The Changing Face of Work in the United States: Implications for Individual, Institutional, and Societal Survival

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Changes in the world of work are posing major challenges to workers, institutions, and society. Not only has the nature of work been affected by the changing work environment, increased global competition, and technological revolutions, but the characteristics of the workforce can only be described as revolutionary. Societal forces have resulted in what the authors call the "changing complexion of the workforce," the "feminization of the workforce," and the "graying of the workforce." Traditional theories of work motivation, employer–employee relations, and the role of psychology must also evolve to accommodate this challenge. The collision of these structural and demographic forces has resulted in major upheaval in society and the world of work. The authors discuss implications of these changes and urge psychologists to use their accumulated knowledge and wisdom to positively impact social policy for the greater good of people, institutions, and society.

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The changing face of work in the United States is fast becoming unrecognizable from that of the past. The image of the youthful White male worker is increasingly giving way to social reality where the worker is more likely to be a person of color, a woman, or a senior citizen. The realization that the workforce is becoming increasingly diversified in terms of race, gender, and older workers has seriously challenged traditional concepts of worker motivation, employer–employee relations, work role stress, organizational psychology, and the interplay of work to the larger society (Hudson Institute, 1987; Morrison, 1992).

The nature of work has also changed radically. Manufacturing no longer dominates the economy as the United States increasingly becomes a service-oriented nation (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1992); rapid developments in technology and information technology place demands on individuals and organizations to master not only new knowledge and skills, but challenge the ability to deal with continual change (Cascio, 1995); and, finally, global competition from abroad and emerging new markets in Asia, Europe, Latin America, and other countries have resulted in acquisitions, mergers, downsizing, and the exporting of jobs outside of the country (Samuleson, 1996; Seppa, 1996).

These rapid changes have all converged, resulting in major challenges to society and particularly to megacities (Hudson Institute, 1987; Morrison, 1992). The rapid changes in the world of work can be seen on an individual level where workers are increasingly being asked to adapt and change, sometimes at the cost of workplace stress and decrements in the standard of living (Keita & Hurrell, 1994; Long, 1998; Osipaw & Fitzgerald, 1993). Data from 1994 suggest that occupational injuries alone cost $121 billion in lost wages and productivity, administrative expenses, health care, and other costs. Interestingly, these figures do not include occupational illnesses and those resulting from psychosocial stress at work. Disorders with suspected links to job stress in the United States seem to be on the rise (North-

western National Life, 1991; St. Paul Fire & Marine, 1992), and claims for emotional disability from work have increased to such a point where "neurotic reactions to stress" is now the fourth most disabling condition (Samuelson, 1996). Even in light of the current economic prosperity, a recent study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities revealed that poor and middle-class families have seen their incomes decline sharply, while the richest households (top fifth) have seen their incomes soar 30% (McLeod, 1997). Two conclusions drawn from this study are (a) not all families are sharing equally in the prosperity of the late 1990s (especially persons of color) and (b) if people start losing their belief that working hard and playing by the rules does not get them anywhere, a formula for disaster is being set.

Likewise, business and industry at an organizational level are having to restructure and reengineer their functions and processes to survive in a highly competitive environment (Seppa, 1996). For example, longer hours and shorter workweeks, outsourcing, increasing part-time employment, and temporary employment are slowly becoming the norm; decisions regarding downsizing and possible mergers are being contemplated or implemented by companies. Unfortunately, not enough organizations realize what such changes mean to workers and their families. If the 1980s were considered an age of prosperity, then the early 1990s were certainly considered an age of cutbacks, belt tightening, downsizing, mergers, acquisitions, hostile takeovers, and general workplace uncertainty. What is more distressing, however, is how employers and employees are now responding to each other in the context of these workplace transformations. Major implications exist for the profession of psychology as well. As mentioned, traditional concepts of industrial and organizational psychology, management, work motivation, career development and vocational planning have been directed at a labor pool of primarily younger White males from a Euro-American context (Sue, 1994). The diversification of the

United States requires addressing the needs of workers who differ from one another in terms of race, culture, gender, and age.

The changing complexion of the workforce is also impacting the societal level, where cities must wrestle with poverty, unemployment, homelessness, immigration, economic downturns, a declining revenue base, and many other such large-scale developments (Basic Behavioral Science Task Force, 1996). Although the prosperity of the current times is heartening to many, the improvement is uneven (Oliver & Shapiro, 1995). It is often said that when America generally finds itself sneezing, portions of urban America have already caught a vicious cold. Many have experienced an exodus of industrial and manufacturing jobs to cheaper labor markets here and abroad; housing patterns have been redisbursed in such a fashion as to create "people of color" inner cities and White suburbs; federal programs that provided meaningful family supports have been cut; available jobs for traditional urban residents and the growing number of immigrants in the plant and manufacturing areas are decreasing; and the workplace climate that tolerated their presence under the guise of affirmative action, equal rights, and social progress has now turned hostile in light of the availability of economic resources.

To frame our discussion around these important developments, we would like to briefly outline some of the dramatic changes in the world of work occurring in American society. Coupled with this analysis is a presentation of how such changes might impact Americans on individual, institutional, and societal levels. Last, we pose some questions regarding the role of psychology in helping effect public policy in dealing with these forces.

Changing Characteristics in the Labor Force

Major demographic changes are occurring in American society and are reflected in the labor force as well. The most striking relates to the fact that only 15% of the *net new workforce* will be native White men through the year 2000 (Hudson Institute, 1987). The entering labor force will be composed of native White women (42%), native non-White women (13%), native non-White men (7%), immigrant men (13%), and immigrant women (9%; Morrison, 1992). Additionally, the aging of the 75-million-strong baby boomers will not only result in the "graying of workers," but it will have major future implications for health and social services, social security, and pension funds. Let us look at some of these figures more carefully.

The Changing Complexion of the Workforce

The rapid increase in racial–ethnic minorities in the United States has been referred to as "the diversification of America" or, literally, "the changing complexion of society." The population will jump 50% from 255 million to 383 million in the year 2050 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). By the year 2000, over one third of the population in the United States will be visible racial–ethnic minorities with 45% in the public schools. Depending on the surveys used, White Americans will become a numerical minority somewhere between the years 2030 and 2050. These radical demographic changes are fueled by two major forces: (a) the continuing immigration rates (documented immigrants, undocumented immigrants, and refugees), which are the largest in U.S. history, and (b) differential birthrates, where White Americans have continued to decline in comparison to other racial–ethnic minority groups (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

This has resulted in dramatic increases of visible racial–ethnic minorities in the United States. In the 1980s alone, the Asian American population increased by 108%, and Latino(a) American population by 53%, the Native American Indian population by 38%, and the African American population by 13%. The White population increased by only 6% during this period of time. The changing demographics are un-

even and have differential impact on different sectors of the country. It is most strongly felt in urban centers. For example, in 1988 racial–ethnic minorities went over 50% in the California public schools and now they comprise a numerical majority in the state; 30% of New York City residents are international born; 70% of Washington, DC, is African American; two thirds of Miami is Hispanic–Latino(a) American; one third of San Francisco is Asian American; and nearly two thirds of Detroit is African American.

IMPLICATIONS.

1. Persons of color will constitute an increasing labor pool from which current and future workers will be drawn. Yet, these potential employees have historically been subjected to prejudice and discrimination that denies them the benefits of equal access and opportunities. As a result, they are likely to be undereducated, underskilled, underemployed, and unemployed. The nature of work now demands new knowledge and skills that employers may believe are absent in the urban labor pool (primarily persons of color). Employers are increasingly leaving the cities or seeking employees who reside elsewhere (many times outside of the country). Because minorities are most likely to reside in major metropolitan areas, they will continue to bear the brunt of a disparity between the "haves and have nots" and the declining standard of living often associated with large cities.

2. Yet, avoiding the hiring of nontraditional employees and seeking them elsewhere may only be a short-term fix. Inevitably, business and industry must recognize that the labor pool is limited and that the challenge of diversity must be faced. Already, 75% of those now entering the labor force are minorities and women. If they continue to occupy the lower rungs in

society, it bodes poorly in two areas. First, companies will find that they cannot compete globally with an unskilled labor force and their economic survival will be at risk. Second, the social–economic system may be jeopardized by lowering the national standard of living and by threatening the economic viability of the social security and pension plans. By the time the baby boomers retire, for example, the majority of people contributing to these retirement systems will be racial–ethnic minorities.

3. The current U.S. minority marketplace now equals the gross domestic product of Canada, and projections are that it will become immense as the shift in demographics continues. Consumers of goods and services will increasingly be persons of color, and corporations and small businesses need to appeal to this consumer base if they are to maintain their competitiveness and viability. Economic analysis indicates that the combined spending power of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanics in 1990 was estimated at $424 billion and that by the year 2000 the figure will reach $650 billion (Sue, 1994).

Corporations and smaller businesses are not isolated and immune from the misunderstandings and conflicts associated with matters of race. Systemic barriers may often exist in an organization that mirrors the nature of race relations in the United States. For example, high-status positions are usually White dominated, whereas low-status positions are occupied by minority groups. The corporate culture may create culture conflicts for minority workers leading to alienation. Formal institutional policies and practices may maintain exclusion of minorities, and powerful informal liaisons (such as "the old boys' network") may be equally discriminatory (Sue, 1994). Unless diversity is managed well in the world of work, productivity

may decline, costs will be increased and market share will be lost.

The Feminization of the Workforce

Between 1990 and 2005, women will account for 62% of the net increase in the civilian labor force and the upward trend is reflected in their growth for the past three decades: 38% in 1970, 42% in 1980, and 45% in 1990 (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1992). These changes apply not just to single women, but to married women as well. For example, married women constituted less than one quarter of the labor force in 1950, only 12% of women with preschool children worked, and only 28% with school-age children worked; but now, married women comprise some 58% of workers, 60% with preschoolers work, and 75% with school-age children work.

Although women's presence in the workforce is significant, they continue to occupy the lower rungs of the occupational ladder, fill positions with little authority and low pay, and often encounter a "glass ceiling" for management positions (Morrison, 1992; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990). For example, Morrison reported that a Korn/Ferry survey found that in a sample of 1,362 senior executives, only 29 (2%) were women and that this disparity also exists in government and educational institutions, where they represent only 9% of the senior executive service levels and comprise only 1.1 senior women (dean and above) per institution, respectively.

IMPLICATIONS.

1. On an individual level, common sense might indicate that women may be subjected to greater numbers of stressors than their male counterparts because of issues related to family life and role strain. Although much is written about this topic in both the popular press and the profession, empirical studies on this subject are limited and mixed (Long, 1998; Martoc-

chio & O'Leary, 1989; Trocki & Orioli, 1994). Most studies on occupational health have been limited to men and the lack of studies on women might reflect bias. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that working women continue to carry the greater domestic and child-care workloads at home than their male partners (Crosby, 1988; Pleck, 1985), are more likely to be single parents, are more responsible for social and interpersonal activities outside of work, encounter a greater number of hostile and unfriendly work environments, and not uncommonly experience sexual harassment (Fitzgerald, Hulin, & Drasgow, 1994; Piltch, Walsh, Mangione, & Jennings, 1994).

2. On an institutional level, many of the implications discussed regarding the changing complexion of the workforce also apply to the increasing presence of women as workers. Recruiting, retaining, and promoting women in the workforce will become profoundly important. Changing organizations to encompass equal access and opportunities, making the work environment accepting of gender differences, and recognizing that many benefits accrue to organizations that value women as workers and consumers (gaining market shares, cost savings, better management, and moral fairness) must become a priority (Long, 1998).

3. On a larger societal level, the increasing number of women in the workforce cannot be seen in isolation from the wider social, political, and economic context. This intersection is most clearly seen in the family, which is now undergoing long-term and sometimes radical shifts. For women, balancing the multiple roles of work, caregiving for children, and marriage or the decision to marry are cause and effect of social conditions (Long,

1998). The movement from the traditional single-earner, two-parent family to the two-earner family speaks to such factors (Marshall & Barnett, 1994). Some of the societal realities were outlined by Mirkin (1990): (a) One quarter of the nation's families are poor; (b) one sixth have no health insurance; (c) one in six small children live in a family where neither parent has a job; (d) 15% of children are born into families where one parent works for wages below the poverty level; (e) 25% of children born will be on welfare at some point before reaching adulthood; (f) between 1973 and 1979, one in five new jobs paid less than $7,000 (adjusted to equivalent years) per year but over half of the new jobs created between 1979 and 1984 paid less than that amount; and (g) women continue to be paid wages approximately 75% of their male counterparts. We believe that systems and institutions of work at once reflect and are shaped by sociopolitical systems and ideological beliefs of the wider society. Some of these systems and forces may be detrimental to individuals, institutions, and society. Thus, meaningful impact and change must occur in larger social systems, which requires that meaningful public policies and practices must be enacted.

The Graying of the Workforce

As the baby boomers head into old age, the elderly population (65+ years) will surge by the year 2020 to 53.3 million, an increase of 63% over the current population of 33 million ("Study: 2020 Begins," 1996). In 1950, the percentage of elderly people in the population was 8%, by the year 2000 it will be 13%, and by 2050 it will be 20%. It will grow from one in eight Americans now to one in six by 2020 and one in five by 2050. The dramatic increase of the elderly population is due to three major trends: the aging

of the baby-boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1961), declining fertility, and increased longevity primarily due to lifestyle changes and improved medical care (Huuhtanen, 1994; Keita & Hurrell, 1994). The graying of America is also being reflected in the workforce: The median age of people in the labor force will rise from 36.6 years in 1990 to 40.6 in 2005; by the year 2005, 70% of workers will be in the 25–54 age work group; and workers 55 years and over will increase from 12% in 1990 to 15% in 2005 (Keita & Hurrell, 1994).

IMPLICATIONS.

1. Older workers are underrepresented in studies of occupational health, quality of work life, job stress, and job satisfaction (Staats, Partlo, Armstrong-Stassen, & Lovinia Plimpton, 1994). In American society, elderly workers suffer from many of the social beliefs and attitudes of the society— that they are less important, diminished in status, represent a drain on the economic system, have declining mental and physical capacities, have grown rigid and inflexible, are incapable of learning new skills, cannot change, are crotchety and irritable, and should retire and make room for younger workers. In addition to dealing with these negative and invalidating messages, changes in company attitudes toward layoffs and retirement brought on by downsizing, mergers, and acquisitions place older workers in peril. Fears that their jobs will be eliminated and/or that they will be laid off before qualifying for retirement benefits are a reality. A recent Supreme Court ruling in 1997 has greatly added fuel to these fears when it legitimized the laying off of older workers for younger ones when issues of economics become involved. The question before us is how psychology can contribute to the betterment of the elderly workforce by promoting

health, work ability, and job/retirement security?

2. On an institutional level, companies need to realize that with the future supply of workers dwindling and with the workforce aging, the productivity of older people in jobs may increasingly become dependent on labor policy or firms. At the present time, older workers seem at the mercy of such policies where the concern is primarily cost cutting: (a) reducing benefits and protection for workers and pensioners, (b) attempting to lower monthly retirement payments, (c) raising retirement ages and the years that must be worked to quality for benefits, and (d) laying off unnecessary workers or forcing early retirement. Although the economic survival of a company is important, such actions are not simply business decisions but "people" decisions as well. They raise profound moral and ethical questions. How can companies create a balance between business decisions and humanitarian ones? What responsibilities do businesses have toward their workers and the urban community? Are profits more important than people and the larger community? Indeed, does good business policy and practice need to conflict with the social good?

3. Older workers appear especially prone to social and environmental forces such as global competition and business recessions. Although persons of color are usually the "last hired and first fired," older workers are also increasingly singled out for cost cutting. Increasing numbers will also retire and will become dependent on disability income, pension/retirement plans, Social Security, and Medicare. Although Florida continues to have the largest proportion of elderly people (19%), it is estimated that by the year 2020 eight other states will reach those proportions: Arkansas (19%), West Virginia (18.5%), Maine (18%), Pennsylvania (18%), North Carolina, (18%), Iowa (18%), Rhode Island, (18%), and Tennessee (18%). Although states with huge elderly populations are scrambling to offer health and social services, it is not clear who will pay for them. Baby boomers have saved little personally and have fewer children, resulting in lower family support, and the number of workers to support the aging population will be far lower than in the past. Social Security and other entitlement programs in their current form will become unaffordable in the future for a nation with a $5 trillion accumulated debt. What public policy should there be in order to ensure a decent standard of living for elderly people without burdening future workers?

The Changing Work Environment

Although not as prevalent as in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the terms *mergers, acquisitions,* and *downsizing* have become feared household words. Rightly or wrongly, they are often associated with corporate greed, profits at any cost, loss of jobs, callousness, reduced wages and benefits, powerlessness, and job insecurity. These images are more difficult to dispel in light of recent statistics revealing that the income gap between rich and poor has increased and that the percentage rise in income levels of CEOs (often in the multimillion dollar ranges) have far outpaced the average worker (Samuleson, 1996). Such reported disparities coupled with structural changes in the work environment have led to negative perceptions of corporate America and strong contempt for business leaders and corporate executives. Representatives of the business world have countered these allegations by pointing out that the business climate and environment have changed radically from

that of the past. Their actions, they contend, stem more from the need of businesses to survive than from greed or insensitivity to the social good. They point to such forces as global competition, technological impact, deregulation, and five recessions since the 1960s as the culprits. Let us briefly explore two of these.

Global Competition

Where U.S. companies were once the sole players on the world economic playing field, they now have many competitors from European, Latin American, and Asian countries. In the 1960s, only 7% of U.S. industries were challenged by international competition; in 1980 the figure jumped to 70% (Gwynne, 1992). Furthermore, defenders are quick to point out that a well-trained workforce is also crucial to economic survival and that the United States may be losing ground in this regard. It currently ranks sixth behind Singapore, Denmark, Germany, Japan, and Norway (Cascio, 1995). A competent and literate labor pool may not be as readily available in communities whose poverty is high, so businesses must leave those areas and/or seek more skilled workers elsewhere. Ironically, even when lower skilled work is involved, many companies are tempted to export jobs overseas because lower wages can be paid and profits increased. Businesses must also cope with international situations that develop abroad, such as the integration of the European community, setting up of enterprise zones in China, the reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese control in 1997, passage of free trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement, and other governmental policies that have a monumental impact on the business climate.

Technological Revolutions

Big and small businesses also point out that they too are victims of a technological revolution that oftentimes demands instantaneous adaptation or change. Cascio (1995) indicated that 50 million workers use computers every day, along with faxes, modems, cellular phones, and electronic mail. New technologies have created (a) labor-saving robotics and mechanics that have permanently eliminated many traditional jobs, (b) new jobs that require technological competence, and (c) a potential two-class division of workers (i.e., computer literates on top of the food chain and the unlucky, unskilled, and technologically challenged on the bottom). The business sector argues that the job destruction–job creation evolution, although painful, is the normal process of market capitalism. Just as businesses must change to survive, workers must also adapt to survive.

IMPLICATIONS.

1. To become more globally competitive and profitable, many industries have resorted to consolidation, downsizing, and mergers. In some business sectors, this is occurring at a furious pace. Banking, for example, has seen the number of banks drop by 4,000, from around 14,000 (prerecession 1980s) to 10,000 (present). Projections are that only 5,000 will be left by the turn of the century ("Staff Buyouts," 1995). Acquisitions and mergers of radio and televison broadcast stations like Disney's takeover of Capital Cities–ABC rank second. Merger mania in 1994 resulted in some 4,625 U.S. companies engaging in acquisitions or leveraged buyouts. This rate increased some 38% in 1995. The overall net effect of these actions is loss of jobs and some 7 million permanent layoffs (Cascio, 1993, 1995). The industries most affected are banking, health care, and telecommunications.

   Corporate executives also believe that business survival dictates the ability to change and to change quickly when required. Apparently, many are practicing what they preach. For example, over the past 3 years,

AT&T, Boeing, IBM, Sears, and Xerox have together laid off some 250,000 people as a result of downsizing. Recently, these companies have announced their intention to hire back some 46,000 employees because of a change in the business climate ("Downsizing Firms," 1996). Although heartening to those who are reemployed, these actions are difficult to comprehend and send confusing mixed signals resulting in greater job insecurity. How can a company lay off thousands of people one year and then hire thousands back the next year?

Mergers have been shown to improve the profit margins of most companies, but they do so only if they restructure the design of their organizations and change the nature of their work. Some of these include moving to smaller and leaner companies, use of new technology to improve efficiency, providing services rather than a product, becoming increasingly flexible to match client demands/business climate changes, and moving to a horizontal rather than the traditional vertical hierarchy. Nowhere are these changes more evident than in what some call the *contingent, disposable,* or *peripheral* workforce. Barker (1995) used the term *contingent workforce* to describe individuals or groups who do not work full time–full year for a company; they package various jobs together to make a living and include independent contractors, home workers, migrant and seasonal workers, and temporary hires. Although such workers have always been a part of the employment picture, their numbers have risen dramatically and appear tied to the changing nature of work in the United States. In 1987, less than 50% of all workers were employed full time and full year (Spalter-Roth & Hartmann, 1992); currently, they

number 25–30% of the workforce, and nearly half of all jobs created in the 1980s were part-time/temporary jobs (Tilly, 1990). Employers are attracted to contingent work because (a) they can focus on core competencies and outsource everything else (Cascio, 1995), (b) such workers earn less, (c) firms enjoy the flexibility of a "disposable" workforce, (d) firms need invest only minimally in training and career advancement issues, and (e) unionization may be avoided or eliminated (Barker, 1095).

2. There is little wonder that workers subjected to such an environment of job instability perceive the actions of organizations as irresponsible. A recent poll by the Preamble Center for Public Policy in Washington found that Americans gave corporations high marks for producing good products and making profits ("Downsizing Firms," 1996). When it comes to grades on good wages and loyalty, however, 42% gave companies a *D* or *F* and only 26% offered a *B* or *A*. When asked to choose between "wasteful and inefficient government" or "corporate greed" as the least liked, greed won 46% to 28%.

On an individual and familial level, anxieties over job security and the experience of unemployment creates great occupational stress that affects almost all facets of human functioning (Grant & Barling, 1994; Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1993; Sutherland & Cooper, 1995). Being laid off can have a devastating impact on status, identity, and mental health (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1993). Oftentimes, recently laid-off workers have to go through a mourning process because the sense of loss (identity with a company or one's career track) is similar to that described in death and dying. Downsizing affects nearly all levels of the employment ladder. It is no longer just unskilled or blue-collar workers who are laid off—the early 1990s have seen white-collar professionals increasingly affected; be-

tween 1988 and 1995, middle managers lost 19% of all job cuts (Seppa, 1996).

Interestingly, the effects of downsizing are not just limited to those who lose their jobs. Workers who remain have been found to experience increased job stress and symptoms of burnout. Survivors of downsizing are never certain when the next layoff announcement will come and their loyalty to the company suffers. This lowered morale, lowered trust in management, concern with self-survival, and diminished loyalty often lead to lowered productivity and increased employee stress disability.

Companies must realize that business decisions are people decisions. Good corporate citizenship dictates recognizing the human face of work. Companies often attempt to insulate themselves from the "pain" they cause others through their cost-cutting efforts. Thus, they behave in an impersonal manner, close lines of communication, and act in an autocratic manner. They convince themselves that their reasons are legitimate and workers will be unreasonable. As a result, workers are seldom consulted about cost-cutting decisions. They fail to realize that such actions only increase the pain and suffering, eventually creating an unfavorable image of the company among not only those who are laid off, but among those fortunate enough to remain.

Regardless of whatever the reasons are for laying off workers, companies must realize that is represents a serious blow to worker self-esteem. Reactions of anger, depression, and frustration and feelings of being treated unfairly are natural psychological consequences. Worker pain can be minimized by attempts to (a) acknowledge the fears of workers regarding their perceptions of being treated unfairly, (b) educate the workforce as to the true business reasons for the downsizing actions, (c) allow opportunities for workers (employee groups) to vent their fears and be part of the decision-making process, (d) have human resource departments develop fair severance and retirement packages as viable options, (e) offer career counseling/outplacement ser-

vices, and (f) make empathic senior management visible.

Conclusions

It is clear that the challenges associated with the changing face of work can no longer be handled from a remedial and individual basis. Psychology as a profession must have the moral courage, fortitude, and political savvy to impact the broader social, political, and economic levels of the macro system within which individuals, groups, and institutions function. In truth, psychology has played a minimal role in the formation of public policy because psychologists have failed to understand how systemic forces affect people and because psychologists have been averse to becoming active in the social and political arenas. Psychologists can no longer be concerned only with individual change, but must also use their knowledge and skills to improve conditions in the world of work. Unless they do so, persons of color, women, and senior citizens will continue to bear the brunt of the negative impact from the changing face of work in the United States. We believe that if psychologists are to effect major improvements in the psychological well-being of people, they must be able to influence political decisions and policies regarding institutions and society. Separating professional roles from social and political concerns is to refuse responsibility for society's future. In the changing face of work in America, psychologists must use their accumulated knowledge and wisdom to make changes in policies and practices that will positively impact people, institutions, and society.

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