about how to curry favour with managers and deal with nepotism.

Since most restaurants are non-union, fair treatment depends on company policy. Because so much depends on management discretion, restaurants may have questionable recruitment and assessment practices. While the concept of fair treatment might be embraced, its practice is

usually unstructured. This affects servers to the degree that they are subject to recruitment and assessment practices that have varying notions of what fairness means. This would appear to fly in the face of the assumptions of the equivalence and productivity functions of the achievement principle.

Because fairness is often questionable, currying favour with schedule managers is necessary in order to acquire good shifts and sections. Therefore, servers must put in the effort to know and understand the personalities of those managers. However, just to "brown-nose" does not guarantee success. Managers might also consider high sales or seniority as factors for shift and section assignment.

Some servers regard currying favour with managers similar to currying favour with customers for tips. Both affect a server's income. While it may be difficult to make a direct connection between aspects of "brown-nosing" and aspects of a manager's assessment or recruitment, it is a connection that cannot be totally dismissed.

Nepotism is also fairly common in restaurants. There is direct and indirect nepotism; direct when workers are hired because they are sons and daughters of owners and managers, and indirect when they are hired because they are friends of owners and managers. These factors add to the complexity of the recruitment process and to questions of fairness. They have a part in the assessment and recruitment process because they may temper the judgements of managers.

In most cases, management recruitment criteria are the same as those used for assessments. Assessments are meant to rationalize the performance-reward relation of the achievement principle. This is problematic when applied to a server's wage structure.

To contextualize management assessments within the achievement

principle, it is necessary to consider first how managers rationalize a server's reward; the hourly wage plus tips. Managers emphasize sales with the logic that higher sales benefit both the server and the restaurant. This seems congruent with the productivity function of the achievement principle. It is a function ideologically associated with the piece-rate system.

"The piece-rate system is geared to an acquisitive, competitive, individualistic worker" (Whyte, 1955:13). These are qualities that servers apparently have to have if they are to be successful at culling tips. Acquisitive because it is assumed that servers do their job because they want to make money (managers also encourage an entrepreneurial attitude in servers by suggesting they consider their sections their own restaurants in microcosm). Competitive because the principle that high sales equal high tips is advocated (sales contests amongst servers are also encouraged by managers). And individualistic because it is up to each server to develop those talents necessary for culling tips. Supposedly, those can be met by developing, and properly applying, input requirements.

Since tips form the bulk of a server's income, the hourly wage is comparatively insignificant. Hourly wage is the formal link to the authority of management assessments. It allows managers the authority to rationalize the allocation of shifts and sections. It also allows managers to rationalize the more problematic aspects of a server's wage structure. This will become clearer in the discussion on authority in chapter five.

Managers regard a server's performance as twofold; one done for the restaurant and the other for the customer. The one for the restaurant fulfills the functional needs of the operation. The one for the customer is not only linked to the needs of the customer and the restaurant, but has the added benefit of tips for the server. In that way, managers suggest that the

restaurant, the customers, and servers share similar interests. Those links are not explicitly clear.

On the surface, tips are the result of a server's performance at a table of customers. That performance is also linked to input; aspects that are part of a manager's assessment. But, since tips are not paid by the restaurant, managers embrace the claimed functions of the achievement principle in order to rationalize the problematic aspects of that income. They argue for the efficacy of the achievement principle because that principle serves as a way to establish their authority to assess a server's performance. Emphasizing the productivity function, managers argue that the fact that the restaurant provides the server the opportunity to make those tips; the opportunity to work in the restaurant becomes part of the reward. There have been extreme cases where the server was required to pay to work at the restaurant because tips were decidedly, and consistently, significant.

Such arguments suggest attempts to support the assumed compensatory, equivalence, productive, and allocative functions of the achievement principle. First, the cost of input elements (physical, technical, and people skills) is assumed to be compensated accordingly. Second, every server has the opportunity to make tips without being affected by ascriptive categories; so long as those input elements are applied properly, the customer will reward you fairly. Third, servers will be justly rewarded for their output or productive labour because more sales equal more tips and a good performance for the customer means a good reward. Finally, the idea that more sales mean more tips fulfills the allocative function because it serves as the motivation for optimal labour productivity. This is the same logic used to rationalize tip-pool systems. Since all workers contribute in some way to a server's production (sales and performance for the

customer), they should all share in the tip reward.

Managers use the achievement principle to rationalize the wage structure of servers. It is a way of accounting for a wage system where the customer assesses the tip. In practice, the process is more problematic. Managers have to assess a server's performance as part of administrative duties. This means that the assessments have to meet a relatively uniform and rational set of criteria. Hiring, firing, and wages, are all rationalized through these criteria. These criteria are essentially the same as those used for recruitment. However, uniformity is difficult because of the variables mentioned above. This is why managers attempt to maintain the ideological aspects of the achievement principle. The principle allows them to rationalize incongruities in the wage system, especially the issue of the allocation of tips by the customer.

Customer Assessments

Tips are the reward of the customer's assessments of a server's performance. That performance takes place in an encounter between a server and a customer. It is unlikely that a customer will use the same criteria managers use for assessing a server's performance, because customers have less interest in the input aspects of servers' work. It is unlikely customers will consider the details of how their requests get processed, produced, and delivered to them in the fashion they expect.

For customers, service is the most important aspect of a server's work. What service means for customers will influence the criteria used for assessments. Those assessments can be analyzed by three main categories; (1) getting what you want when you want it, (2) the personality of the server, and (3) good or bad food. These categories can be affected by ascriptive

aspects like race, age, gender, or sexual preference. They can be affected by encounters with other workers, notably hostesses and managers who greet and seat the customers. They can be affected by a customer's concept of tipping.

A customer's assessment criteria may emphasize different aspects. In general, they are based on the compensatory function of the achievement principle. The assumption is that if servers fulfill the requirements of the assessment categories, they will be rewarded accordingly. In practice, this is not clear.

Getting what you want when you want it means different things to different customers. However, it is safe to assume that most customers have certain expectations about receiving what they requested. This aspect involves the server's skill to "read" the customer. This means assessing the type of customer in order to apply the right approach in service. For instance, not all customers will tell a server whether they want relaxed or hurried service. It is up to the server to decide which course to take. Customers may complain of service as being too slow or too fast. In general, it is reasonable to assume that all customers want to be made comfortable. Giving them what they want when they want it is one way of accomplishing that. This includes doing extras like accommodating requests for better tables, menu substitutions, dietary needs, and so on. The assumption is that a comfortable customer will render a favourable assessment. However, that favourable assessment may already be affected by a negative encounter with a hostess or manager. This places the server in a situation where the assessment begins on a negative note. In these cases, it becomes contingent on the server to bring that customer back to feeling comfortable again; the application of people skills. Experience marks the relative success of those

applications.

Customers also consider the personality of the server as a measure of performance. Customers may want an overtly friendly server or one that is more reserved. Customers may want obsequiousness or be offended by it. This usually calls for the acting ability of the server. It is likely that most customers want some form of acting from a server. This means the server must give the right performance. The problem is knowing which performance to give. It is mostly experience that helps a server in this decision. This type of interpersonal encounter is a central feature of the assessment process. To some degree, its uncertainty may have negative impacts on tips. On the other hand, the tip could be decided by other criteria.

Although good or bad food is not the responsibility of the server, it will affect assessments and tips. Since the server has the most contact with the customer, compliments and complaints on food are directed to the server first. Customers have been known to give a poor tip for poor food. This makes the connection to food production an added assessment criterion outside the immediate performance of the server.

While it may not be difficult to make the claim that good food equals good assessments, good assessments do not necessarily equal good tips. The fact that the server has fulfilled all the necessary requirements of a customer's assessment categories is not a guarantee of a good tip. This is because other factors affect that process. These include norms of tipping or a customer's concept of tipping, and the application of ascriptive criteria.

Applying the achievement principle to the concept of tipping presents its own problems. According to the compensatory and productivity functions of that principle, service is the product and tips are the reward. However,

since the product cannot be easily defined, it makes problematic any attempt to allot it an appropriate reward. It is likely that the percentage system came out of a need to resolve this problem. In addition, tipping practices may be socially and culturally determined and have less of a connection to a server's input or output. For instance, in Canada and the United States the range for tipping is between ten to twenty percent of the total bill. Supposedly, customers tip below and above this range according to what they deem good or bad service. However, some customers may consider an arbitrarily fixed amount, higher or lower than the norm, and regardless of the total bill, as appropriate. By contrast, in Australia, tipping itself is discouraged. Supposedly, restaurants pay a sufficiently higher wage. In some European countries, a service charge is added to the bill. If service is exceptional you leave something extra.

The general assumption in these systems is that tipping is part of a server's wage. However, they differ in the extent to which tips form that wage or how that wage gets determined. While the assessment criteria become questionable because of the unpredictability of each customer's application, each system has structures that determine the norms of practice. These norms serve as guidelines for applying assessment criteria. In most cases, the customer still has the choice to follow these norms or to apply their own.

The fact that the customer decides the tip brings into consideration biased criteria for assessments. It challenges the assumptions of the equivalence function of the achievement principle. While it is difficult to ascertain to what degree ascriptive categories affect customer assessments, it is reasonable to assume customers bring their personal biases and opinions about tipping with them to the restaurant. Those biases and opinions have a

bearing on their assessment. For instance, a customer may consider a waiter as worthy of a better tip than a waitress; a gender bias that is also systemically perpetuated in the hiring practices of restaurants. Women are given the coffee-shop and casual service jobs while men get the more formal ones which also happen to have the better tip potential. It is also unreasonable to assume that customers will take the time to make a comprehensive assessment of service. The encounter with the server is relatively brief. It is more likely that those assessments are made on unstructured criteria, influenced by biases, and loosely based on the norms of a system of a percentage of the total bill.

The problem with a customer's assessment of a server's work lies mainly in the customer's perception of what aspects of input and output matter in that assessment. Most customers focus only on a particular aspect of output; service. Inputs are seldom considered even though they are connected to service. Furthermore, the definition of good service is problematic because of the many variables discussed above. Nonetheless, tips are rewarded based on these criteria with the assumption that the compensatory and productivity functions of the achievement principle are met.

It is likely that managers can make the most comprehensive assessments of a server's work and reward it accordingly. This would be unproblematic if the income structure of servers were solely in the hands of managers. However, tips, the bulk of a server's income, come from customers. Tips are the result of a fleeting relationship between a server and a customer. That fleeting relation does not allow for comprehensive assessments. Assessments become focused on a particular aspect of a

server's output; service. However, service itself is subject to a set of variables that makes problematic the whole assessment process. So, while the functions of the achievement principle are applied ideologically, by managers and customers, their efficacy is questionable in relation to the tip reward.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

The achievement principle assumes that there is an authority capable of assessing a worker's performance. Managers usually serve that function. In restaurants, servers are subject to two types of authority; management and customer. The authority of the customer is linked to tips. The authority of management is linked to an hourly wage but indirectly affecting tips through the assignment of shifts and sections. This chapter analyzes the implications of this type of arrangement.

Management Authority and The Function of The Hourly Wage

Claus Offe suggests that one of the features of work in late capitalist societies is the movement from task continuous status organization to task discontinuous status organization. Offe gives the examples of the continuous type as the master/journeymen/apprentice relation and the discontinuous type as the foreman/chargehand/production worker relation (1969:25). The former has more explicit status links to technical knowledge and skills, the latter less. The discontinuous type "...brings heterogeneous qualifications and work functions into an order of vertical rank" (Offe, 1969:26). The result is a movement from full to fragmentary control over certain decisions of the lower-ranked worker. Fragmentary control means that managers may not have full knowledge of the required skills of lower-ranked workers. Therefore, it becomes questionable whether managers can make capable performance assessments.

However, restaurants are typified by the continuous type in the manager/server/busser relation. This appears congruent with Offe's model of master/journeyman/apprentice. In fact, in Europe, restaurant service training

emphasizes this type of model. Although less explicitly adhered to in North America, that type of status link is still apparent.

In the preceding chapter, it was suggested that managers were the most likely authority capable of assessing a server's performance. Recruitment and assessment criteria coincided well with the input and output aspects of servers' work. Most managers have also worked as servers and bussers. In the day-to-day running of restaurants, managers are called upon to do the work of servers and bussers. It is not uncommon for managers to buss a table, open wine, or serve food and drinks. This is because it is often difficult to consistently anticipate the volume of business. This may result in problems of understaffing. On these occasions, the manager has to take over the functions of the server and the busser. Having those skills adds to establishing the capability of a manager's assessing authority. However, assessing the reward is more problematic. This is because of the twofold structure of a server's wage.

Tips have historically been supplements to a server's income. Today, depending on the type of restaurant, tips represent more than double the hourly wage (a few unionized restaurants are possible exceptions).

The hourly wage is the functional tie to management authority. When workers are hired, they enter into an employment contract with that organization. That contract has two significant implications. First, workers have to fulfill the requirements of the job, and secondly, they have to recognize, and comply with, the authority located in the management positions of that company. This establishes the manager-worker relation. Wages are the reward for this contract. In restaurants, the hourly wage serves this function.

However, because of tips, the hourly wage serves more as a symbolic

part of the contract. Both managers and servers speak of the hourly wage as insignificant to the total income. The hourly wage gives managers the official authority to assign shifts and sections; assignments based on assessing criteria discussed in chapter four. They influence tips indirectly.

On the other hand, the practice of tipping has also affected the hourly wage. It keeps the wage low (servers are usually paid minimum wage), and increments rare. Because of the significance of tips, managers argue that the minimum wage is sufficient because servers do not depend on it for subsistence. Servers are commissioned salespeople and tips are the result of sales. Most servers accept this as a characteristic of the job.

For managers, the minimum wage helps to control labour costs. Tip pools serve the same function. Tip pools are a way of redistributing income at minimal administrative cost. Managers argue that tips should be shared with co-workers (bussers, hostesses, cooks, and dishwashers) because everyone contributes to the production of satisfaction for the customer. This argument appears to originate from the compensatory and productive functions of the achievement principle. Everyone's contribution is the product and tips are the compensation. This type of tip pool arrangement adds to the problematic aspects of the achievement principle. It assumes that there is a link between the work of co-workers and the tips servers make. The connection is not clear. Since customers seldom tip by assessing all aspects of a server's input and output, it is even less likely they would consider those of co-workers.

The authority of managers affects tips through shift and section assignments and tip pool arrangements. Since tips are the responsibility of customers, management authority only indirectly affects tip assessment. This raises the issue of the capable assessing authority of customers. The irony is

that while task continuous status organization typifies the manager-server relation, it is the task discontinuous status organization of the server-customer relation that determines the tip.

The Peculiar Authority of The Customer

Servers are subject to the authority of both managers and customers. Tipping assumes the assessing authority of the customer. It is a peculiar authority because customers do not occupy positions of authority in the organization, and only assess a particular performance (service) with varying criteria that may have little connection to management assessments. Management assessments are more comprehensive. It is unlikely that customers have a detailed understanding of servers' work. This makes the server-customer relation one of task discontinuous status organization. While the assessing authority of management is important for sustaining a server's job, it is the assessing authority of the customer that determines the main income.

Servers enter into an odd contractual arrangement with customers. In its simplest form, it is a contract where the server complies with the requests of the customer in return for a tip. Those requests represent interests and expectations customers have of restaurants; food, beverage, and service. Compliance signifies a recognition of customer authority. The control of the tip congeals that authority.

It differs from the server-manager contract because managers have a long-term interest in a server's performance and productivity. Server-customer relations are fleeting. In general, a customer's interest in a server's performance only lasts the duration of the stay at the restaurant. While customers do not hold positions of authority in the organization, they

control the vital part of a server's income.

In the preceding chapter, it was suggested that customers are, by and large, capricious in their assessments of a server's tip-worth. Those assessments are guided by a set of varying and changing criteria that are influenced by norms, culture, temperament, and personality. Customers control tips to the extent that they deem their demands and expectations are met. It is a limited authority (managers control and affect the careers of servers while customers may only affect those careers indirectly through complaints about service). When servers attempt to fulfill the demands and expectations of customers, they are recognizing, and responding to, that peculiar authority over their performance. It is a specious authority that may exist only because of this type of reward system. The unpredictability of a customer's tip potential is a facet of this arrangement.

However, there is a second irony to this arrangement. While it is likely that customers have varying tip-assessment criteria for a server's performance, they also exercise this authority within socially structured tipping practices, like the percentage-of-total-bill system. Therefore, while the assessing authority of the customer might be questionable or unpredictable, the percentage system acts as a balance in the distribution of tips. Most servers will attest that good and bad tips even out in the long run. The evening-out effect of the percentage system may account for the failure of attempts to take that peculiar authority away from the customer by using service-charge systems or eliminating tipping altogether.

Two other reasons might account for those failures; the growth of the industry, and the continued belief in the achievement principle. The growth of the industry has made the volume of sales an important dimension in tip income; more sales equal more tips. Growth has also made the job more

attractive because of the relatively tax-free character of tips. Servers seldom declare all their tips. Growth may also account for perpetuating these tipping practices. Tips are now generally accepted as an added cost of eating at a restaurant.

It would also appear that managers, customers, and servers share acceptance of the achievement principle. This seems to allow the system to continue functioning. Managers use that principle to rationalize their authority over the server; assessing a server's performance by input and output criteria. They also support a customer's tip assessing authority for administrative reasons. Labour costs are kept low by paying minimum wage because tips are more significant. The fact that managers are not responsible for tips allows them to argue that the onus is on the server to develop those necessary tip-culling skills.

Customers appear to use the achievement principle in deciding a server's tip. If demands and expectations are met, the server will be compensated accordingly. This appears congruent with the assumptions of the productivity and compensatory functions. The achievement principle also appeals because of the equivalence function. The tipping system takes place in a market economy. A market economy functions on the claims of the achievement principle. It is an ideology that presumes workers can be objectively assessed and rewarded for their performances; therefore, free of ascriptive criteria. It is likely that customers follow the same logic. Customers are also likely to rationalize the maintenance of their assessing authority in order to keep some measure of control over the cost of eating at a restaurant. The functions of the achievement principle provide the arguments for this rationalization.

Servers often speak of their own performances in terms of being

worth certain percentages of the total bill. Most realize that their own assessment criteria may not be the same as the customer's. Servers often use a measure of stress as a gauge of their own tip-worth. Stress can mean anything from dealing with an overdemanding customer to the organizational problems of their sections. Although there are no systematic criteria with which they measure this stress, servers will attempt to equate the amount of tips made with the amount of stress experienced. This is how servers rationalize the contradictions of the achievement principle.

Problematic or otherwise, the assumed functions of the achievement principle seem well-entrenched in the reward assessment relations between manager and server, server and customer. This is why the customer authority to assess a server's performance will likely continue unchanged. The system functions as all parties believe in the achievement principle. It appears that managers, customers, and servers all use aspects of the assumed functions of that principle to rationalize their relations with each other. Task continuous status organization establishes the general assessment authority of managers. However, the main reward comes from the task discontinuous status organization of the server-customer relation. This characterizes the customer's peculiar authority over a server's tip worth.

Appendix

To further illustrate the peculiarity of that customer authority, I will take a reflexive look at how I, as an experienced insider knowledgeable of detailed assessment criteria, behave as a customer. As a customer, my relation to the server depends on a set of criteria not unlike those of other customers. For instance, I prefer a minimal amount of contact with the

server. Obsequiousness offends me. I am impressed with efficiency. I am impressed if a server takes charge and guides my restaurant experience. Therefore, if all, or part, of these criteria are met, I will reward the server generously. Although I may be aware of the possible behind-the-scenes aspects that affect a server's performance, I seldom use them as criteria for assessing performance. My concerns are usually with the company I am with at the restaurant. This could be said of all customers.

In talking with other servers and managers, I also had the sense that they behaved like other customers. As customers, some servers and managers seemed more concerned with food quality. They may be more knowledgeable of the foibles and talents of servers, but, like other customers, their assessments could also be influenced by norms, temperament, and personality. While it is likely that they are more sympathetic to a server's problems, the opposite can happen. They can be more critical, and less tolerant, of a server's performance. In general, servers and managers do tip well, but, as customers, they do not necessarily use a more comprehensive set of assessment criteria. To be concerned with all those aspects means taking some measure of enjoyment away from the restaurant experience. In short, they behave much like other customers.

CHAPTER 6

ASCRIPTIVE CRITERIA AND PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

The equivalence function of the achievement principle assumes that assessments can be free of ascriptive criteria like gender, race, age, sexual preference, disability, and so on. Discriminatory practices based on such criteria can be found in most work organizations. Restaurants are no exception. For the purposes of this thesis, the discussion will focus on the gender aspect. Restaurants have systemic gender biases that affect recruitment and assessments. Customers may share similar biases. This chapter examines those implications.

Ascriptive Criteria and Management Assessments

Managers rationalize recruitment and assessment practices through the achievement principle. Ascriptive criteria affect those practices. Gender is the most common. Despite some evidence of change, gender discrimination is a systemic problem in restaurants.

Most servers are familiar with gender discrimination in restaurants. Most accept them as organizational norms. Managers continue to follow company policies that exclude women from jobs with good tip potential; policies based on assumptions that men make better dining-room servers. Women are usually relegated to coffee shops or other casual types of service. This is a well-entrenched assumption. One waitress even commented that she preferred to be served by a waiter in a dining room because she felt that it was the way it should be.

Managers recruit and assess with similar assumptions. They rationalize gender-biased practices as marketing strategies. The premise is that sex sells. Marketing lunch trade to businessmen is an example.

Many restaurants only hire women for lunch shifts. The logic is to cater to the sexual fantasies of businessmen. Presumably, being able to flirt with good-looking waitresses is an important requisite for a businessman's choice of restaurants. Most waitresses who work these shifts are aware of this. When managers recruit, this aspect is sometimes made clear to the applicant. This requires that recruits meet certain appearance criteria; norms as to what is sexually appealing.

Experienced managers also look for recruits with cocktail service experience. This is because cocktail waitresses are familiar with these types of marketing strategies. They encounter them routinely in bars and lounges. They are also aware that flirtation with male customers is part of tip-culling. They also have some experience in how to control the extent of a customer's sexual advances. Controlled promiscuity is an added aspect of a waitress' input. It forms part of the assessment criteria of managers and businessmen. Recruits who are uncomfortable with this arrangement, or do not meet those requirements, find employment elsewhere.

This type of marketing strategy echoes other gender-biased practices. The allocation of shifts and sections is an example. Managers are supposed to allot shifts and sections according to a server's performance. In Tom's restaurant, there is a seniority and performance system. While it is not explicitly laid out, those with the longest tenure, and the most consistent high sales, get the better shifts and sections. However, this appears to apply only to waiters. The few waitresses hired to do the same job are seldom assigned good shifts and sections. Unfortunately, few stay long enough to test the extent to which managers comply with those assessment criteria. In the end, most accept the futility of challenging those inequities and move on to other jobs.

Managers rationalize this type of inequity by aspects of performance; usually based on what they believe to be the capabilities of waitresses. Sexist assumptions include: (1) women do not provide the correct image for dining-room service, (2) women do not project professionalism, (3) customers prefer to be served by waiters. While the merit of these assumptions is dubious, they significantly influence management assessments. Managers emphasize certain criteria over others in order to rationalize gender inequities. The assumed neutrality of the achievement principle is only selectively used.

One other example further illustrates the embeddedness of gender inequality in restaurants; the role of women in kitchen work. It seems ironic that while women are usually the preparers of food in the home, in the restaurant, it is mainly the work of men. It is likely rooted in androcentric notions of a woman's capability to organize and handle stress. There are male managers that still believe this. Until recently, men totally dominated chef positions. Traditionally, women were relegated to preparation (washing and cutting vegetables, portioning orders, and so on) or the *garde-manger* section of production (salads, desserts, and other cold items). Cooks have been known to be quite open about not wanting to work with women. These biases are seldom challenged.

These biases also establish the social ambience of the workplace. They have an effect on the way workers get assessed because, by and large, managers and workers share these attitudes. While there is some representation of women in both management and chef positions, the policy-making people are still men. Although most managers claim objectivity in performance assessments, it is likely that a restaurant's systemic gender inequities, and a manager's personal gender biases, will

influence those assessments.

Ascriptive Criteria and Customer Assessments

Servers are assessed by customers. The server-customer relation is typified by a task discontinuous status organization. Since customers have little knowledge of the details of a server's input, it is more likely that ascriptive criteria influence assessments. In addition, since gender discrimination is systemic in restaurants, it is likely that customers will accept those practices as norms before they would question their inequities.

It is difficult to tell to what extent customers use gender-biased criteria to assess a server's tip-worth. It is beyond the scope of this thesis. The control of the tip allows customers to use whatever criteria they choose. They do not have to explain their choices. It is part of the peculiar authority given them in the odd contractual arrangement between server and customer.

In addition, observations, and reports from servers, suggest customers do carry certain stereotypical notions of waiters and waitresses. The gum-chewing coffee-shop waitress, the promiscuous cocktail waitress, or the condescending waiter, are examples of these stereotypes. It is likely that because of the gender-biased recruitment and assessment practices of restaurant managers, these stereotypes are reinforced in customer perceptions of restaurant workers. This may have an effect on the assessments of servers.

How managers assess servers is likely influenced by ascriptive criteria like gender. Despite some changes, discrimination appears systemic. This reinforces stereotypical images of servers that may, in turn, influence

customer-assessments. Customers are also unlikely to objectively assess a server's performance, allowing for the use of ascriptive criteria. This makes more questionable the assumptions of the equivalence function of the achievement principle.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has been an analytic look at the wage structure of restaurant servers. It is framed by the theoretical assumptions of the achievement principle. It focuses on the assumptions that: (1) it is possible to objectively measure and assess the differential value of work performance, (2) there are authorities capable of making those assessments, and (3) these processes can be free of ascriptive criteria like gender. The analysis serves to illustrate these problematic aspects.

In varying ways, these concepts inform the assessment criteria of managers and customers. In general, it is problematic to try to objectively measure aspects of input and output and reward the appropriate wages or tips. Furthermore, managers and customers do not necessarily share the same assessment criteria. Managers use more comprehensive ones. This is because the manager-server relation is typified by a task-continuous status organization while the customer-server relation represents a discontinuous one. The former offers minimum wage and shifts as a reward, the latter, tips. The former is a contractual agreement between a worker and an authority position, the latter is a peculiar arrangement that gives customers the non-contractual authority to control the major part of a server's income. These two types of authority make problematic the assumed functions of the achievement principle.

Management authority affects tips indirectly through shift and section assignments. Their assessments are not free of ascriptive criteria, like gender, because of systemic discrimination. While they appear to be more capable of assessing a server's tip-worth, they do not. Customers do the tip assessments. Customers do not have a clear understanding of a server's input and output. It is also likely that ascriptive criteria will influence those

assessments. Yet, it is this peculiar authority that has the greatest impact on a server's income.

By and large, the system continues to function with relatively little resistance. The inconsistencies of applying the achievement principle to the system seem of little interest to the parties concerned. This is because, in one way or another, all parties benefit from it. Managers have a way of rationalizing low wages. Customers have some measure of control over the cost of eating at a restaurant. Servers enjoy relatively tax-free income.

APPENDIX A

On Method

This thesis has relied on three sources of information; my experience as a server and a manager, my observations on the job, and interviews with servers and managers. Since my purpose was to examine the problematic aspects of the tipping system, it is a project more analytic than ethnographic. The descriptive aspects of chapter three served to present a general picture of some of the components of the job.

The interviews were also less informative. They were a way of getting feed-back on some of my analytic concepts, particularly those of the problems of assessment criteria and assessing authority. They helped to show some differing views on tipping between managers and servers. I relied more on personal experience and observations.

This had drawbacks. My experience as a server and a manager gave me a wealth of information. It was not necessary to do extensive field work. However, there were problems distancing myself from that information. This was evident in my initial attempts to focus on a thesis problem. I inundated myself with an array of research questions and attempted to answer all of them. I had missed the point. Furthermore, my writing took on an authoritative tone that lacked objectivity. The struggle for objectivity resulted in drafts of chapters that were unconnected and unsociological.

My next task became one of refocusing the thesis in a sociological manner. I reread Offe (1969) and extracted what I deemed the relevant parts of his analysis. I placed those parts in the context of servers' work and began to assemble those work elements that fit that analysis. This brought together my restaurant experience in a more cohesive, and sociological, fashion. The analysis of the tipping system began to take shape. I began to

make the connections between a server's work components and assessment and authority problems. The thesis congealed when I assembled those analytic components in a more logical fashion.

The project has been one of discovery and frustration, enlightenment and disappointment. I am sure that these are facets of research that most sociologists experience. I am hopeful it will be a contribution to the field of occupational sociology, and be useful for those who continue this type of research.

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