

**STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD UNIONS  
AND EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ISSUES:  
A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION**

by

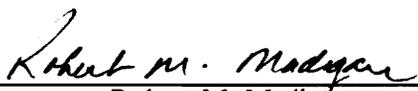
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(ABSTRACT)

The decline of trade unionism is a well-documented phenomenon. Possible causes for this decline include the changing demographic composition of the workforce and effective anti-union campaigns by employers. Unions and employers share several common avenues in their respective efforts (i.e., increasing union membership and continuing effective anti-union efforts) including issues of importance to employees and socializing new labor market entrants. Such issues of importance include employment rights issues (e.g., drug testing, polygraphs, privacy, and scheduling work). Such groups of new labor force entrants include forthcoming college graduates. This study, therefore, investigates employment rights issues and attitudes toward unions in a sample of college students. More specifically, the study is formulated as a test of the classic Fishbein and Ajzen theory of beliefs and attitudes. Fishbein and Ajzen proposed that one's attitude regarding an issue (e.g., drug testing) or object (e.g., unions) is a function of one's factual knowledge regarding that issue or object and one's socialization experiences regarding that issue or object. Thus, attitude toward unions is a function of factual knowledge about unions and socialization experiences. This study extends this model by proposing that attitudes toward employment rights issues should be related to attitude toward unions, such that individuals valuing employee rights should be more pro-union or view unions as protectors of employee rights. In this sample, factual knowledge about unions was not found to be related to attitude toward unions. However, personal experience with activities such as drug use was found to be inversely related to attitude toward an employer's right to engage in activities such as drug or polygraph testing. Furthermore, work experience was found to be nega-

tively related to attitude toward an employer's right to engage in typical business activities such as scheduling work and determining pay. Factual knowledge regarding the legality of employer activities was also found to be negatively related to attitude toward an employer's right to engage in personal inquiries. Finally, consonance between attitude toward unions and attitude toward employee/employment rights issues was demonstrated with respect to attitude toward an employer's right to engage in activities such as personal inquiries and employer's right to engage in normal business activities.

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## *Evidence Indicative of a Decline in Trade Unionism*

The decline of trade unionism is a well-documented phenomenon. Numerous studies have been conducted to assess the magnitude of this decline and recent evidence only strengthens the notion that unions are in a state of decline. The decline in unionism is revealed in membership rates, industry statistics, and election (both certification and decertification) results. Labor unions experienced a decline in membership between 1980 and 1984 among employed wage and salary workers: 2.7 million members were lost during this period, while the number of wage and salary workers increased by nearly 4 million (Adams, 1985). Furthermore, analyses for the decade of 1980 to 1989 indicate that union membership dropped 15.6% (Chang and Sorrentino, 1991). Industry analysis demonstrates that those occupations representing the most highly unionized groups such as operators, fabricators, laborers, production, craft and repair workers are in decline (Kochan, 1985). Additional evidence of a decline in unionism is gained from the comparison of labor force participation rates with labor union membership rates in the same industries. For example, traditional bastions of unionism, nonagricultural goods-producing industries such as mining, construction, and manufacturing, registered a net decline of 800,000 jobs between 1980 and 1984. Jobs held by union

members in these nonagricultural goods-producing industries decreased by 1.9 million jobs during this period, while jobs held by non-unionized employees rose by nearly 1 million (Adams, 1985). Current analyses indicate that union members comprise only 11.9% of the private sector workforce (Bureau of National Affairs, 1993). By the year 2000, estimates indicate that only 5% of the private-sector workforce will be comprised of union members if current trends continue (McDonald, 1992). Finally, unions have also experienced declining success in NLRB representation elections, from a high of more than 60% of elections leading to union representation for employees to a low of 45% (Porter and Murrmann, 1983). Concurrently, decertification elections, wherein bargaining unit members vote whether to retain the union as exclusive representative or not, nearly doubled between 1975 and 1985. In 1986, unions subjected to decertification elections lost the right to represent bargaining unit members in 76% of the decertification elections held. The pivotal year for unions and their membership appears to have been 1975 as it was that year in which the percentage of representation elections won by unions decreased below 50% and the percentage of decertification elections won by unions declined below 30%. The number of workers lost by unions during decertification elections has increased steadily to 27,527 in 1981, which is the last year such statistics were available. By 1989, decertification elections represented one-fifth of all union elections conducted. Thus, the number of decertification elections has increased as have the number of bargaining units and members lost to unions in these elections (Levine, 1989). In order to match projected workforce growth of 1.1 million workers per year and maintain union representation at 12.4% of private sector employees, unions would have to gain 136,000 new members annually. Currently only 90,000 new members are being organized annually, while 10,000 members are being lost annually via decertification elections. Thus, to achieve a net gain annually of 136,000 new members, projections indicate that union certification victories would have to yield 360,000 new members annually just for unions to hold their current position (McDonald, 1992).

## *Explanations for the Decline in Trade Unionism*

Several different explanations have emerged for this decline in trade unionism. Chief among the explanations for declining membership is the economic situation of many highly unionized industries (e.g., manufacturing, mining). Many of these industries have recently faced harsh economic contexts that have resulted either in a reduction of employment industry-wide or in efforts by employers to minimize costs. Measures taken to minimize costs often focus on the reduction of costs involved with collective bargaining agreements (e.g., wages, benefits) (Kochan, 1985).

Another explanation for labor's decline can be found via historical analysis of the labor movement's development. Heckscher (1987) suggests that the three "pillars" upon which the labor movement was founded have changed. The first pillar, the advent of large industrial corporations, set the stage for union growth as the mechanism through which workers could combat the increasing power of management hierarchies. However, the recent trend toward the decentralization of organizational structures has undermined the base of collective action by severely limiting the exposure of employees to each other (i.e., decentralization of facilities and groups of employees to different locations), thereby decreasing opportunities for communication and collective action. Thus, decentralization impedes the organization of employees as well as increases difficulty in collective bargaining situations by physically separating members of the collectivity. The blue collar class of employees which served as the second pillar upon which unionism was built is being replaced by white collar and service sector employees. As aforementioned, traditionally unionized industries are suffering economic difficulties. Increasing numbers of white collar and service sector employees, who have traditionally low unionization rates, are being hired in the growing service and professional sectors of the economy. Thus, unionism is being further eroded by a redistribution of workers from traditionally unionized industries to lesser unionized industries. Finally, the third pillar of unionism was the "New Deal" coalition with its active promotion of social welfare programs. This active social coalition has given way under the pressure of recessionary inflation and

unemployment. Some believe that the extended emphasis on social well-being has seriously taxed the economy, leading to calls for a more economic rather than humanistic approach to government. Unions were viewed as one mechanism for humanistic and social change during the New Deal era. Government support for unions in the form of pro-union legislation was largely responsible for their growth. However, calls for limiting social welfare programs during recent years have damaged unions as attention has shifted to other areas (Heckscher, 1987).

Yet another explanation for declining unionism focuses on the reduced level of public approval for organized labor. Public approval of unions had steadily declined from its high in the mid-1950's to a low of 55% in 1981 (Heshizer, 1985), although recent analyses suggest that public approval of unions may be rising. Some research even indicates that while union members are generally satisfied with the performance of their union, they feel some dissatisfaction with unionism in general (Heshizer, 1985). Possible explanations for this general dissatisfaction may include beliefs that unionism outside one's own local is corrupt, or that unionism above the local level is ineffective in gaining valued outcomes. Overall, this seems to indicate that attitudes toward unions are not merely a function of personal experience with unions. Perceived confidence in unions and their leaders has continued to decline in recent years as has their perceived threat to the country in terms of their role in inflation and the economy, as well as the effects of strikes (Heshizer, 1985). Taken in total, the public perception of unions seems to indicate declining faith in unions and their power. Some suggest that the public's negative opinion of unions is a result of the unions' success in attaining what union members desire (e.g., increased wages and benefits) through methods that draw public disapproval (e.g., strikes and coercion) (Heshizer, 1985).

An explanation also based on disapproval for unions and their activities centers around anti-union campaigns. Declines in membership may also be due to the increasing success of employers in actively battling unionism. Employers' anti-union strategies are not only important because of their success, but also because they symbolize the rising tide of opposition toward unionism and the boldness with which organizations are willing to act in order to maintain a union-free environment. Porter and Murrmann (1983) identified four types of practices used by organizations to remain

union-free: (1) utilization of equitable personnel practices to minimize the perception of need for a union among employees, (2) use of defensive tactics to thwart potential organizing efforts by unions, (3) practice of tactics to detect organizing activities early on, and (4) the preparation of a well-conceived election campaign to win employee votes in the event of an actual election. The range of these strategies and tactics used by employers in fighting unionism indicates their commitment to an anti-union stance. All of the strategies used and the desired resultant changes require a great deal of forethought and planning as well as the expenditure of considerable resources. The results of Porter and Murrmann's investigation indicate that employers using these strategies and tactics are successful in accomplishing their anti-union goals. This study showed that an employer was more likely to maintain union-free status if an attempt was made to hire employees lacking previous union experience, organizing activities were detected early in the process, and an attempt was made to limit union solicitation activities. Employers successful in defeating unions in certification elections were found to have brought about change with respect to both the composition of the bargaining unit and the date of the election. Additionally, employers successful in elections tended to use multiple channels of communication for disseminating information to employees (Porter and Murrmann, 1983).

## *Avenues for Reversal of Declining Trade Unionism*

Whatever the reasons for the decline, the evidence regarding membership rates, effectiveness of unions in organizing and resisting decertification, labor force composition, and public opinion indicates that unions are facing a bleak future. Unions must find or develop methods for increasing their success in representation and decertification elections and promoting growth in membership rates if they are to survive. Conversely, organizations promoting a union-free environment must find ways to prevent unionization if they are to attain their objectives. Successful anti-union efforts will further contribute to the erosion of trade unionism.

The key to both employers' anti-union efforts and unions' organizing efforts may be the identification of new issues of importance to employees upon which unions or employers may capitalize. The present effort is a preliminary investigation of one such class of issues, employer/employee rights issues. Specific examples of volatile issues in this area include drug testing and polygraph testing. These types of rights issues are gaining increasing attention in the media and legislatures as well as among employees. Unions and employers may be able to capitalize upon workers' attitudes regarding such issues in organizing or resisting organization, respectively.

The labor movement has traditionally gained strength by capitalizing on issues of concern to employees. Thus, it would seem logical that unions might choose to capitalize on rights issues in their efforts to recover from recent declines in membership. Should organized labor choose to focus on these and similar issues, they could supply the impetus necessary to improve membership.

Employers in their attempts to remain union-free are also likely to be concerned with rights issues. Positive personnel practices that circumvent volatile issues may be key to successful anti-union strategies. Surprisingly little research has been conducted in this area, and almost no research has been conducted investigating students' attitudes regarding rights issues. This area certainly deserves more attention by unions, employers, and researchers. This is not to say, however, that research regarding attitudes toward unions and related issues does not exist. A large body of literature exists detailing both the formation of attitudes and the nature of specific attitudes. This literature will be discussed in Chapter Two.

In addition to capitalizing on issues of interest to employees, another avenue for reversing the declining trend of unionism involves unions capitalizing on the changing demographic composition of the workforce. One vista that unions are sure to pursue involves the identification of new groups to organize. The most obvious target group is female labor force participants. This group has, in fact, been the subject of a variety of research regarding their potential as union members. Some of this research suggests that the role of women in labor unions must be expanded if unions want to capitalize on increased female labor force participation. Currently, one of every three union

members is female, but only one of twelve union leaders is female (Baden, 1986). The underrepresentation of women among union leaders presents unions the opportunity to capitalize on the increasing proportion of women in the workforce by increasing female leaders. Female employees may be less reluctant to join or participate in a union if they know they will be involved with female as well as male leaders. Simply put, given the rapidly rising entry of women into the workplace, unions may be able to improve their membership level by providing expanded leadership opportunities to women or by providing mechanisms for the resolution of issues of concern to women. The current male-dominated union leadership may present the image of an "old boy's network" which may, in turn, discourage women from joining unions.

High school and college students comprise another group that present great potential for union organization given their pending entry into the labor market. Very little research has been conducted regarding the attitudes held by students with respect to unions. However, the importance of future labor force entrants as a group has been recognized by the business community. The business community has already begun to address pending labor force problems such as the decreasing number of high school graduates, the increasing labor force participation rate of women, the complexity of new technology used by new employees, and the increased productivity necessary to compete internationally. The recognition of such problems by business indicates that the repercussions of these difficulties are being anticipated and most likely factored into organizations' strategic business plans. While it would be easy to view these efforts by the business community simply from an economic point of view, these efforts may also be an extension of anti-union sentiments. In this light, the business community can be viewed as attempting to influence the "workers of tomorrow" before they are exposed to unions. Business is attempting to influence public education not only through the funding of programs, but also through participation in policy formation, thereby recognizing the important role students will play in the labor force of the future (Timpane, 1984).

Unions have, thus far, failed to provide indications of similar strategic actions to expose or influence students with respect to unions. Thus, business seems to have at least a temporary advantage over

organized labor in having anticipated the importance of future labor force participants. Preliminary research (Willoughby and Keon, 1985; and Jackstadt and Brennan, 1983) has shown, however, that attitude change with respect to unions can be brought about by education (economics and labor relations courses). Thus, unions may be able to reverse negative attitudes or promulgate positive attitudes in students through education. The future of organized labor rests in the hands of today's students - the employees and managers of tomorrow. Research investigating the attitudes of this crucial group may lead to methods by which unions can increase their membership or by which organizations can prevent unionization. For example, research investigating employer-employee rights issues may identify issues important to future employees that unions could capitalize upon in organizing, or which organizations should address to prevent their exploitation by unions.

## *Flaws in the Literature Regarding Attitudes Toward*

### *Unions*

Theorists and researchers alike agree that attitudes are learned (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). By extension, attitudes can be viewed as a function of life experience or individual-specific learning situations. Although this seems to be obvious, it is often overlooked. General attitudes toward unions have been found to significantly predict such behaviors as voting in certification elections, voting in decertification elections, and participation in union activities. Unfortunately, it is difficult to draw conclusions from this body of literature because researchers have failed to investigate the construct validity of their measures. Thus, inconsistent or conflicting results are generated by the use of inconsistent and varying measures of the same construct. Problems with inconsistent measurement of the same construct (e.g., general attitude toward unions) have led to calls for and attempts to construct validate such measures (McShane, 1986).

In addition to construct validation efforts, a great deal of information could be gained from investigations of the correlates of various attitudes toward unions. Information regarding characteristics and other attitudes that correlate with attitudes toward unions can provide information that could be useful in categorizing and identifying different groups of people (e.g., prounion or antiunion). While correlational data is merely descriptive rather than causal in nature, it can, nonetheless, provide useful information. Demonstration of a relationship between two phenomena is necessary before the causation of that relationship can be validly assessed.

Several studies investigating correlates of attitudes toward unions have been conducted and are discussed in Chapter Two. Generally speaking, the results of such studies demonstrate the absence of exposure to socialization influences from which attitudes toward unions are formed. These findings reiterate the role of learning in forming attitudes. Socialization may be the link which unions and employers can utilize to achieve their respective goals of organizing or remaining union-free. Unions and employers alike may find it helpful to attempt to socialize individuals, specifically students, prior to their entry into the labor force.

In addition to the lack of construct validation, other flaws exist in the research of attitudes toward unions and their correlates. One of the most damaging flaws is evident in the nature of the samples commonly drawn: most research conducted in this area focuses on the attitudes of workers. Samples of employees are perfectly acceptable when the research question involves the attitudes of employees, but when the question at hand involves the formation of attitudes, greater value could be obtained from research using a group that has not had extensive or prolonged experience in a work/unionized environment. Attitudes are learned and are, therefore, a function of life experience (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). An important component of such an experiential body is work experience, and while some students may have substantial work or union experience it is likely that these individuals will be in the minority in a student sample. Greater benefit in the study of attitudes would be derived from research conducted upon an "uncontaminated" group, so to speak, when the research question involves the formation of attitudes as the present study does in investigating attitudes toward employer rights issues and attitudes toward unions. Generalization of results from

a sample of employees to a sample of students is dangerous at best since these groups are hardly comparable.

The period before the individual enters the workplace is likely to be a period in which the individual's attitudes toward work and unions are more malleable given a lack of experience with both. If information regarding an individual's attitudes can be garnered before the individual enters the workplace, unions and employers may be able to use this information to their advantage. Unions may be able to use such information to be more effective in organizing new members or in utilizing new organizing techniques. Employers may be able to use such information to be more effective in preventing unionizing or carrying out anti-union campaigns.

## *Purpose and Significance of the Study*

Since the students of today will be the employees of the future, students comprise an important group for study both from the perspective of unions (i.e., as potential labor force entrants and potential union members) and from the perspective of organizations trying to prevent unionization. Thus, one purpose of the present study is to examine the attitudes of college students with respect to unions. Additionally, correlates of these attitudes will be investigated. Information garnered through investigation of such correlates will, hopefully, contribute descriptive data to the existing information regarding the relationship between individual characteristics and individual attitudes toward unions.

Given that unions are in a state of decline and that organizations are undertaking more proactive strategies to discourage unionization, both groups are likely to be searching for issues that will prove pivotal in attaining their respective goals. Thus, a second purpose of this study is to look at the attitudes of students toward one such pivotal set of issues, employer/employee rights issues. The

correlates of attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues will also be investigated so as to contribute descriptive data to the information regarding the relationship between individual characteristics and individual attitudes toward rights issues.

Since both attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues represent major attitudes toward one's employment, it is reasonable to hypothesize that these two attitudes are related. Thus, one general hypothesis of the present study is that attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward employer/employee rights, as components of a more global attitude toward work, should be consonant, or, rather, should not be dissonant. For example, attitudes regarding employer rights to engage in activities that are personally or physically intrusive for the individual (as in the case of drug testing), may be related to positive attitudes toward unions as protectors of employee rights. While it is possible to hypothesize and test for causality between a belief in employee rights and a belief that unionism is a valid mechanism for protection of those rights, to infer such causality would be tenuous, at best. In addition to the temporal and correlational requirements for inference of causality, there is an additional requirement: that some third variable is not the cause of the empirical correlation between two variables (in this case, attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward employer rights) (Babbie, 1986). Past research has done little to indicate whether an underlying and common foundation for both sets of attitudes does or does not exist. At the present time, a hypothesis concerning causality between these sets of attitudes would not only fail to meet the requirements of causation, since the existence of the relationship has not been adequately investigated, but it would also fail to meet the third requirement regarding additional variables affecting the relationship. The investigation of the correlates of attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward rights issues may provide information regarding the possibility of such intervening variables. However, the present effort will be limited to an investigation of the attitudes in question and an investigation of the correlates of these attitudes.

The significance of the present study rests on its three potential contributions. The first and perhaps most important potential contribution of this study is the information it can contribute to unions and employers with respect to the future of unionization. Specifically, information regarding atti-

tudes toward unions, attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues, and the relationship between them may provide a useful mechanism for unions to utilize in their recovery from their current state of decline or for employers to utilize to continue to contribute to the erosion of unionism through anti-union campaigns. Secondly, in choosing to study students as opposed to employees, the current study contributes to the scant body of literature regarding future employees and the utility of locating a volatile issue upon which unions and employers through education or provision of information could capitalize to sway malleable individuals to their point of view. Finally, the present study represents a contribution to the literature in that its main portions will be replications of previous work. Thus, this study will make a contribution in the area of construct validation through the addition of information on convergent and discriminant validity.

## *Chapter Summary*

Chapter One provides a cursory overview of important issues with respect to the decline of trade unionism in the United States, attitudes toward unions, and the determinants and correlates of those attitudes. This chapter also provides a statement of the problem to be addressed by the present research and the significance of such research. Chapter Two contains a detailed review of the literature relevant in this area. A discussion of the methods to be used in investigating the hypotheses for the present study can be found in Chapter Three. The results of the study are presented in Chapter Four. The conclusions to be drawn from the study and implications for the literature are discussed in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Introduction*

The logic underlying any study is derived from the review of relevant theoretical and empirical literature. In this regard, the current work is no different. The theoretical literature regarding the formation and impact of attitudes is reviewed and analyzed in order to provide one base for this work. Utilization of this rich literature provides a solid deductive base from which much information crucial to the current study can be gained. However, review of this literature is only general. Attitudes, their formation, and their impact are all treated in an abstract fashion. More information specific to the formation and impact of attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward employment rights issues is required for successful investigation of the research questions of interest. Thus, review and analysis of the empirical literature regarding these specific attitudes is included. Review of this literature provides an inductive path from which specific information regarding attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues as well as methods for their investigation may be gleaned. Together, the deductive and inductive methods provide a sound theoretical base for the current work as well as direction for the empirical execution of this work.

The review of the theoretical literature regarding attitudes toward unions and toward employee/employer rights issues and the relationship between these attitudes must begin with a clarification of the term "attitude", description of the components of an attitude, and a discussion of theory in this area. Thus, this chapter begins with the definition of relevant terms. The empirical literature regarding specific attitudes is reviewed and is followed by a discussion of how these theories regarding attitudes may be applied to the present research.

## *Definition of Attitude and Related Terms*

"Attitude" has evolved into an integral concept for fields of study such as social psychology and sociology. The evolution of the concept is evidenced by the numerous definitions of the term and the manner in which these definitions follow the evolution of psychology from behaviorism to cognitive approaches. Many definitions reflect the notion that an attitude is a state of readiness for action toward an object. Nearly all definitions of the concept share the notion of an attitude's social orientation such that the attitude predisposes individuals to certain actions. Thus, there is general consensus that attitudes are learned through a social process (i.e., socialization). The point that attitudes are social in nature, however, is important and should not be taken for granted.

For the present study, the definition of attitude to be used is actually a combination of two definitions:

(1) An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related (Allport in Fishbein, 1967, p.8); and

(2) An attitude can be described as a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p.6).

The synthesis of these definitions leads to the following:

An attitude is a learned mental state organized through experience which predisposes individuals to respond to all objects and situations with which it is related in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner by exerting a directive or dynamic influence.

This integrated definition retains the important points of both definitions and is used because it presents a clearer meaning. It indicates that an attitude is learned and is a function of experience. It also indicates that an attitude serves to organize objects in the same category (e.g., unions or workplace issues) and predisposes the individual to take action. Finally, this definition reflects the fact that one's reactions are qualitative in nature (e.g., either positive or negative) and are somewhat consistent while recognizing that they may be dynamic with respect to time. An aspect of one of the contributing definitions has been intentionally omitted from the synthesized definition. The characterization of an attitude as a neural state has been omitted because it reflects an historical emphasis in psychology on physiology which is of no importance to the present effort.

Four important criteria for classifying affective responses as attitudes emerge from the synthesized definition:

- An attitude differs from simple or conditioned reflexes in that it is characterized by an orientation to the realm of objects (i.e., categories of objects which are formed through cognitive processes) rather than simply stimuli (which evoke involuntary or reflexive actions).
- An attitude must not result in simply automatic or routine behavior, but must result in some latent tension (or remain in one's memory) within the individual even when not evoked.
- An attitude varies in intensity with respect to time (i.e., as experience is gained and as socialization continues).
- An attitude is learned and is based on experiences unique to the individual or a group to which the individual belongs (Park in Young, 1931).

These criteria reiterate the important components of the chosen definition.

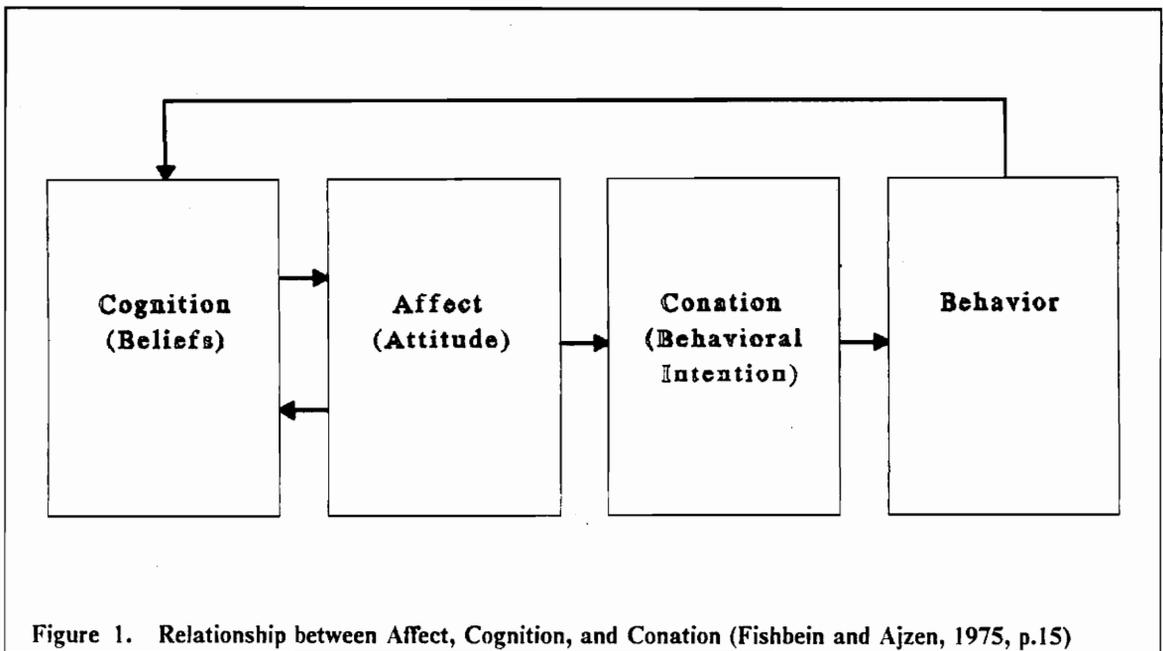
## *Attitudes and Related Concepts*

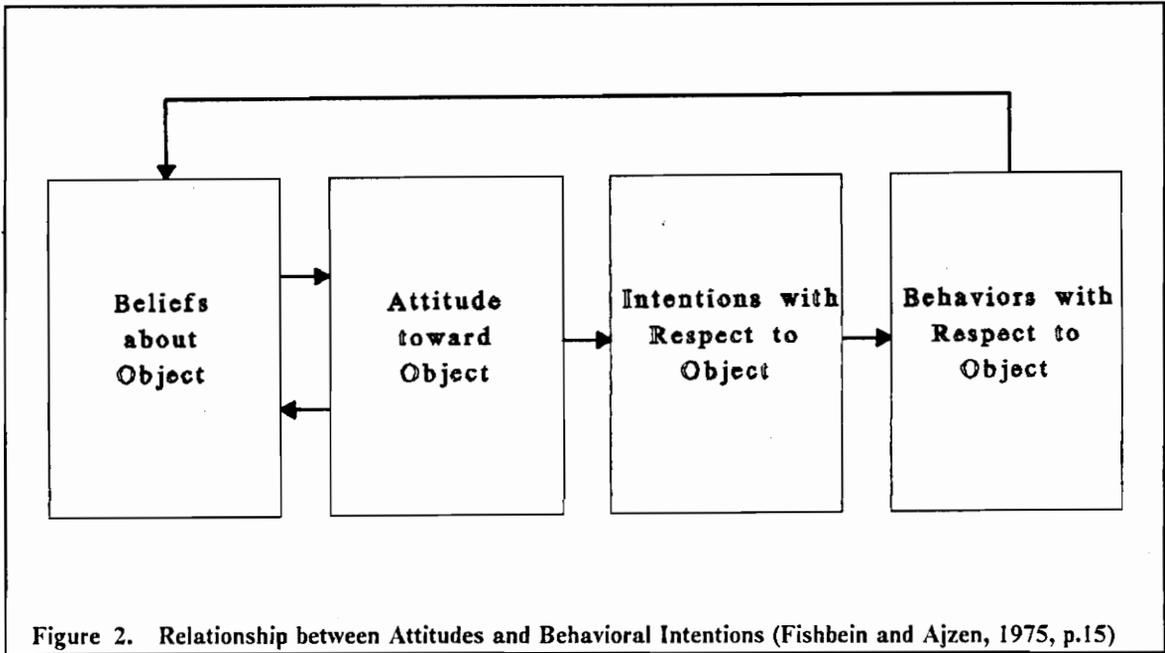
The four criteria of an attitude, outlined above, become useful in distinguishing the concept of attitude from other concepts in this area. When considering attitude as a construct a tripartite ap-

proach is often taken. The three concepts used are those of affect, cognition, and conation. Each of these concepts can be operationalized resulting in terms commonly used and confused. "Affect" generally refers to an individual's emotions with respect to some object. Thus, as the term "attitude" has been defined, it is representative of the concept "affect". The operationalized counterpart of the second concept, "cognition", is a belief. Beliefs differ from attitudes in that attitudes are evaluative in nature (i.e., the positive or negative evaluation of an object). Beliefs are the body of information or knowledge that an individual has with respect to the object in question and, therefore, represent the cognitive set of the individual. Beliefs are conjunctive in nature, serving as links between knowledge of an object as a whole and the attributes of that object, whose affective evaluation leads to the formation of attitudes. The strength of beliefs may vary, indicating that the probability that an object possesses a certain attribute varies. Thus, attitudes must be distinguished from beliefs in terms of their evaluative nature. Finally, "conation" can be operationally represented as an intention or in this case as a behavioral intention. An individual's intention to perform a behavior varies as a function of the object, the expected outcomes of the behavior, and the value (i.e., positive or negative) attached to the outcome. Hence, attitudes differ from behavioral intention in that attitudes merely serve as predispositions for behavior toward an object, not as the exact behavioral intention to perform a specific behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

The relationship between these three important concepts is central to the present study and is discussed below. The relationship between affect, cognition, and conation can be graphically depicted in Figure 1. Individuals form beliefs through the direct observation and collection of information from the environment surrounding them. In the process of forming beliefs about objects, individuals determine or learn the attributes that are related to an object. The information acquired in this process of attribution and its resultant beliefs serve as the individual's body of knowledge with respect to the object in question. The process of forming attitudes is nothing more than the affective evaluation of the attributes of an object or the evaluation of one's beliefs as either positive or negative. Thus, the formation of an attitude toward an object is the inference of affect based on beliefs. Realistically speaking, this evaluative process, which results in the formation of an at-

titude, is not based solely on the totally positive or negative evaluation of an object. Individuals can and often do form both positive and negative attitudes about an object and its attributes. The attitude held with respect to an object, then, is the total affect associated with an object and the set of attributes common to that object. Attitudes influence behavior toward an object by serving to predispose behavior. Attitudes influence, but do not serve directly as behavioral intentions. A closer link exists between behavioral intention and actual behavior. An attitude can be viewed as a general predisposition toward an object and, when taken in combination with other attitudes, leads to a corresponding set of behavioral intentions (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). This relationship is graphically depicted in Figure 2.





This model is unique in that knowledge of an individual's attitude toward an object is not assumed to be a valid or accurate predictor of the individual's behavior with respect to that object. Instead, this model views specific behaviors as a result of behavioral intentions, where such intentions are partially a function of the behavior itself, as well as the individual's beliefs regarding the object. Individuals cognitively anticipate the possible consequences of their behavior, and in doing so their beliefs influence their attitudes about performing a behavior. The beliefs and attitudes regarding a given behavior are related to the beliefs regarding the consequences of a behavior and the evaluation of that behavior.

Other beliefs influencing behavioral intentions focus on the normative pressure the individual experiences from important referents. The combination of normative pressures from all important referents is known as the individual's subjective norm. Thus, an individual's intention to perform a given behavior is a function of that individual's attitude toward that behavior and his subjective norm (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). The interceding mechanism of behavioral intention is a feature unique to this model and provides a possible explanation for the lack of evidence that knowledge of an individual's attitude will allow prediction of behavior with regard to that object (Fishbein, 1967). Essentially, this model allows for the contention that attitude and behavior may not be di-

rectly related as has been traditionally thought. This notion provides a viable alternative to explain why two individuals holding the same attitude behave differently (Fishbein, 1967). This model is also particularly useful in the present endeavor because it focuses on the genesis and evaluative nature of attitudes without polluting the concept with the notion of resultant behavior. The present investigation will deal only with attitudes, their genesis, and the relationship between two sets of attitudes.

Perhaps the most ambiguous portion of this model's definition of attitude is that portion dealing with response consistency. Thus, some clarification of this notion is in order. Three types of response consistency can be identified: stimulus-response consistency, response-response consistency, and evaluative consistency. Stimulus-response consistency refers to the consistency with which an individual responds reflexively to a given stimulus. Stimulus-response consistency deals only with the occurrence of a stimulus and the action it evokes. This notion fails to recognize the evaluative or affective nature of attitudes and thus, fails to meet the criteria that attitudes are not merely simple or conditioned responses to a stimulus. Response-response consistency refers to the consistency of two behaviors with respect to each other. This form of consistency encompasses only the behaviors emitted, neglecting both the object or stimulus and its affective evaluation. This notion implies that the form of consistency outlined in the definition of an attitude is merely the consistently positive or consistently negative reaction or behavior of an individual. Although this form of consistency seems to account for the evaluative nature of attitudes, it does so only in a cursory manner looking at the outcome of evaluation rather than the process. This flaw is not present in the third notion of consistency, evaluative consistency. This form of consistency is based on many behaviors over time and can be present in the absence of one or both the aforementioned types of consistency (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Regardless of the behaviors performed as a function of one's behavioral intentions toward an object, the overall evaluative nature (e.g., favorable or unfavorable) may remain constant and, thus, conform to this definition of consistency. Thus, evaluative consistency is congruent with the chosen definition of "attitude". Indeed, it is evaluative consistency that will be the focus of the present study. Since the focus of this study is

on attitudes and their genesis rather than resultant behaviors, the evaluative consistency of attitudes toward an object will be investigated.

## *Theoretical Perspective*

### **Attitudes**

Attitudes have been examined in terms of many different theoretical perspectives such as classical and instrumental conditioning, concept formation, and instrumentality theory. The theoretical underpinnings for the current project reflect the contribution of each of these theoretical streams, utilizing the unique contributions of each. Thus, just as the chosen definition of "attitude" is a synthesis, so too is the theory underlying the current study. Essentially, the chosen definition of attitude is comprised of three basic notions: (1) that attitude is learned, (2) that attitudes predispose reactions or behaviors, and (3) that behavior is fairly consistent and as such is reflective of the evaluative consistency of the attitude with respect to that object (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). The synthesis of theory is formed by the utilization of a different theory to reflect each of these three facets.

The first component in the definition of attitude that must be addressed theoretically is the mechanism or method through which attitudes are learned. The paradigms of classical and instrumental conditioning were used in early explanations describing the process by which beliefs are formed and thus, provide the cognitive basis or information to be evaluated in forming an attitude. The terminology used in these psychological paradigms is somewhat different from that used above, but is none-the-less equivalent. Attitudes, in this realm, are most often defined as "learned, implicit evaluative responses" (Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum, 1957). Given this definition, psychologists

approach the learning process in terms of how the individual comes to associate the implicit evaluative response (attitude) with beliefs about a given stimulus object.

A detailed discussion of classical conditioning and its principles will be avoided in an attempt to provide a simple and relevant explanation of the process. Attitudes and beliefs are deemed to be implicit responses, because they are unobservable. The main contribution of conditioning theory to the present study lies in the elucidation of a learning mechanism. One of the main tenets of classical conditioning rests upon the nature of stimulus and response reactions. It is assumed that some stimuli automatically elicit responses from the individual. Thus, the stimuli results in some reflexive behavior from the individual. This behavior is, in effect, an implicit response and has an evaluative component (e.g., positive or negative). According to the principle known as mediational conditioning, the implicit response emitted by the individual becomes associated with the stimuli itself. Concurrent with this process of association, the evaluative component of the response becomes associated with beliefs about the object which are formed through cognitive processes and an attitude develops or is learned.

The association between the implicit evaluative reaction and the overt behavior (which may include either a public display or an attitude or a behavioral intention) considered to be appropriate given that attitude is arrived at and strengthened through principles described in instrumental conditioning. In any given stimulus situation, the individual may emit a number of different responses; those responses that are reinforced will be strengthened and those that are punished will be weakened. Thus, when an individual is reinforced for a behavior corresponding to a belief about an object, the association between the belief and the response is strengthened. Thus, attitudes toward an object are a function of the individual's beliefs about that object, because reinforcement of a behavior causes an association between object, belief, and behavior that, when evaluated, becomes an attitude. Rarely, however, do individuals face a single stimulus at a time. Rather, humans perceive many stimuli simultaneously. The totality of stimuli to which an individual is subjected at any given time is known as a stimulus complex. Conditioning principles also allow for the learning process involved when individuals face stimuli complexes. Higher order principles of classical conditioning elucidate the fact that other stimulus objects present at the time of the pri-

mary association will tend to elicit the same implicit response through the same process of classical conditioning. Similarly, the principles of generalization explain that stimuli similar to that participating in the original pairing come to elicit the same response via the same implicit evaluative response (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

This simplistic explanation of attitude formation must be refined because it suggests that the conditioning of an implicit evaluative response (attitude) is a function of one or more simple stimulus objects and their corresponding beliefs, and thus, fails to allow realistically for the combined effects of two or more stimuli that elicit different implicit evaluative responses. Simply put, this explanation does not account for the stimulus complexes that are most often faced by individuals in the real world. Nor do conditioning principles account for the cognitive process that occurs during the formation of attitudes and beliefs. Therefore, other principles must be introduced. The inclusion of this discussion based on conditioning principles serves a dual purpose: (1) it provides an historical perspective of concept evolution, and (2) it recognizes that while our criteria state that an attitude differs from simple or conditioned reflexes, conditioning processes (especially higher order conditioning processes) may contribute some of the information used in forming beliefs and attitudes.

The theoretical orientation chosen for the discussion of learning in the face of stimulus complexes is that of concept formation. This theory is a subset of learning theory and, although it does not provide any exact combinatory rules regarding the effects of multiple stimuli, it is still useful. Concept formation is also useful in elucidating the third criteria of an attitude (i.e., that an attitude varies in intensity with respect to time) discussed above. According to this theory, concepts are formed when a common response to a set of stimuli is learned through conditioning. More specifically, an attitude is learned or acquired congruently with the learning of a new concept. Attitudes may vary in intensity as individuals encounter new stimuli through experience and socialization and as they are responded to evaluatively. Thus, a large number of responses can be generated from a given concept based either upon the original stimuli contributing to the formation of the concept or stimuli that contributed at a later point in time. This notion of concept not only

explains how attitudes are acquired and function with respect to stimulus complexes, but also why attitudes are not highly predictive of actual behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

While conditioning principles address the relationship between stimuli and response and concept formation addresses stimuli complexes, both fail to adequately elucidate the relationship between object, belief, and attitude that functions in attitude formation. Fishbein (1967) has constructed one of the clearest theories about attitudes. In this theory, the beliefs that an individual holds about an object are reflective of the object's attributes. According to Fishbein, an attitude or an implicit evaluative response is associated with each attribute of the object through conditioning, and the sum of these conditioned responses comprise the overall attitude elicited by the object. The following equation expresses this theoretical relationship (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p. 29):

$$A_o = \sum_{i=1}^n B_i E_i$$

where  $A_o$  is that attitude held toward the object (O);  $B_i$  is the belief held regarding the object (O); and  $E_i$  is the evaluative response to the attribute (i) of object (O); and finally,  $n$  is the number of beliefs held about the object in question.

Although approaches have been developed that use the relationship between beliefs and attitudes in order to predict or explain actual behaviors, these attempts will not be discussed here, because behavioral outcomes are not the subject of the present study. Rather, the relationship between beliefs and attitudes will be furthered through a discussion of theory dealing with that portion of the definition suggesting that attitudes lead to a consistent evaluative response to an object. Rosenberg (1956) believed that the instrumentality of an object in attaining favorably-valued goals and in avoiding unfavorably-valued goals was related to the favorableness of the indi-

vidual's attitude toward that object. Stated in the form of an equation, the relationship is as follows (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975, p.31):

$$A_o = \sum_{i=1}^n I_i V_i$$

where  $I_i$  represents the probability that object (O) will aid the individual in attaining or blocking the attainment of a valued goal (i). This probability is known as the instrumentality of the object;  $V_i$  is the value placed on the attainment of the goal; and  $n$  is the number of goals or valued states in question.

The initial formulation of this instrumentality-value model was based upon the premise that attitudes are best understood in terms of the function an object serves in the attainment of a valued end (or goal) by an individual. Rosenberg refined this preliminary idea by more directly addressing the functional relationship between beliefs and attitudes. More specifically, he believed that humans have a distinct need for consistency between affect and cognition and that they will take action to achieve such consistency. By extension, then, Rosenberg felt that individuals would strive to achieve consistency between the beliefs and attitudes they hold with respect to an object (Rosenberg, 1957).

The theoretical approaches taken by Fishbein (1967) and Rosenberg (1957), while seemingly unconnected, actually complement one another. Fishbein's model explains one mechanism by which beliefs and attitudes become associated (i.e., conditioning) and Rosenberg's explains the need for consistency between affect and cognition which drives the process of attitude formation. As such, the synthesis of these models provides an explanation of the need and the mechanism through which the need is satisfied. Although it seems peculiar that need for consistency between cognition and affect would drive the conditioning process, this is often the case with individuals selectively perceiving stimuli that conform to established attitudes. Thus, individuals actively shape the conditioning process by attending to some stimuli and ignoring or eliminating others.

The final theoretical component necessary for the present study deals with the relationship between two attitudes, namely attitude toward unions and attitude toward employee/employer rights issues. Cognitive dissonance theory deals directly with the relationship between two cognitive elements. A cognitive element, according to Festinger (1957), is that which a person knows about himself, his behavior, or an object. Given this notion, a cognitive element is equivalent to a belief under the present definition. Three types of relationships may exist between cognitive elements: consonance, dissonance, and irrelevance.

Two elements are in a dissonant relation if, considering these two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other (Festinger, 1957, p.13).

Consonance occurs when one element "follows" the other. Not surprisingly, when two elements are unrelated, their relationship is referred to as irrelevant. The major hypothesis of this theory is that dissonance is psychologically uncomfortable for the individual. Conversely, consonance causes the individual no psychological discomfort. Given the discomfort caused by dissonance, the theory states that the individual will be motivated to reduce the dissonance between cognitive elements and increase the consonance between those same elements. Consonance, then, is a comfortable state for the individual and will not motivate the individual to change the relationship between the elements in question. Similarly, since no relationship between two elements is perceived in the case of irrelevance, the individual will not be motivated to change a relationship that does not exist. It is necessary to note that an irrelevant relationship between two elements may change. The vehicle for such change is the acquisition of knowledge (beliefs) about an object or element and the resultant affective evaluation that gives rise to attitudes. Thus, an individual may perceive that two elements have no relationship at one point in time (irrelevance), only to have a consonant or dissonant relationship arise over time.

The magnitude of a dissonant relationship may vary in terms of the psychological discomfort it causes the individual. Generally, the magnitude of dissonance increases with the relative importance of the cognitive elements to the person. The cognitive elements that comprise beliefs and form attitudes may have a more relevant relationship with one element than with another. Only the alteration of one element in a dissonant relationship will lead to the elimination of dissonance. Since the total elimination of one cognitive element may, in all practicality, be impossible, altering

the magnitude of dissonance may be the only solution for the individual. The reduction of dissonance may occur either through the addition of new cognitive elements that share a consonant relationship with the element in question, or the individual may simply reduce the importance of either of the elements involved in the relationship (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

There are four basic situations in which cognitive dissonance commonly arises: (1) decision making, (2) forced compliance, (3) voluntary and involuntary exposure, and (4) disagreement with other persons. Dissonance that arises through decision making is due to the knowledge that the unchosen alternative has positive aspects forgone through selection of the other alternative. Similarly, dissonance arises when a decision is made because the individual recognizes that the chosen alternative has negative aspects. An individual may reduce dissonance caused by a decision by either inflating the evaluation of the chosen alternative or devaluing the unchosen alternative. Dissonance also arises when an individual is forced to behave in a fashion that is contradictory to his beliefs or attitudes. The threat of punishment or the promise of reward is often the mechanism through which compliance is forced. The greatest dissonance in cases of forced compliance occurs when the threat or promise is small, because the applied force is small and could be more easily resisted. Conversely, the least dissonance occurs when the motivator is large or strong, truly forcing compliance (Festinger, 1957). Dissonance can also develop when an individual is exposed to objects or situations that are contradictory to his beliefs or attitudes. In this case, voluntary exposure holds the greatest potential for cognitive dissonance because the individual has chosen to expose himself. Conversely, involuntary exposure, by definition, excludes individual choice, thereby allowing the individual to rationalize his role in a dissonant situation as beyond his control. The final situation that can give rise to cognitive dissonance arises when individuals disagree with people to whom they are exposed. The range of dissonance caused by such disagreement varies as a function of the importance of the other persons involved. Thus, disagreement with others that one considers important causes greater dissonance to the person in question than does disagreement with a casual acquaintance.

Cognitive dissonance theory is central to the present study because the relationship between attitude toward unions and attitude toward rights issues is hypothesized to be consonant. This

hypothesized relationship is the subject of the present investigation. It may be argued that the cognitive elements referred to in dissonance theory are beliefs and that an individual's beliefs about the attitudes s/he holds are not equivalent to the attitudes themselves. Simply put, this argument states that the knowledge that one holds an attitude is not the same as the attitude itself. However, the reverse may also be argued: beliefs about attitudes or the knowledge that one holds an attitude, when measured, serve as a good proxy for the attitude itself. The direct measurement of an attitude is impossible and measures of beliefs about attitudes are often used. A measurement of an individual's knowledge that he holds a given attitude will be used in the present study as an adequate proxy for a measurement of the attitude itself. Use of such a proxy for the current study is justified by three things: (1) that the magnitude of the relationship between the actual attitude and its proxy is not the focus of the present study, (2) that the behavioral outcomes associated with the relationship between beliefs and attitudes are not of importance in the current study, and (3) the use of beliefs as proxy measurements for attitudinal constructs is generally accepted in the literature.

Given the review of the theoretical literature discussing how attitudes are formed, a discussion of the empirical literature specifically pertaining to unions and employer/employee rights is appropriate. In keeping with the main issues of the present work (i.e., attitudes toward unions, attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues, and the correlates of these attitudes), the following presentation will be organized accordingly. Eight studies relevant to these issues were located: Garland, Giacobbe, and French (n.d.); Rajan (1977); Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, and Spiller (1980); Willoughby and Keon (1985); Willoughby and Barclay (1986); Amann and Silverblatt (1987); and Bramel and Ortiz (1987). Since one of the main contributions of the present effort lies in its replication of previous works, a detailed discussion of the works to be replicated is in order. As the review of the literature will demonstrate, conflicting results have been generated and many of these efforts have been plagued by methodological problems.

## Socialization Experiences

As previously discussed, socialization experiences provide the body of information from which individuals form beliefs and attitudes and, therefore, represent a crucial issue for the present study. Thus, socialization experiences comprise the next portion of discussion regarding the theoretical perspective. One socialization experience that is integral in the formation of beliefs for students is their educational experience. For example, in attitude formation toward unions, the amount of time instructors spend teaching labor history and the space devoted to labor history in textbooks represent two important sources of knowledge, the basis of beliefs, for students. Several researchers (Ravitch, 1985; Anyon, 1979; and Leffler, 1983) have noted that these two sources of knowledge have declined notably in recent years. Amann and Silverblatt (1987) investigated the frequency with which different socialization agents discussed unions. Sixty - five percent of students surveyed indicated that unions were never discussed at home while 22% percent indicated that unions were seldom discussed. Only 13% indicated that unions were discussed sometimes or often in their homes. Only 22% of those surveyed indicated that their teachers discussed unions during classes and 74% of these students indicated that the time spent in class was less than five hours. These findings also provide support for the contention that students are receiving little information, either factual or affective, regarding the labor movement from the two major sources of socialization experiences in their lives, school and family (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987). Willoughby and Barclay (1986) found similar patterns of exposure to discussions about unions. Twenty-three percent of respondents reported having heard pro-union statements at home while 25% reported having heard anti-union statements. The remaining 52% of those sampled reported that unions had not been discussed in their home (Willoughby and Barclay, 1986).

Although most studies in the area of student attitudes have included questions about the discussion of unions at home and in school, only Amann and Silverblatt (1987) attempted to directly assess what sources influence students' attitudes toward unions. Specifically, they asked the students in their sample to rate the following sources in terms of their influence on the individual's

attitudes toward unions: television, newspapers, immediate family members, teachers, movies, friends, books, fellow workers, and other family members. Participants responded that television and newspapers were the primary sources of their attitudes toward unions. These sources were followed in importance by immediate family members, teachers, and movies as major sources of influence. Over half of the respondents reported that immediate family members, teachers, and books exerted no influence whatsoever on their attitudes in this area (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987). This serves as direct confirmation that the family and schools are not serving to educate students, either intellectually or affectually, about unions. Should unions and organizations choose to focus on students as future labor force participants, this information void could provide them with the opportunity to mold beliefs and attitudes by providing information to support the organization's antiunion stance or the union's organizing strategy, respectively.

The effect of family as a socialization agent was specifically addressed by Bramel and Ortiz (1987) and Rajan (1977). Bramel and Ortiz asked students if someone in their family was a member of a labor union. Those students responding "yes" had significantly higher scores on the knowledge questions than did individuals without union members in their family or those individuals who did not know if any family member belonged to a union. This would seem to suggest either that students with unionized parents are more frequently exposed to discussions about unions or that such individuals are sensitized to information dealing with unions and thereby acquire more knowledge (beliefs) in this area (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987).

Similarly, Rajan (1977) conducted a small study focusing on parental influence on trade union knowledge. He administered a survey to 46 high school students which consisted of true/false questions dealing with general knowledge of unions. He found that children whose parents belonged to a union did not have any greater knowledge of unions than did children of equivalent age and educational level whose parents were not union members. The finding that students of unionized parents have no better knowledge of unions than students without unionized parents directly contradicts the findings of Bramel and Ortiz (1987). A unique but incidental characteristic of the sample was that no respondents had participated in any educational activities involving labor unions. Thus, the family remained as the major source of socialization experiences. The findings

of this study, however, are limited by its small sample size and by the author's intentional omission of other sources of knowledge about unionism such as television, movies, and books. Therefore, the effect of having union members in one's family on knowledge about unionism is unclear, given the existing literature. This issue will be addressed in the present study.

Most studies regarding socialization experiences have focused on the relative influence of given socialization experiences or factors on general attitudes toward unions. However, Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, and Spiller (1980) conducted a study that, in part, investigated the effect of socialization experiences on the specific attitude of commitment toward unions. Organizational commitment was defined as

(1) a strong desire to remain a member of the particular organization, (2) a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization, and (3) a definite belief in and acceptance of the values and goals of the organization (Gordon et al., 1980, p. 480).

One of the underlying premises of this investigation was that socialization experiences occurring in the first few years of employment could be of equal or greater importance to organizational commitment than pre-employment (personal) socialization experiences. Factor analysis was utilized to investigate the dimensions of the construct of organizational commitment to the union. Four factors or dimensions emerged from the analysis: union loyalty, responsibility to the union, willingness to work for the union (i.e., extra work), and belief in unionism. Early socialization experiences (i.e., those socialization experiences occurring early in union membership) were among the variables most strongly correlated with all of the emergent dimensions except willingness to work for the union. As would be expected, early socialization influences were also strongly associated with the global factor of overall commitment to the union. Recent socialization influences were found to be moderately correlated with overall commitment to the union. Thus, Gordon et al. (1980) demonstrated the effects of socialization experiences on the formation of a specific attitude. This research reiterates that a void exists with respect to attitudes toward unions (i.e., that recent socialization influences had a substantial impact on commitment, because the individual had not been previously exposed to influences that would have caused the development of commitment or attitudes toward unions) since the attitude of commitment toward the union appears most malleable early in employment.

## Knowledge About Unions

Knowledge gained through experience and socialization serves as the basis for the formation of beliefs or the cognitive set of the individual. Thus, the next portion of the literature review covers studies that investigate students' knowledge with respect to unions. Investigations of students' knowledge regarding unions generally use a measure of individual factual knowledge about unions as the variable of interest. Thus, a distinction needs to be made. Studies most often measure factual knowledge such as knowledge of unions' legal rights or legal constraints upon union activities, because such knowledge is distinct and verifiable. Personal knowledge of union activities may or may not be factually correct and may become difficult to verify in a manner that is generalizable to all respondents. Henceforth, factual knowledge should be interpreted by the reader as connoting objective and verifiable fact.

Bramel and Ortiz (1987) conducted a survey of 585 students (311 ninth graders and 274 twelfth graders). One section of their study measured student knowledge of labor history and labor relations. True/false questions were taken from history texts used by the students and, thus, had the potential for being learned by the students. Examples of questions used include:

- The AFL - CIO is a large organization which resulted from the merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987, p. 34).
- The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 was a major law which gave unions a lot of legal support (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987, p. 34).

The results of the knowledge section indicated that the number of correctly answered questions barely exceeded the number of questions incorrectly answered or answered in the undecided category.

Amann and Silverblatt (1987) included a similar knowledge section in a study of high school students' views on unionism. Five questions covering how organizations become unionized, requirements to join unions, federal regulation of unions, the function of the AFL-CIO, and the types of jobs generally held by union members were included. Amann and Silverblatt found that correct answers to all five questions were given by less than 2% of the 208 students surveyed. Twenty -

six percent of those surveyed could not correctly answer even one question. On average, only two questions were answered correctly. These findings support those of Bramel and Ortiz (1987), in that students seem to have a limited knowledge base from which attitudes arise. Since attitudes are nothing more than the product of affective evaluation of beliefs, lack of knowledge regarding unions is equivalent to a lack of beliefs. Thus, the lack of beliefs results in the lack of a basis upon which attitudes toward unions can be formed.

## **Students' Attitudes Toward Unions**

The affective evaluation of beliefs is the process by which attitudes are formed. Bramel and Ortiz (1987) investigated student attitudes toward unions. Examples of attitude questions include:

- Labor unions impose too many restrictions on the way management runs the business.
- Strikes are often the only means workers have of getting better working conditions.
- Unions cause unnecessary bad feelings in the workplace.
- If there were no unions, the workers would get ripped off.

For the students participating in the Bramel and Ortiz (1987) study, a significantly positive overall attitude toward unions was found. Given that students in this sample had, at best, minimal factual knowledge about unions from which to form beliefs, this positive affective evaluation of unions is surprising. These findings indicate that some other mechanism may be involved in the formation of attitudes or that something is interceding in the process of affective evaluation.

Participants in a study conducted by Amann and Silverblatt (1987) were asked three questions designated as indicators of their attitudes toward unions. The first question dealt with right-to-work issues. Sixty - two percent of participants responded that they opposed mandatory union membership. Eleven percent supported mandatory membership, with the remaining 27% expressing no opinion. The second question used as an indicator of attitude toward unions dealt with the right of public sector employees to strike. Thirty-seven percent of respondents supported this right, while 29% opposed government workers having this right. The remaining 34% of the sample expressed no opinion on the matter. The final question used by Amann and Silverblatt as an indicator of

attitude toward unions asked participants to judge what the welfare of the United States would be given either an increase or a decrease in union membership. Fifty percent of the respondents perceived no relationship between growth or decline in membership and the welfare of the nation. Eighteen percent of the students surveyed believed that the nation's welfare would improve if union membership were to decline, while 31% felt that the nation's welfare would improve if union membership grew.

Amann and Silverblatt (1987) also included 6 questions regarding attitudes based on perceptions of "big labor's image" which are somewhat analogous to those included by Bramel and Oritz (1987). Specifically, these questions asked respondents to rate how "big labor" political activities influenced elections to public office, laws passed, and how the country is run. Respondents were also asked to evaluate statements dealing with union - member relations, such as whether members are required to "go along" with decisions and whether leaders act in their own best interest. Finally, respondents evaluated the power of unions relative to the employer. The results of this series of questions are quite interesting. Over 38% of respondents felt that "big labor" political activities influence which candidate is elected to public office, while 33% of the sample neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Contrary to this finding, 44% of participants felt that union political activities did not influence laws passed, while only 19% believed that union political activities impacted laws passed and 30% expressed no opinion. The attitudes expressed by respondents with respect to organized labor's influence on how the country is run mirrors attitudes expressed about laws passed. In terms of internal union affairs, nearly 38% of respondents felt that union members were not required to go along with decisions, while 29% expressed no opinion and 23% felt that members were required to go along with the union's decisions. Thirty - four percent of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that union leaders act in their own self - interest, while almost 30% of those surveyed disagreed with the statement and nearly 19% agreed with it. These two patterns of responses seem to suggest that those surveyed believed that individuals could maintain their independence while being a member of the union and that labor leaders are not selfish or corrupt. Finally, respondents were almost evenly divided with respect to the power of unions relative to the employing organization, with 35% agreeing that unions are more powerful,

30% disagreeing, and 21% remaining neutral with respect to this issue (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987).

Amann and Silverblatt (1987) also investigated student beliefs with respect to union instrumentality. As was suggested in the discussion of Rosenberg's (1957) instrumentality-value model, attitudes about an object may be a function of the individual's beliefs about the degree to which the object helps the individual attain some desired end. Amann and Silverblatt failed to explicitly discuss the relationship between instrumentality beliefs about unions and attitudes toward unions; however, these questions can still serve as a preliminary investigation of Rosenberg's (1957) instrumentality-value theory as outlined above. Students were asked to rate the instrumentality of unions in four areas: protecting workers against unfair actions, improving job security and working conditions, and providing members their "dues worth". Nearly 84% of participants indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that unions do protect workers from unfair actions, while 10% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 5.9% disagreed to some extent. Seventy-nine percent of students agreed that unions improve job security, while 12% voiced no opinion and only 9% disagreed to some degree. Seventy-one percent of participants agreed that unions were instrumental in improving wages and working conditions for employees, while nearly 19% voiced no opinion on the matter and the remaining 10% of those sampled disagreed that unions were instrumental in improving wages and working conditions. When students were asked about the instrumentality of unions in providing members their "dues worth" a somewhat different picture emerged. Only 44.5% of respondents agreed that unions accomplished this, while close to 39% of the sample was unsure, and only 17% of those sampled believed that unions did not give the member their "dues worth". Thus, there appears to be some conflict with respect to these students' beliefs about the instrumentality of unions. Clearly, the majority of respondents believed that unions do protect workers from unfair actions, improve job security, and improve wages and working conditions. However, a considerable number of participants were unsure whether union members receive their "dues worth" from unions. One potential explanation for this apparent contradiction is that students do not know or understand what unions are supposed to do for their members (e.g., protect workers; improve security, wages, and working conditions). Another potential explanation is that

students are unclear about the amount of dues that are charged. These seemingly contradictory findings may be due to the lack of education that seems to be occurring in this area either at home or in school.

Willoughby and Barclay (1986) investigated the differences in attitudes toward unions among students with different college majors. Their sample consisted of 236 college juniors and seniors, 25% liberal arts majors, 22% education, 15% nursing, 19% other health sciences such as physical therapy, and 19% management. Seven scales were utilized to assess attitudes toward unions in general, national unions, union issues, the effectiveness of unions, union leaders, the economic impact of unions, and local versus national unions. Sample items from each of these scales can be found in Table 1. Although Willoughby and Barclay hypothesized that students with different college majors would hold different attitudes toward unions, no such differences were found. Results demonstrated that students surveyed were neutral in their attitudes toward unions. Additionally, Willoughby and Barclay suggested that experiences causing frustration occurring early in one's employment history may polarize an individual's attitudes, such that individuals with little work experience would be expected to have more neutral attitudes than individuals with greater work experience (Willoughby and Barclay, 1986).

Willoughby and Keon (1985) conducted an investigation in order to assess attitudinal change as a result of a course in collective bargaining. This research is the most explicit test of the process of affective evaluation of beliefs by which attitudes are formed. The scales used were identical to those used in Willoughby and Barclay (1986), examples of which are presented above. This quasi-experiment assessed the attitudinal change resulting from the affective evaluation of beliefs altered by college instruction. Appropriate control groups were utilized. Pretest and posttest scores were collected for both the control (i.e., policy class) and experimental (i.e., collective bargaining class) groups. The experimental group had significantly more favorable attitudes on five pretest scales (general attitudes toward unions, attitudes toward national unions, attitudes toward union issues, attitudes toward union leaders, and attitudes toward the economic impact of unions) than did the control group indicating that the groups were not equivalent prior to the treatment (i.e., instruction in collective bargaining). This lack of equivalence, which may have resulted from dif-

ferential quantities of work experience, was controlled for statistically. After receiving instruction, the experimental group's attitudes toward unions in general were significantly more positive than those of the control group (even after controlling for initial differences between the groups). Similarly, attitudes toward national unions and union effectiveness were significantly more positive for the experimental group. Attitudes that were not significantly affected by instruction included attitudes toward unions as collectivities, union leaders, and unions' economic impact. Thus, this study provides support for the notion that beliefs that are altered when an individual is exposed to new information regarding an object result in affective reevaluation and, ultimately, altered attitudes.

## **Behavioral Intentions**

Although the link between attitudes and behavior was once believed to be direct, lack of empirical evidence supporting this relationship has led to its reformulation. As outlined above, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) hypothesized that attitudes are more closely related to one's behavioral intentions than to actual behavior performed. Bramel and Ortiz (1987) included two questions in their survey which provide some insight into the behavioral intentions of today's students with respect to unions. When asked if they expected to be members of a labor union in 10 years, 18% responded "yes", 25% said "no", and the remainder of students were undecided. The large number of undecided students indicates that, at least for this sample, students were still malleable in terms of their future participation in and interaction with unions. When asked whether "big labor", "big business", or "big government" posed the biggest threat to the future of the United States, 56% of students replied "big government" and 27% said "big business". Only 16% of students surveyed responded that "big labor" posed the greatest threat to the country.

In a similar vein, Amann and Silverblatt (1987) found that over 90% of students participating in their survey claimed they did not take the degree of unionism in an organization into consideration when making a career choice. When asked to hypothetically choose between a job in which fellow employees were unionized, but union membership was not required and a job in a non-

unionized organization, 18% of respondents said they would choose to work in the non-unionized organization, while 48% said they would choose to work for the unionized organization; the remaining 24% did not voice a preference for either option. These findings, coupled with those of Bramel and Ortiz (1987), would seem to indicate that student behavioral intentions regarding unions were not biased against unions. Thus, it would seem that their attitudes toward unions are neutral.

**Table 1. Examples from Willoughby and Keon (1985) and Willoughby and Barclay (1986)**

**General Attitudes toward Unions (GUATT)**

- The growth of unions has made our democracy stronger.
- If it were not for unions, there would be little protection against favoritism on the job.
- Labor unions hold back progress.

**Attitudes toward National Unions (NUATT)**

- It is practically impossible to select different officers in national unions.
- The officers of national unions, as compared to chief executives of organizations, are paid too much.

**Attitudes toward Unionism (UATT)**

- Employees should have the right to join a union.
- Unions represent the wishes of members.
- Unions are a prime cause of strikes.

**Attitudes toward Union Effectiveness (UEFF)**

- Unions cooperate with management on disciplinary matters.
- Unions are generally reasonable in their claims.

**Attitudes toward union leaders (ATTOLDRS)**

- Union officers are interested in the welfare of their members.
- Labor leaders, as compared to business leaders, do the most good for the country.

**Attitudes toward the Economic Impact of Unions (ECONIP)**

- Unions have the right amount of power by the economic sanctions they possess to deal with large corporations.
- Economic power of unions should be limited by the Federal Government.

**Attitudes toward Local versus National Unions (LOCVNAT)**

- Local issues are more critical to the well being of the individual union member than national and state economic issues.

## Correlates of Attitudes Toward Unions

Many factors thought to be related to attitudes toward unions have been investigated. Such factors include social class, membership of relatives in unions, level of education, gender, age, race, personal union membership, and college major. Nearly all studies investigating attitudes include measures to assess the demographic composition of the sample so that differences between groups within the sample for the attitude in question can be studied. The discussion that follows is a summary of such correlates for the literature reviewed.

In investigations of level of knowledge about unions, such as Bramel and Ortiz (1987), no significant differences in the number of correctly answered questions were found by gender or education level. Nor was social class, which was assessed with three different measures, found to be significantly associated with knowledge about unions. Differences in attitudes toward unions were found to differ by gender, with females holding significantly more positive attitudes than males. Only 2.5% of the males in this sample had anti-union attitudes. No females surveyed held anti-union attitudes. No significant association between social class and attitudes toward unions was found (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987).

With respect to future behavioral intentions toward unionized employment, Bramel and Ortiz (1987) found no significant gender differences, but significant differences associated with educational level did emerge. Significantly more high school seniors expected to be union members within 10 years than did freshmen. This difference may be attributable solely to the imminence of employment for seniors. Social class did have a significant effect on behavioral intentions with individuals in lower social classes being more likely to expect to be union members within 10 years (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987).

With reference to specific union issues, significant gender differences were found. Male participants in Amann and Silverblatt's (1987) study were found to be more inclined to support mandatory union membership than were female participants. Racial differences also emerged with respect to the issue of mandatory union membership. With respect to racial differences, a dis-

inction between opposition to and support of mandatory membership emerged. While opposition and support appear to be end points upon a continuum, participants did not view lack of support for mandatory membership as equivalent to opposition. Rather, lack of support appeared to be viewed more as a neutral position. Hispanic individuals were least likely to support required membership, while Black individuals were most likely to support it. Whites were found to be the most likely racial group to oppose mandatory membership. Gender differences with respect to the issue of the right of public sector employees to strike were not found; however, racial differences did emerge. Black students were found to be nearly twice as likely to support this right as non-Black students. White students were found to be the least likely to support this right. Gender and racial differences were evident with respect to the issue of union growth and national welfare. Females were more likely than males to view the relationship between union growth and national welfare as positive. Whites were found to be more likely than Blacks or Hispanics to perceive a positive relationship between union growth and national welfare (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987).

## **Attitudes Toward Employer/Employee Rights Issues**

Given that most studies investigating students' attitudes toward unions find generally neutral attitudes, the isolation of a non-neutral attitude related to unionism could provide unions and employers with a mechanism upon which they can capitalize to polarize affect toward unions. Attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues may serve this purpose. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted regarding this type of attitude. In fact, only one study using a student sample could be located. This study, conducted by Garland, Giacobbe, and French (n.d.), investigated students' attitudes toward 54 employer activities as well as the relationship between those attitudes and other variables (e.g., demographic, lifestyle, and personality variables). This study leaves uninvestigated knowledge or beliefs with respect to rights issues and focuses only on the attitude component of the model proposed for the current project (i.e., attitudes toward

employer/employee rights issues, not knowledge of such rights issues). Likewise, no investigation of socialization experiences or sources was included.

Garland et al. recognized that attitudes toward employer activities that were personal and obviously intrusive (e.g., polygraphs) were likely to be different from attitudes toward less intrusive activities (e.g., informational inquiries). Thus, they hypothesized that employment activities traditionally supported by social norms or, as termed by Garland et al., normative activities, would correspond to a different set of attitudes than intrusive activities. Factor analysis showed, however, that employer activities actually clustered into three distinct groups: "private" activities such as collection and use of non - job related information (e.g., intended pregnancy plans); "polydrug" activities, which are all activities related to polygraph or drug testing; and "normative" or accepted employer activities (e.g., scheduling work, determining compensation) (Garland et al., n.d.).

Overall, Garland et al. found that students in their sample condoned normative employer activities. Clear support was evident for employers' rights to engage in the design of work, the determination of employee compensation, and the appraisal of employee performance. Less support was demonstrated for employer rights to engage in polydrug activities such as polygraph and drug testing. Opposition to employers' rights to engage in private activities was clearly voiced by the respondents. Respondents voiced strong disagreement regarding an employer's right to collect certain information or use such information in making employment decisions. Specific types of information opposed by the students surveyed included religious beliefs, pregnancy status or intentions, personal finances, union activities, political affiliations or voting behavior, sexual orientation or behavior, and spouse characteristics. Thus, student attitudes according to this study are supportive with respect to employer normative activities, neutral or undecided toward polydrug activities, and nonsupportive with respect to employer private activities.

## Correlates of Attitudes Toward Employer/Employee Rights Issues

As was the case in research addressing attitudes toward unions, research addressing attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues also often includes measures to assess demographic characteristics of the sample so that pertinent differences can be identified. Garland et al. also investigated two additional groups of variables: "lifestyle" and "individual". Those variables labeled as lifestyle variables dealt mainly with individual experience with certain behaviors (e.g., drug use) while variables termed "individual" dealt mainly with employment history. These three categories of variables (i.e., demographic, lifestyle, and individual) can all be classified as socialization experiences. In addition to these three categories of variables, Garland et al. included a measure of a personality variable, authoritarianism. Authoritarianism has been defined as: "The personality dimension that involves submission to authority, rigid conformity to social norms, and hostile rejection of those who deviate from the norms "(Baron and Byrne, 1982).

In investigating variables predictive of attitudes toward private activities, six variables emerged as significant in the regression analysis ( $p < .01$  to  $p < .0001$ ): authoritarianism, gender, race, self-employment, cigarette smoking, and political conservatism. Men were more likely to support these types of activities than women, Asians more likely to support private activities than Whites, smokers were more likely to agree with these activities than non-smokers, and conservatives were most likely to agree and liberals least likely to agree with employers' rights to engage in private activities.

In the comparable regression analysis for polydrug activities, five variables emerged as significant ( $p < .01$  to  $p < .0001$ ): authoritarianism, drug use, cigarette smoking, religious beliefs, and stealing from employers. Specifically, those respondents who admitted using drugs were less likely to agree with employers' rights to engage in such activities than were non-users. Those participants who smoked cigarettes were less likely to agree with employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities. Fundamentalist Christians were the most likely of the religious denominations represented in the sample to agree with an employers' rights to engage in such activities. Finally, those respond-

ents who admitted to stealing from an employer were less likely to agree that employers should be allowed to conduct such activities (Garland et al., n.d.).

In the final type of activity investigated, normative activities, race, gender, and marital status were the variables that comprised the best predictive model ( $p < .01$  to  $p < .0001$ ). Asians were less likely to agree than Whites with an employers' rights to engage in such activities. Hispanics were found to be less likely to agree than Whites with an employers' rights to engage in normative employment activities. Males were more likely to agree with such activities than females. Single individuals were found to be less likely to agree with an employers' right to engage in normative activities than those respondents who were married.

## *Conclusions from the Empirical Literature*

What kind of picture can be drawn about today's students from the empirical literature regarding socialization experiences, knowledge about unions, attitudes toward unions, behavioral intentions regarding unions, correlates of attitudes toward unions, and correlates of attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues? It is clear that students are receiving very little exposure to information about unions and union issues at home and in the classroom (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987; Willoughby and Barclay, 1986). This is evidenced by the fact that television and newspapers were indicated as the strongest sources of influence on attitudes toward unions (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987). The influence of family as a socialization agent when at least one family member belongs to a union is not clear (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987; Rajan, 1977). Further research is necessary to clarify the contradiction evident in the literature to date regarding the effect of having a unionized family member. Gordon et al. (1980), in their investigation of the relationship between socialization experiences and commitment toward unions, concluded that socialization experiences occurring during early employment may be of equal or greater importance to commitment to the union than pre-employment socialization experiences. The "potency" of early employment experiences may

be due to a lack of pre-employment exposure to unions and union issues. Further empirical work is needed to investigate this possibility. Not surprisingly, students also seem to have a limited factual knowledge base regarding unions (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987; Amann and Silverblatt, 1987). Given their limited exposure to union issues from major socialization sources such as school and family, low factual knowledge is to be expected.

With respect to overall attitudes toward unions, students were neutral or slightly positive in their attitudes. Certainly, attitudes regarding some specific issues were more polarized than neutral, but since the nature of the aggregation of component attitudes toward attributes of an object into global attitudes about the object as a whole is not clear, this remains unresolved. Since socialization experiences are the basis for knowledge and knowledge forms the matter for attitudes once affectively evaluated, the neutrality of attitudes toward unions among students sampled is not surprising. Without exposure and knowledge, there is no basis for students to form either negative or positive attitudes (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987; Amann and Silverblatt, 1987; Willoughby and Barclay, 1986). Research has shown, however, that some attitudes regarding specific union issues can be polarized following presentation of factual material (Willoughby and Keon, 1985). In accordance with lack of exposure to socialization sources, lack of knowledge regarding unions, and basically neutral attitudes toward unions, findings that indicate undecided behavioral intentions regarding employment in unionized settings and union membership are not startling either (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987; Amann and Silverblatt, 1987).

Various correlates of attitudes toward unions have been investigated. In general, gender, social class, and educational level have not been found to be related to knowledge about unions (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987). Significant gender differences have been found regarding attitudes toward unions with women being more pro-union than men (Bramel and Ortiz, 1987). Gender differences with respect to specific union issues were found as were racial differences (Amann and Silverblatt, 1987). Gender differences regarding future behavioral intentions were not found. As might be expected, educational level and social class were found to be significant correlates of future behavioral intentions.

Generally speaking, students seem supportive of employers' rights to engage in normative activities. They seem less supportive of employers' rights in the areas of drug and polygraph testing and least supportive of employers' rights to inquire and take action regarding private or personal issues. In investigating correlates of attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues, some significant findings emerged. Racial and gender differences as well as differences in political beliefs and some personal variables emerged as significant predictors of support for employers' rights in the area of private information. Differences in past behaviors such as drug use and stealing, along with some personal variables, emerged as significant predictors of support for employers' rights to engage in drug and polygraph testing. Finally, racial and gender differences were found with respect to support for employers' rights to engage in normative activities.

Given the state of the current empirical literature, several important research needs emerge. Further research is needed to address the influence of unionized family members as a socialization agent regarding union issues and attitudes and, thereby, to help resolve the contradiction evident in the literature to date. Similarly, additional research is needed regarding the relative influence of various socialization experiences in the formation of beliefs and attitudes toward unions. In this same vein, further research is needed to clarify the effect of early employment experiences in the formation of attitudes toward unions, and specifically to determine the potency of such experiences relative to other socialization experiences. Future research regarding attitudes toward unions might also address the qualitative nature (i.e., positive or negative affect) of attitudes with respect to specific attributes of unions relative to overall or global attitudes toward unions. Finally, given the lack of research regarding employment rights issues, any quality research in this area would be informative. Specific research might address the exact nature of rights (i.e., are private, normative, and polydrug activities perceived as separate and distinct clusters across various populations?) and the relative importance that various groups of individuals attach to rights issues.

The most pressing need to emerge from the review of the current empirical literature, however, is not substantive in nature. Rather, it is a broad methodological concern. Empirical work in the area of student attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues has been haphazard at best. The reader gets the sense that oftentimes convenience samples are used and measures

thrown together when a research opportunity presents itself. Specifically, past research has been characterized by inordinately small sample sizes, poor design, poor measurement, and sloppy analyses. The literature in this area would at this time be best served by a well conceived and designed study with ample sample size to detect expected effects. Future designs could include sampling procedures to select subjects with expressly different socialization experiences on the variables of interest, thereby ensuring adequate variance between groups. Similarly, a well conceived design would rationally select students as the sample of choice, not convenience. Measures utilized in data collection should be pretested and thus refined, and analyses of the measurement qualities of chosen measures (e.g., reliability) should be calculated and reported. Analyses of future data in this area should be based on criteria established prior to measurement and should be obtained from the theoretical base established for the investigation in question.

Although there are many flaws apparent in both the theoretical and empirical literature regarding attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues, it is difficult to conceive of all these errors being correctly addressed by a single research endeavor. Thus, the current work is designed to address a few of these flaws, and specifically those which are thought to be most daunting. Primarily, the current work is designed specifically to utilize students as the chosen sample for the aforementioned reasons. Additionally, the measures selected were utilized in the literature and their utilization in the current project will explore their reliability and generalizability to students. This effort, in conjunction with further work in these areas, will contribute information regarding the construct validity of these measures. Finally, descriptive information as well as correlates of the attitudes of interest will be analyzed in hopes of contributing to or establishing a descriptive base for further work, since a descriptive base is currently lacking in the literature. Data designed to help address other flaws in the literature, such as the nature and impact of socialization experiences on attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues, will be collected simultaneously with the data to be utilized in the present investigation and analyses, but will not be reported due to spatial and temporal limitations. Thus, the present empirical effort, further detailed in Chapter Three, focuses largely on the relationship between knowledge and attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues and the relationship between these two attitudes.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The methodology to be used in conducting the study is detailed in this chapter. The type of sample to be drawn, the method of data collection, the hypotheses derived from the theoretical base as well as the restatement of these propositions as operationalized hypotheses to allow for statistical testing, the scales used to investigate the operationalized hypotheses, and the statistical procedures to be used are described.

### *Research Questions*

The main research questions to be investigated in this project are as follows:

1. Is factual knowledge about unions related to attitudes toward unions? If so, how?
2. Is factual knowledge and/or experience with certain activities which comprise rights issues related to attitudes toward rights issues? If so, how?
3. Are attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues related?
4. What are the correlates of attitudes toward unions?
5. What are the correlates of attitudes toward employment rights issues?

Thus, the current endeavor is largely descriptive and correlational in nature. As detailed in chapters 1 and 2, descriptive work is almost wholly lacking in the case of students. Therefore, a conscious

decision has been made to focus here on the descriptive function as well as on preliminary analyses of the nature of the relationships of interest.

## *Theoretical Model*

The major components of the proposed model are: beliefs about unions (knowledge), attitudes toward unions, beliefs about rights issues (knowledge), attitudes toward rights issues, and socialization experiences. The theoretical model may be graphically depicted as follows:

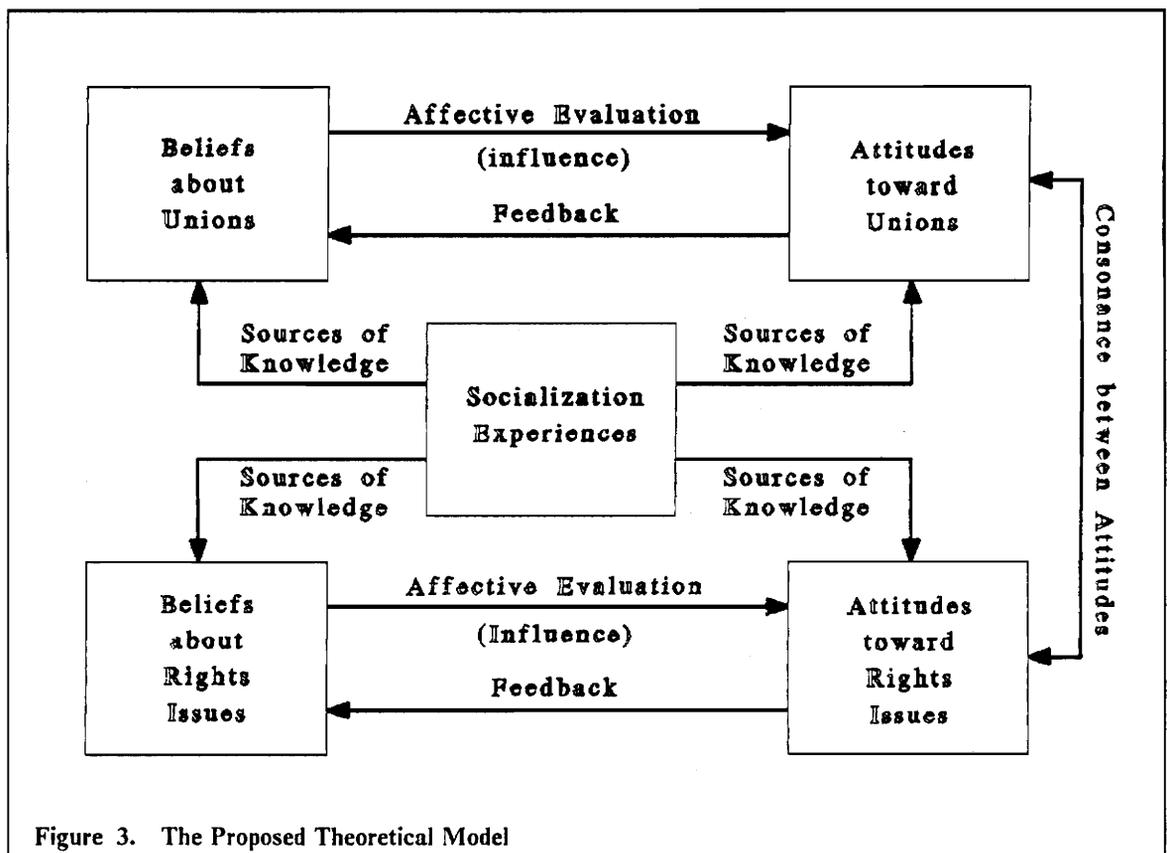


Figure 3. The Proposed Theoretical Model

As is evident upon inspection of the model, many propositions and operationalized hypotheses can be formulated as tests of various parts of the theoretical model. Only a few limited tests

of the model's major linkages or relationships will be conducted under the purview of the current project. However, data intended for use in conducting further tests of the model will be analyzed at a later date.

## *Operational Hypotheses*

In order to use the scales contained in the questionnaire to test hypotheses, a set of operationalized hypotheses must be formulated. For convenience, each theoretical proposition is listed below and is followed by the corresponding operationalized hypothesis. The statistical test for each hypothesis is then discussed.

### **Affective Evaluation Between Union Knowledge and Union Attitude**

**PROPOSITION 1:** Individuals with higher levels of knowledge about unions will have significantly more positive attitudes toward unions than individuals with lower levels of knowledge.

Hypothesis 1: Factual knowledge about unions will be positively associated with attitude toward unions.

The rationale underlying Proposition 1 is simply that increases in factual knowledge regarding unions are suspected to polarize attitudes in a positive direction. For example, it is likely that increases in factual knowledge regarding unions would include ideas such as the functions that unions serve and the services they provide for their members. Both the functions that unions serve (e.g., "keeping employers in their place") and the services provided (e.g., negotiating hours and wages or grievance representation) are likely to be viewed as positive, thereby polarizing attitudes toward unions in a positive manner. Willoughby and Keon (1985), in fact, demonstrated that attitudes of students did polarize in a positive direction as a result of in-

struction that improved students' factual knowledge regarding unions. Based on the theoretical model, factual knowledge regarding unions is the cognitive base for affective evaluation from which an attitude is formed. Thus, this relationship should be evident empirically.

Operational Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) positive correlation between factual knowledge about unions and attitude toward unions.

A Pearson's product-moment correlation will be used to test Operational Hypothesis 1.

## **Affective Evaluation Between Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Rights Issues**

### ***Polydrug Rights Issues***

**PROPOSITION 2A:** Individuals with higher levels of exposure to and/or participation in activities that comprise polydrug activities (e.g., drug use, or stealing from an employer) will have significantly more negative attitudes toward those activities that comprise employers' polydrug activities (e.g., drug testing or polygraphs) than individuals with less exposure to or participation in polydrug activities.

Hypothesis 2A: Exposure to polydrug activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities.

The rationale underlying this hypothesis is simply that individuals engaged in polydrug activities such as using drugs are likely to have a negative attitude toward employers' rights to engage in activities that might reveal an employee's participation in such activities. Furthermore, individuals not currently participating in polydrug activities, but who have in the past engaged in or have been exposed to such activities, are likely to feel that such activities are permissible and, therefore, also have a negative attitude toward employers' rights to engage in activities that could identify participants. Garland et al. (n.d.) found that students participating in their study generally did not support employers' rights to engage in activities such as drug and polygraph testing. Furthermore, their regression analysis demonstrated that participants who admitted

drug use, stealing from employers, or smoked cigarettes were less likely to agree that employers should have the right to engage in such activities. From a theoretical standpoint, experiences with or exposure to polydrug activities should form the base from which an attitude toward such activities would arise via affective evaluation. Therefore, an empirical relationship should be demonstrable.

Operational Hypothesis 2A: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between exposure to polydrug activities and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities.

This operational hypothesis will also be tested with a Pearson's product-moment correlation.

### *Normative Rights Issues*

**PROPOSITION 2B:** Individuals with higher levels of exposure to normative employer activities will have a significantly more positive attitudes toward normative employer activities (e.g., hiring, work scheduling) than individuals with less exposure.

Hypothesis 2B: Exposure to work situations (e.g., part time, temporary, seasonal, or full time employment experience) will be positively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct normative activities.

The rationale underlying this hypothesis is that individuals having greater exposure to activities that employers regularly and legally engage in (e.g., scheduling work) in the course of business or who have greater factual knowledge about employers' rights to engage in such activities will feel that employers should rightly be allowed to do so (thereby having a positive attitude toward employer rights to engage in normative activities). Participants in the study conducted by Garland et al. (n.d.) generally condoned normative employer activities. In their regression analysis, race, gender, and marital status emerged to form the best predictive model with whites, males, and single individuals most likely to agree with employers' rights to engage in these activities. One's experience with employment, according to the theoretical model, con-

stitutes one's cognitive base from which an attitude is formed as the product of affective evaluation.

Operational Hypothesis 2B: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) positive correlation between exposure to work and normative rights issues and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct normative activities.

Operationalized Hypothesis 2B will be tested with a Pearson's product-moment correlation as has been the case with aforementioned hypotheses.

### *Private Rights Issues*

**PROPOSITION 2C:** Individuals with higher levels of knowledge regarding activities that employers can legally engage in or, conversely, activities that employers can not legally engage in (e.g., legal bases for hiring, termination, and requiring employees to engage in certain activities) will have significantly more negative attitudes toward those activities that comprise employers' private activities (e.g., inquiring about marital status) than individuals with less knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities.

Hypothesis 2C: Factual knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct private activities.

The rationale underlying this hypothesis is that individuals having greater factual knowledge about employers' rights to conduct activities or, rather, which employer activities fall within the realm of being legal and which do not, are more likely to have knowledge regarding the legality of employers' inquiries about private issues (e.g., marital status, pregnancy plans, religion) and, furthermore, are more likely to believe that it is inappropriate for employers to engage in such activities. Therefore, individuals with greater factual knowledge about the boundaries of employers' rights are more likely to have a negative attitude toward employers' engaging in private activities. Opposition to employers' rights to engage in private activities was clearly voiced by the participants in Garland et al. (n.d.). Opinions voiced in opposition to employers' private activities by participants were stronger than those voiced in opposition of employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities. Specifically, respondents objected to employers collecting and/or using the following information in making employment-related

decisions: religious beliefs, pregnancy status or intentions, personal finances, union activities, political affiliations or voting behavior, and spouse characteristics. Key variables emerging from Garland et al.'s regression analysis were gender, race, self-employment, cigarette smoking, and political conservatism. Men, Asians, smokers, and conservatives were most likely to agree with employers' rights to engage in private activities. Once again, this factual knowledge is the cognitive base for affective evaluation in the proposed theoretical framework.

Operational Hypothesis 2C: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between factual knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct private activities.

Again, Operational Hypothesis 2C will be tested with a Pearson's product-moment correlation.

## Consonance Between Union and Rights Attitudes

### *Private Rights Issues*

**PROPOSITION 3A:** Individuals with a negative attitude toward employers engaging in activities falling within the cluster of private activities (e.g., employers should not inquire about marital status) will have significantly more positive attitudes toward unions than individuals with positive attitudes toward employers' rights to engage in activities within the private realm.

Hypothesis 3A: Attitude toward private rights issues will be inversely related to attitude toward unions.

The rationale underlying this hypothesis is that individuals who believe that employers do not have a right to investigate or have knowledge of private information (e.g., marital status or pregnancy plans) will view unions as protectors of their privacy (thereby having a more positive attitude toward unions). Thus, the degree to which one's attitude toward employers' rights to engage in private activities is negative is hypothesized to be inversely related to the degree to which one's attitude toward unions is positive. Within the theoretical framework, then, nega-

tive attitude toward employers' rights in this realm is hypothesized to be consonant with a positive attitude toward unions.

Operational Hypothesis 3A: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between attitude toward private rights issues and unions.

To test the hypothesized consonance between attitudes toward private rights issues and attitude toward unions, Operationalized Hypothesis 3A will be tested with Pearson product-moment correlation.

### ***Polydrug Rights Issues***

**PROPOSITION 3B:** Individuals with a negative attitude toward employers engaging in activities that constitute polydrug activities (e.g., drug testing or polygraphs) will have significantly more positive attitudes toward unions than individuals with positive attitudes toward employer rights in the polydrug area.

Hypothesis 3B: Attitude toward polydrug rights issues will be negatively associated with attitude toward unions.

The rationale underlying this hypothesis is parallel to that for hypothesis 3A. Individuals who believe that employers should not engage in polydrug activities (e.g., drug testing) are likely to have a positive attitude toward unions in that they will view unions as protectors of their individual rights (including their right to engage in polydrug activities). A negative attitude toward employers' rights in this area is hypothesized to be consonant with a positive attitude toward unions according to the proposed theoretical model.

Operational Hypothesis 3B: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between attitude toward polydrug rights issues and unions.

Investigation of the hypothesized consonance between attitude toward polydrug activities and attitude toward unions leads to the test of Operationalized Hypothesis 3B with Pearson product-moment correlation.

## *Normative Rights Issues*

**PROPOSITION 3C:** Individuals with a positive attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities (e.g., work scheduling) will have a significantly more negative attitude toward unions than those individuals with a negative attitude toward such activities.

Hypothesis 3C: Attitude toward normative rights issues will be inversely related to attitude toward unions.

The rationale underlying this hypothesis is similar to that for hypotheses 3A and 3B. Individuals who have a positive attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities are likely to view employers as "rulers" of the workplace with various appropriate entitlements and rights. Individuals with this point of view are also likely to view unions as usurpers of employers' authority in their organization. Therefore, individuals with a positive attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities are likely to have a negative attitude toward unions indicating consonance between these attitudes.

Operational Hypothesis 3C: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between attitude toward normative rights issues and unions.

For the last hypothesized test of the proposed model, Pearson product-moment correlation will be used to test Operationalized Hypothesis 3C.

## *Post Hoc Analyses*

Research questions 4 and 5, which involve the correlates of attitudes toward unions and toward employment rights issues, respectively, will be addressed through post hoc analyses. The justification for post hoc analysis is simply that, given the descriptive nature of the current effort, no correlational relationships can be hypothesized a priori between any relevant variables (e.g., attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, or demographic information) beyond those hypothesized above. The

literature in this regard is mixed at best. Generally, studies report only scant information regarding correlates of attitude toward unions. When such correlative information is presented, it is often in conflict with similar correlative information presented by other sources. The scarcity of literature in the area of attitudes toward employment rights issues is also reflected in a lack of information regarding correlates of these attitudes. Furthermore, with prediction beyond the purview of this project, post hoc analyses are acceptable to augment the descriptive information gained through hypothesis tests (as described above). Future projects, based on the descriptive information gathered through post hoc analyses, will be more appropriately geared to address predictive concerns.

Post hoc analyses will consist of Pearson product-moment correlations and point biserial correlations. The distinction between point biserial correlation and the more commonly used Pearson product-moment correlation deserves discussion, since both will be used in the current work. Point biserial correlations are calculated when one of the variables of interest is dichotomous or categorical and the other continuous, whereas Pearson's product-moment correlation is calculated when both variables in question are continuous. In practice, the point biserial calculation is derived from the formula for Pearson's product-moment correlation. Therefore, these two concepts as well as their calculation are highly similar (Howell, 1987). Some difficulty may arise for the reader in interpreting point biserial correlations (e.g., interpreting a point biserial correlation between a categorical variable such as gender and a continuous variable such as attitude toward unions). Interpretation of a point biserial correlation might appear to require further statistical analysis such as a difference in means test (i.e., t-test or ANOVA). Further analysis of this nature is not necessary, however, as a point biserial correlation has a unique relationship to difference in means tests such as the t-test. Namely, the t obtained in order to compare levels of the categorical variable (e.g., male and female if gender is the variable of interest) yields the same information as the point biserial correlation between the categorical variable and some other continuous variable. If analyses demonstrate a significant point biserial correlation, then, by definition, a test for differences in means of the groups comprising the categorical variable will also be significant. Thus, interpretation of either analysis yields the same information. For example, a significant point biserial correlation between marital status (i.e., married or unmarried) and income would lead to the inter-

pretation that income varies as a function of marital status. A t-test intended to assess whether married and unmarried individuals differ with respect to income would also yield statistically significant results and would lead to the interpretation that married and unmarried people differ in income (Howell, 1987). Generally speaking, correlations will be reported along with their level of statistical significance and interpretation of their meaning for each class of attitudes (e.g., unions in general, national unions, attitudes toward polydrug and private issues etc.). and major demographic variables (e.g., gender, race).

## *Sample Population*

Due to the importance of students as future labor force participants and the lack of research utilizing student participants, the sample chosen for the current research is comprised of college students. In an effort to test the component of the model that reflects socialization experiences, various college samples have been drawn. These college samples were initially obtained from a list of faculty potentially willing to participate which was generated by committee members for this project. The committee members contributed a list of colleagues from colleges and universities around the nation. Fifty-two potential faculty participants received a letter asking if they would be willing to administer the questionnaire to their students. Of these 52 individuals, 32 agreed to participate. To date, of the 32 confirmed faculty participants, five have returned their questionnaire packages. Thus, these five subsamples will be utilized in the analyses to test hypotheses proposed in this chapter. Specifically, this sample is comprised of student participants from Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina (two faculty from this site agreed to participate); Winthrop College, Rock Hill, South Carolina; University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky; and Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida. Data obtained from the remaining faculty participants will be utilized for further tests of the theoretical model at a later date. Utilization of data provided by students from four different universities adequately ensures a diversity of socialization experiences

which, as a component of the theoretical model, is necessary to stringently test the proposed hypotheses. The total projected sample size of 250 was based on estimates of average class sizes (e.g., 30 to 50 students) and average class load per faculty participant.

The subsample from the two participants at Appalachian State provided 149 respondents. The subsample from Winthrop College resulted in 63 respondents. The subsample from the University of Kentucky yielded 25 respondents, and the subsample from Florida State University contained 28 respondents. Thus, the total sample size is 265. While the target sample size was obtained, the nature of the sample differs slightly from its projected composition with two subsamples being rather large and two rather small. Obviously, two participants were only able to supply respondents from single classes, whereas the data provided in the larger subsamples represents the contribution of more than one class. Since many college students attend schools that are not in the area in which they were raised, and since the sample size meets the projected target for meaningful analyses, the sample should represent a diversity of socialization experiences.

## *Data Collection*

A questionnaire designed to investigate the components of the model was utilized. In great part, the questionnaire replicates the previous studies described in Chapter Two. As such, many of the items contained in the questionnaire are obtained from the literature. The exact nature of the scales included on the questionnaire is detailed below. After confirmation was obtained from faculty members who wished to participate, questionnaire packets were mailed to the participating faculty. Each questionnaire packet contained an instruction sheet to be read by the faculty member to voluntary respondents, a cover letter describing the nature of the research, a copy of the questionnaire, and two computer readable answer forms to be used by participants in recording their responses. All faculty stressed voluntary participation as well as anonymity of all responses. Individuals were requested NOT to give their name or any identifying information in order to

maintain anonymity and elicit honest responses. Faculty members distributed the questionnaire packets to those students willing to participate and collected the data from participants upon completion. Faculty then mailed the data back to the researcher. The questionnaire generally took between 30 and 60 minutes to complete. Faculty participants were supplied with a computer file containing the data provided by their students.

Response rates range from 51% to 90%. An overall response rate of 73.6% was obtained. Subsample specific response rates are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Subsample Response Rates	
Subsample	Response Rate
Appalachian State University Subsample Number 1	82%
Appalachian State University Subsample Number 2	75%
Overall Appalachian State University	78%
Florida State University	51%
University of Kentucky	62%
Winthrop College	90%

The number of packets sent to faculty members was based their estimation of class size. Thus, the calculation of response rates based on the number of packets sent may result in a response rate lower than was actually the case (i.e., fewer students enrolled than estimated would lower the response rate). Nonrespondent analyses to determine if nonrespondents differed significantly from participants were not possible given the sampling technique utilized and the importance of anonymity in order to obtain honest responses.

## *Questionnaire Design*

Scales representative of each of the model's components were either adopted from the literature cited in Chapter Two or designed for the present effort. The questionnaire was comprised of five

major sections: demographics, factual knowledge regarding unions, attitudes toward unions, factual knowledge regarding employment rights issues, and attitudes toward employment rights issues. The questionnaire contained 242 items. A copy of the questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

The model's first component, beliefs or knowledge about unions, was assessed by a set of 15 factual knowledge questions about unions. This scale is comprised of a mixture of original questions and questions used in the literature. Most questions included in this scale conform to a "true, false, or not sure" response format. Questions comprising the factual knowledge test about unions were as follows:

1. In right-to-work states if the company and the union agree, all employees can be required to join the union and/or pay union dues (false).
2. If you work for a business where a union has negotiated fringe benefits such as medical insurance, you must join the union to receive these benefits (false).
3. Even if workers feel that a safety hazard presents an immediate danger, they do not have the right to leave their worksite without the permission of the foreman or other person in charge (false).
4. If s/he wants to, your boss can legally fire you for joining a union (false).
5. Federal government employees can be legally fired for striking (true).
6. If you are fired for joining a union, your boss must pay you any wages lost because you were fired (true).
7. It is legal for an employer to hire only persons who are already union members (true).
8. The percentage of working people who are in unions has been increasing over the last 30 years in the U.S. (false).
9. Employers must pay their workers at least one and a half times their regular wages for hours worked beyond 40 hours a week (true).
10. The majority of working people in the U.S. are members of unions (false).
11. You can be refused a job because you are a member of a union (false).
12. If a union calls a strike, it cannot legally prevent you from working (true).
13. Unions are governed by federal law (true).
14. Workers can be required to join a union in:
  - All states
  - Some states (true)
  - No states
  - Not sure
15. How does an organization go from being non-union to unionized?
  - The workers decide (true)
  - The management decides
  - The government decides
  - The management and workers decide together

Unless otherwise indicated, response categories were true, false, and unsure. The number of questions answered correctly was summed and divided by the total number of questions to arrive at an average knowledge score for each individual. This knowledge score will serve as an index of that individual's factual knowledge regarding unions.

The second major component of the model, attitude toward unions, was assessed by 31 questions drawn from several sources in the literature outlined in Chapter Two. While scales constructed to assess both general attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward specific facets of unions were available from the literature, questions were utilized only from the general attitude toward unions scales. Restriction of the scope of investigation with respect to attitudes toward unions was warranted given the hypotheses to be tested. Selection of items for inclusion in this scale was based upon the theoretical base for this work. Items thought to be too issue-specific were omitted. The majority of questions contained within this scale are Likert type items. The response categories include:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

Specific items comprising this scale are as follows:

1. If it were not for unions, there would be little protection against favoritism on the job.
2. I think the best person should be kept on the job regardless of seniority when layoffs occur (reverse scored).
3. Unions impose too many restrictions on employers (reverse scored).
4. Employees of a firm have better compensation and working conditions when all of them belong to a union.
5. Unions should have something to say about whom the employer hires.
6. Union rules often interfere with the efficient running of the employer's business (reverse scored).
7. We need more laws to limit the power of unions (reverse scored).
8. The high wage demands of unions reduce chances for employment (reverse scored).
9. The growth of unions has made our democracy stronger.
10. The selfishness of employers can be fought only by strong unions.
11. Employees should not have to join a union in order to hold a job (reverse scored).
12. If a majority of workers in an organization vote to have a union, the others should be required to join.
13. Employees should have the right to join a union.
14. Teachers and other public employees should have the right to collectively bargain.
15. Gains made by employees are chiefly due to unions.
16. Laws regulating union activity are too strict.
17. Unions represent the wishes of members.
18. It is proper for unions to campaign for political candidates.
19. Management is the major cause of strikes.
20. Employees in the private sector should have the right to strike.
21. Employees in the public sector (e.g., local, state, and federal employees) should have the right to strike.
22. If you work at a job that is dirty, dangerous, and stressful, you need a union.

23. By demanding higher wages and benefits, unions cause inflation. (reverse scored).
24. Unions cause unnecessary bad feelings in the workplace (reverse scored).
25. Without unions, women's pay relative to men's pay would be even worse than it is now.
26. Employees who belong to a union have better wages and working conditions than employees who do not.
27. Strikes are often the only means workers have of gaining better working conditions.
28. Unions are un-American (reverse scored).
29. We need more laws to increase the power of unions.
30. A worker could gain more by asking the employer individually than by presenting requests through the union (reverse scored).
31. Even "white collar" workers and professionals need unions to assure themselves good wages and working conditions.

Summated responses will be used as an indicator of each individual's attitude toward unions. Simply put, the sum of each individual's responses to the statements comprising each scale divided by the total number of items in the scale will serve as the score representing that individual's attitude toward unions. Given the format of the response scale, higher numerical scores will signify more positive attitudes toward unions. As is obvious, several authors included in the Chapter Two literature search utilized scales that are comprised of similar items. Although it would appear that this scale is inordinately long, the decision to include thirty-one items was made for several reasons. First and foremost, the goal of replication for this project supported inclusion of so many items. Additionally, the present effort is not one designed to improve the psychometric qualities of scales, but rather to utilize those representative of the literature. Finally, some duplicate items were included to provide for reliability checks. Thus, the length of this scale is well rationalized and justified.

Socialization experiences comprise the next component of the model tested. Four types of information are collected for this test. The main type of information is simply demographic information. Demographic variables represented include:

- Age
- Gender
- Educational level
- Employment history
- Religion
- Region of the country in which the individual was raised
- Individual political orientation

Descriptive statistics to determine the characteristics of the samples are calculated for the demographic variables. In addition, the demographic variables are used to make post hoc comparisons between subgroups with respect to knowledge and attitudes.

The second type of information included to assess socialization experiences deals with exactly that, the individual's socialization experiences. Generally, this series of questions addresses the individual's socialization experiences with respect to exposure to unions at home and at school. This section is comprised of questions commonly used in the literature and some questions created specifically for the present effort. Variables present in this section include:

- Parental and family union membership status
- The frequency of discussions regarding unions both at home and in school
- The qualitative nature (i.e., positive or negative) of exposure to unions at home and in school

As with the demographic questions, information obtained from these items provides information about the characteristics of the sample. Specific information on the number of sources of exposure to unions, the frequency of exposure to those sources, and the amount of influence of those sources is garnered.

The next type of information used to investigate socialization experiences inquires mainly about the individual's experience with, participation in, or exposure to various employment rights issues or activities that are involved in such rights issues. These questions are adapted from the background and lifestyle questions included by Garland et al. (n.d.) in their investigation of rights issues. Examples of variables investigated in this scale include:

- Work experience
- Participation in a union or unionized work setting
- Criminal history
- Drug and/or alcohol use
- Cigarette smoking
- Perceptions of personal discrimination

Specific questions included:

1. Have you ever been arrested?
2. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
3. Have you ever stolen from a company for which you worked?
4. Have you ever used an illegal drug?
5. Have you ever used alcohol?
6. Have you ever been under the influence of an illegal drug while at work?

7. Have you ever been under the influence of alcohol at work?
8. Have you ever smoked cigarettes?
9. Have you ever done temporary work?
10. Have you ever done seasonal work?
11. Have you ever held summer jobs?
12. Have you ever held part time jobs throughout the school year?
13. Have you ever held a full time job other than during summer?

The responses to these questions are used to compile descriptive statistics about sample characteristics. The response format for these questions, "yes/no", is intended to assess participation in or exposure to various activities. Therefore, no "score" is obtained as with previous scales. Space concerns prevented investigation of degree of exposure. Thus, the present effort is concerned only with participation in or exposure to certain activities.

The next component of the model, beliefs about employer/employee rights issues, is tested by a scale used to assess the beliefs or knowledge component with respect to rights issues. This section is a factual knowledge test very similar to that used for the beliefs about unions component of the model. Since the only work investigating this area, Garland et al., contained no factual knowledge test, the questions in this section were written specifically for this study. The response format for these factual questions is "true, false, or not sure" Items include:

1. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their sex (false).
2. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their race (false).
3. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their color (false).
4. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their religion (false).
5. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone because they once belonged or currently belong to a union (false).
6. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone who is not qualified for the job (true).
7. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone who has been convicted of a crime (true).
8. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their marital or family status (false).
9. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their age if they are over the age of 18 (false).
10. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their personal financial history (false).
11. An employer can legally require a job applicant or an employee to take a drug test (true).
12. An employer can legally require a job applicant to take a polygraph test (true).
13. An employer can legally determine what work will be performed by employees (true).
14. An employer can legally determine how much employees will be paid (true).
15. An employer can legally determine what hours employees will work (true).
16. An employer can legally appraise the quality of an employee's performance (true).

As with the other scale of factual knowledge questions, the number of questions answered correctly is used as a knowledge score. The number of questions answered correctly is summed and divided by the total number of questions to arrive at the score.

The final component of the model to be tested in the present study is attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues. This component is tested by scales adopted from Garland et al. (n.d.). Nearly all the items included in Garland et al.'s investigation are included. The same Likert response categories as were used in the scale concerning attitudes toward unions are used with the items. Responses to the Likert items for each cluster of rights (i.e., private, polydrug, and normative) were summed and divided by the total number of items in the scale to yield an indicator of attitude. Higher numerical scores were representative of more positive or more supportive attitudes of an employer's right to engage in an activity. Questions selected for inclusion in this scale are as follows:

### *Private Employer Activities*

Employers should have the right to:

1. Know whether female job applicants are currently pregnant.
2. Know whether any of their employees are living with a person of the opposite sex who is not their spouse.
3. Prohibit dating between supervisors and subordinates.
4. Prohibit dating between any employees of the organization.
5. Review a job applicant's credit history.
6. Review a job applicant's personal income tax return.
7. Review an employee's personal bank statement.
8. Hire special investigators to investigate a job applicant's moral character.
9. Know how employees spend their time in nonworking hours.
10. Know an individual's religious affiliation.
11. Know whether a job applicant has ever been a member of a union.
12. Know an employee's marital status.
13. Know whether an employee is engaged in an extramarital affair.
14. Know the political affiliations of job applicants and employees.
15. Ask a job applicant's sexual preference.
16. Know whether a job applicant intends to take maternity leave during the course of their employment.
17. Know whether job applicants are likely to become disabled due to poor health.

## *Polydrug Employer Activities*

Employers should have the right to:

1. Require all job applicants to submit to drug tests.
2. Require only those job applicants who look like potential drug users to submit to drug tests.
3. Test employees to determine if they use illegal drugs during working hours.
4. Test employees to determine if they use illegal drugs during nonworking hours.
5. Require polygraph tests for all new job applicants.
6. Require polygraph tests for existing employees

## *Normative Employer Activities*

Employers should have the right to:

1. Determine the nature of the work to be performed by employees.
2. Determine how much an employee should be paid for the work he/she performs.
3. Refuse to hire anyone who does not possess the skill necessary to perform the job.
4. Evaluate an employee's job performance
5. Assign work to employees.

Results of statistical analyses on the data set as tests of hypotheses presented in this chapter are presented in Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The results of the statistical analyses designed to describe the respondents, test hypotheses, and answer the research questions proposed in Chapter Three are presented in this chapter. To reiterate, the research questions of interest are as follows:

1. Is factual knowledge about unions related to attitudes toward unions? If so, how?
2. Is factual knowledge and/or experience with certain activities comprising rights issues related to attitude toward rights issues? If so, how?
3. Are attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward employer/employee rights issues related?
4. What are the correlates of attitudes toward unions?
5. What are the correlates of attitudes toward employment rights issues?

### *Sample Characteristics*

One of the main contributions of the current work is to add descriptive information to the literature regarding student attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues. Therefore, demographic characteristics of the sample are quite important. Of the current participants: 86.5% are between the ages of 18 and 24; 56.9% are male; 87.5% are caucasian; and 82.8% are seniors in college. Furthermore, 58% of participants are Nonfundamentalist Christians. Seventy-eight percent of re-

spondents were raised in the Southeast. Nearly 48% of participants were raised in suburban areas while about 40% were raised in rural areas, and only approximately 14% were raised in urban areas. Nearly 39% of the respondents labeled themselves as politically conservative whereas almost 45% labeled themselves as politically moderate, with the remaining 16% being liberal. The modal respondent:

- Has parents and extended family members who have never been members of a union.
- Has been employed as a temporary employee.
- Has been employed in seasonal work.
- Has held summer jobs.
- Has held part time jobs.
- Has NEVER held a full time job.
- Has NEVER worked in a unionized organization.
- Has NEVER been a union member.
- Has NEVER been fired from a job.
- Has NEVER been laidoff from a job.
- Has NEVER been subjected to racial, gender, or religious discrimination at work.
- Has NEVER been arrested or convicted of a crime.

When asked if they desired a unionized job upon graduation, 56% of students responded they did not, while 41% replied that they were unsure. However, 56% of students indicated that they did not consider unionism when making career decisions. Fifty-three percent of students further indicated that unions had never been discussed at home; of those indicating that unions had been discussed at home, nearly 18% indicated that opinions expressed were negative, while only 7% indicated hearing pronoun statements at home. Nearly 50% of individuals indicated that unions were never discussed at school. Furthermore, 53% indicated that unions had rarely been discussed in school, but 39% indicated that when unions were discussed, neutral ideas or attitudes (i.e., neither pro nor anti-union) were expressed.

With respect to actions undertaken or outcomes attained by unions, the modal respondent valued protection from unfair employer actions, job security, good wages, and good working conditions a great deal. When questioned regarding sources of influence for the formation of attitudes toward unions, the majority of students said they were not influenced at all by immediate or extended family members, movies, friends, or fellow workers. The most influential sources for students in the formation of attitudes toward unions were teachers, television, and newspapers. With respect to sources of influence in the formation of attitudes toward employment rights issues, stu-

dents reported that television, newspapers, immediate and extended family members, teachers, friends, and fellow workers all had significant influence upon them and that no one of these source exerted greater influence than the others.

Almost 16% of respondents admitted that they had stolen from an employer. Nearly 42% reported having used an illegal drug at least once while only 8.5% admitted current drug use. Over 10% admitted that they had used illegal drugs while on the job. Ninety percent of students reported that they had consumed alcohol at least once and 76% reported current alcohol use. Nearly 15% of students participating reported they had consumed alcohol while on the job. Fully 50% of students had smoked cigarettes at one time, but only 14% currently smoked.

Descriptive statistics regarding the sets of items designed to test the hypotheses also provide valuable information about the students comprising this sample. Scores on the factual knowledge test about unions ranged from 0 to 87 percent. No one answered all 15 questions correctly. Eighty percent of respondents scored below seventy percent. Ten percent of students surveyed scored between seventy and eighty percent and only 10% scored above eighty percent. Students fared better on the knowledge test regarding legal and illegal employer behaviors. Scores ranged from 0 to 100%. Only 15% of students scored below seventy percent. Forty-five percent of those surveyed scored between seventy and ninety percent. Fully 40% of respondents scored above ninety percent.

Of the 94% of participants who responded to items regarding attitudes toward unions, 27% were negative in attitude or anti-union. Sixty-six percent of respondents espoused neutral attitudes toward unions, while only 1% of respondents were positive in attitude toward unions overall. A resounding majority of 99% of students did not support an employer's right to engage in polydrug activities. Furthermore, 98% of students did not support an employer's rights to engage in activities designed to ascertain private information. However, only 1% of respondents failed to support an employer's right to engage in normative activities. Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed with an employer's right to engage in such activities. Thirty percent of students voiced clear support of the right of employers to engage in normative activities. Thus, it appears that students were either undecided with respect to an employer's right to engage in normative activities or clearly supported an employer's right to engage in such activities.

Results of hypothesis tests are located in Table 3.

Table 3. Hypothesis Test Results				
Hypothesis	Hypothesized Direction	Pearson's r	Statistical Significance	Results
Hypothesis 1 Knowledge and Attitude toward Unions	Positive	-.02	n.s.	Fail to Support
Hypothesis 2(A) Polydrug Exposure and Polydrug Attitude	Negative	-.19	p < .01	Support
Hypothesis 2(B) Work experience and Normative Attitude	Positive	-.17	p < .01	Fail to Support
Hypothesis 2(C) Private Issues' Knowledge and Private Attitude	Negative	-.28	p < .01	Support
Hypothesis 3(A) Attitudes toward Private Rights and Unions	Negative	-.14	p < .05	Support
Hypothesis 3(B) Attitudes toward Polydrug rights and Unions	Negative	-.10	n.s.	Fail to Support
Hypothesis 3(C) Attitudes toward Normative rights and Unions	Negative	-.20	p < .01	Support

## *Hypothesis 1: Factual Knowledge and Attitudes Toward*

### *Unions*

Hypothesis 1 was proposed to answer research question number 1. Hypothesis 1 stated: Factual knowledge about unions will be positively associated with attitude toward unions. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the items comprising the knowledge test was .57. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for items comprising the attitude scale was .85. The Pearson's product-moment correlation between the factual test of knowledge regarding unions and the scale assessing attitude toward unions was  $r = -.02$  (n.s.). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported, because the predicted positive correlation did not emerge.

## *Hypotheses 2(A), 2(B), and 2(C): Knowledge, Experience, and Attitudes Toward Employment Rights*

### *Issues:*

Hypotheses 2(A), 2(B), and 2(C) were proposed to answer research question number 2. Hypothesis 2(A) stated: Exposure to polydrug activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was not calculated for items inquiring about exposure to polydrug activities for theoretical and logical reasons. These items do not truly comprise a scale of items in the psychometric sense. Furthermore, responses to items can not be expected to conform to traditional standards for reliability measures, because individuals can not be expected to answer these questions in a consistent manner since these questions tap different behaviors. For example, an individual who has consumed alcohol will not necessarily have consumed illegal drugs. Responses from such an individual, therefore, would not meet traditional standards for reliability of responses. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was, however, calculated for items comprising the attitude toward employment rights issues. This Cronbach's alpha was .76. The Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient between exposure to polydrug activities and attitude toward an employers' right to engage in such activities was  $r = -.19$  ( $p < .01$ ). Thus, the predicted negative correlation was found supporting Hypothesis 2(A).

Hypothesis 2(B) stated: Exposure to work situations (e.g., part time, temporary, seasonal, or full time employment experience) will be positively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct normative activities. As was the case with items inquiring about exposure to certain activities in Hypothesis 2(A), no Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated for the exposure items required by this hypothesis. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for items in the attitude toward employers' rights scale required to test this hypothesis was .71. The Pearson's

product-moment correlation coefficient between exposure to work situations and attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities was  $r = -.17$  ( $p < .01$ ). Hence, the predicted positive correlation was not found and Hypothesis 2(B) was not supported.

Hypothesis 2(C) stated: Factual knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct private activities. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were calculated for items comprising both the factual knowledge test and the attitude scale. Cronbach's alpha for the knowledge test was .75. Cronbach's alpha for the attitude scale was .86. The Pearson's product moment correlation between factual knowledge regarding legality of employer activities and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct private activities was  $r = -.28$  ( $p < .01$ ). This negative correlation provides support for Hypothesis 2(C) by demonstrating the predicted negative correlation.

### *Hypotheses 3(A), 3(B), and 3(C): Consonance Between Attitudes Toward Unions and Employment Rights Issues*

Hypotheses 3(A), 3(B), and 3(C) were proposed to answer research question number 3. Hypothesis 3(A) stated: Attitude toward private rights issues will be inversely related to attitude toward unions. As the reader will recall, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the scales of attitude toward private rights issues and unions were .86 and .85, respectively. The Pearson's product moment correlation resultant from this analysis was  $r = -.14$  ( $p < .05$ ). Thus, the negative correlation supports the inverse relationship hypothesized in Hypothesis 3(A).

Hypothesis 3(B) stated: Attitude toward polydrug rights issues will be negatively associated with attitude toward unions. Again, the reader will recall that Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for attitude toward polydrug rights issues and unions were .76 and .85, respectively. The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient calculated to test this hypothesis was  $r = -.10$

(n.s.). Therefore, this analysis failed to support the negative correlation proposed by Hypothesis 3(B).

Finally, Hypothesis 3(C) stated: Attitude toward normative rights issues will be inversely related to attitude toward unions. Recall again that the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the attitude toward normative rights issues and unions scales were .71 and .85, respectively. The Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient resultant from calculations to test this hypothesis was  $r = -.20$  ( $p < .01$ ). Thus, the proposed negative correlation was found supporting Hypothesis 3(C).

## *Research Question Number 4: Correlates of Attitudes*

### *Toward Unions*

Demographic information can also provide unique insight into the correlates of attitudes toward unions. The correlation matrix for demographic and union variables is presented in Table 4. Age was positively correlated with factual knowledge about unions ( $r = .20$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Work experience in a unionized organization was negatively correlated with factual knowledge about unions ( $r = -.13$ ,  $p < .05$ ; worked in unionized organization  $x = .61$ , not worked in unionized organization  $x = .55$ ). Past experience being laid off from a job was also negatively correlated with this facet of knowledge ( $r = -.13$ ,  $p < .05$ ; laid off  $x = .64$ , not laid off  $x = .56$ ), as was the frequency of discussions regarding unions at home ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Attitude toward unions was negatively correlated with past union membership of one's father ( $r = -.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ; father was unionized  $x = 2.94$ , father not unionized  $x = 2.68$ ), past personal union membership ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ; union member  $x = 3.03$ , not union member  $x = 2.70$ ), and personal experience involving layoff from a job ( $r = -.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ; laid off  $x = 2.89$ , not laid off  $x = 2.69$ ). Attitude toward unions was positively correlated with the extent to which one considers unionization in making job decisions ( $r$

= .15,  $p < .05$ ), political beliefs (e.g., conservatism or liberalism) ( $r = .18$ ,  $p < .01$ ; conservative  $x = 2.63$ , moderate  $x = 2.74$ ), the extent to which one desires a unionized job after graduation ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < .01$ ; want unionized job  $x = 3.01$ , do not want unionized job,  $x = 2.57$ ), the extent to which one considers unionization when making career decisions ( $r = .24$ ,  $p < .01$ ), the extent to which one values protection against unfair employer actions ( $r = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ), the extent to which one values job security ( $r = .19$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and the extent to which one values good wages ( $r = .16$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

## ***Research Question Number 5: Correlates of Attitudes***

### ***Toward Employment Rights Issues:***

Once again, information provided by descriptive statistics can shed a great deal of light on the nature of student attitudes toward employment right issues. The correlation matrix for demographic and employment rights variables is presented in Table 5. Age was negatively correlated with attitude toward employers' rights to engage in private activities ( $r = -.29$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Gender was negatively correlated with exposure to polydrug activities  $r = -.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ; male  $x = .453$ , female  $x = .371$ ) and work experience ( $r = -.17$ ,  $p < .01$ ; males  $x = .74$ , females  $x = .66$ ). Gender was also negatively correlated with attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities ( $r = -.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ; males  $x = 3.44$ , females  $x = 3.31$ ) and to engage in private activities ( $r = -.26$ ,  $p < .01$ ; males  $x = 2.43$ , females  $x = 2.17$ ). One's own employment history in unionized organizations was positively correlated with factual knowledge regarding legal and illegal employer activities ( $r = .13$ ,  $p < .05$ ); worked in unionized organization  $x = .79$ , never worked in unionized organization  $x = .85$ ) such that individuals who had worked in unionized organizations exhibited less factual knowledge than those who had not. One's own work experience was negatively correlated with the extent of consideration of unionization in making job decisions ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .01$ ;

Table 4. Correlates of Attitudes Toward Unions		
Variable	Factual Knowledge About Unions	Attitude Toward Unions
Age	.20**	.06
Gender	-.06	.06
Class	.02	-.04
Father Ever Union Member	-.10	-.20**
Father Now Union Member	-.08	-.19**
Mother Ever Union Member	-.10	-.06
Mother Now Union Member	-.05	-.05
Other Family Ever Union Members	.01	-.10
Worked in Unionized Organization	-.13*	.02
Ever Union Member	-.03	-.15*
Currently Union Member	-.05	-.14*
Consider Unionization Job Decision	-.02	.15*
Ever Fired	.00	-.04
Ever Laid Off	-.13*	-.14*
Union Opinions Expressed at Home	-.11	.12
Frequency of Union Discussions at Home	-.16**	.08
Union Opinions Expressed at School	-.05	-.01
Frequency of Union Discussions at School	-.06	.05
Religion	-.08	.10
Area of Country Raised in	.09	-.15*
Type of Area Raised in	-.00	.01
Race	.05	-.04
Political Beliefs	.02	.18**
Want Unionized Job	.01	.34**
Consider Unionism in Career Decision	-.09	.24**
Value Protection from Unfair Employer Actions	.07	.25**
Value Job Security	.01	.19**
Value Good Wages	.05	.16*
Value Good Working Conditions	-.01	.10

\* =  $p < .05$   
\*\* =  $p < .01$

consider unionization  $x = .83$ , do not consider unionization  $x = .68$ ). Type of opinions regarding unions expressed at one's home was negatively related to one's attitude toward right to engage in polydrug activities ( $r = -.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Type of area in which one was raised (e.g., urban, rural, or suburban) was found to be negatively related to attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities ( $r = -.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ; rural  $x = 3.09$ , suburban  $x = 2.98$ ). Race was found to be positively related to both exposure to or experience with polydrug activities ( $r = .21$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Asian  $x = .20$ , Black  $x = .267$ , Caucasian  $x = .436$ , Hispanic  $x = .400$ , other  $x = .600$ ) and knowledge regarding

legal and illegal employer activities ( $r = .17, p < .01$ ; Asian  $x = .609$ , Black  $x = .778$ , Caucasian  $x = .847$ , Hispanic  $x = .917$ , other  $x = .813$ ). Current political beliefs of student participants were found to be negatively correlated with attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities ( $r = -.22, p < .01$ ; conservatives  $x = 3.15$ , moderates  $x = 2.95$ ).

Degree of factual knowledge regarding legal and illegal employer actions was found to be positively correlated with the extent to which the individual valued protection from unfair employer actions ( $r = .13, p < .05$ ), job security ( $r = .19, p < .01$ ), good wages ( $r = .29, p < .01$ ), and good working conditions ( $r = .26, p < .01$ ). The extent to which the individual valued job security was found to be negatively correlated with work experience ( $r = -.17, p < .01$ ). Finally, attitude toward employers' rights to engage in private activities was inversely related to the extent to which the individual valued good wages ( $r = -.16, p < .05$ ) and good working conditions ( $r = -.19, p < .01$ ).

Table 5. Correlates of Attitudes Toward Employment Rights Issues

Variable	POLY EXP	POLY ATT	NORM EXP	NORM ATT	RITE KNOW	PRIV ATT
Age	-.01	-.11	.20**	.02	.03	-.29**
Gender	-.16**	-.06	-.17**	-.20**	.10	-.26**
Class	.02	.05	.11	.01	.02	.03
Father Ever Union Member	.02	-.00	-.14*	.03	-.05	.11
Father Now Union Member	-.01	-.03	-.13*	.02	.06	.06
Mother Ever Union Member	-.05	-.04	-.03	-.03	-.06	.02
Mother Now Union Member	.01	-.07	-.04	-.02	-.05	-.01
Other Family Ever Union Members	.00	.02	-.07	-.05	-.05	.04
Worked in Unionized Organization	-.06	-.00	-.11	-.09	.13*	-.06
Ever Union Member	-.16*	-.02	.08	.05	.11	-.03
Currently Union Member	-.11	.08	-.03	.11	.10	.08
Consider Unionization Job Decision	-.06	-.03	-.22**	-.05	.00	-.08
Ever Fired	-.18**	.14*	-.04	.13*	-.04	.11
Ever Laid Off	-.10	.09	-.19**	.05	-.05	.04
Union Opinions Expressed at Home	.03	-.14*	-.17**	-.15*	-.01	-.11
Frequency of Union Discussions at Home	.07	-.02	-.09	-.06	.02	-.33
Union Opinions Expressed at School	.07	-.08	.08	-.05	.07	-.07
Frequency of Union Discussions at School	.01	-.07	.04	-.11	.05	-.02
Religion	-.04	-.09	-.10	-.09	-.15*	-.17
Area of Country Raised in	.03	-.11	-.03	.04	-.04	-.09
Type of Area Raised in	.06	-.15*	-.09	-.01	.00	-.05
Race	.21**	.05	.09	.09	.17**	-.09
Political Beliefs	.02	-.22**	.03	-.03	-.02	-.11
Want Unionized Job	-.05	-.12	-.09	-.15*	.07	-.11
Consider Unionism in Career Decision	-.06	.04	-.12	-.20**	-.06	.02
Value Protection from Unfair Actions	-.07	-.07	-.02	-.08	.13*	-.09
Value Job Security	-.03	.03	-.17**	-.01	.19**	-.06
Value Good Wages	.01	-.04	-.05	-.03	.29**	-.16*
Value Good Working Conditions	.02	.04	-.06	-.09	.26**	-.19**

POLYEXP = Experience with or exposure to polydrug activities  
 POLYATT = Attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities  
 NORMEXP = Experience with or exposure to normative business activities  
 NORMATT = Attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities  
 RITEKNOW = Factual knowledge about legal employer actions or activities  
 PRIVATT - Attitude toward employers' rights to engage in private activities

\* = p < .05  
 \*\* = p < .01

# CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND CAVEATS

## *Discussion of Results*

### **Demographic Characteristics of the Sample**

In general, the sample drawn for the current research differed very little from samples drawn for previous research. With respect to socialization experiences, lack of exposure to information regarding unions through school and family in this sample echoed the lack of exposure reported by Amann and Silverblatt (1987) and Willoughby and Barclay (1986). Students in the current sample also reported sources of influence with respect to attitudes toward unions similar to those reported by students in the Amann and Silverblatt (1987) study.

One of the major contradictions in the literature stems from the effect of parental unionization on student factual knowledge regarding unions. Specifically, Branel and Oritz (1987) found that students with family that were members of a union had higher factual knowledge than students

without unionized family members. Conversely, Rajan (1977) found that unionization among family members was not related to student factual knowledge regarding unions. Results from the current research also failed to demonstrate a correlation between family unionization and student knowledge. Lack of a significant relationship, in this case, may be an artifact of the composition and size of the sample. In this sample, 85% of students' fathers had never belonged to a union and 94% of students had mothers who had never belonged to a union. Furthermore, 81% did not even have an extended family member that had belonged to a union. Thus, those without unionized family members so greatly outnumbered those students with unionized family that a reasonable test of the impact of unionized family upon student knowledge regarding unions was impossible. Overall, these students appeared to lack exposure to both sources of information (e.g., unionized family members, discussion of unions at home or in school) and information about unions (both pronion and antiunion) and, therefore, lacked a cognitive base from which to make affective evaluations and form attitudes regarding unions. With the cutoff score set at 69%, scores on the factual knowledge test only reinforce this lack of exposure, as 80% of students in this sample would have failed this test scoring below 70%. The lack of a cognitive base from which to form attitudes toward unions is reflected in the neutrality of attitude toward unions demonstrated by this sample as well as the samples reviewed in Chapter Two. These results are congruent with the theoretical model in that it is one's cognitive base about an object or issue from which attitudes are formed. Without a cognitive base, affective evaluation is likely to result in neither a positive nor a negative attitude, but rather a neutral attitude toward a subject. These results are also congruent with past empirical work utilizing student samples in that students in these past samples have also expressed generally neutral attitudes toward unions.

Although the modal respondent had not held a full time job other than during summer employment, this sample did have some work experience. Lack of exposure to unions was also reflected in the fact that the modal respondent had neither worked for a unionized organization nor been a union member. While students in the current sample did not differ a great deal from those participating in previous research regarding unions, they did differ to a great extent from students participating in previous research regarding employment rights issues. Students surveyed by

Garland et al. (n.d.) generally condoned normative employer activities, while only 33% of those surveyed for the current project clearly condoned such activities despite work experience that generally did not include layoff, termination, discrimination, or harassment (i.e., negative experiences). Further, Garland et al.'s (n.d.) participants demonstrated less support for employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities than in normative activities. Students sampled for the current project took a stronger stance against an employer's right to engage in polydrug activities than did those in the Garland et al. (n.d.) sample, with 99% disagreeing that employer should have the right to engage in such activities. The intensity of this attitude in the current sample may largely be due to personal experience with drugs and alcohol even while on the job. Recall that nearly 42% of participants in this project admitted drug use. Ten percent admitted drug use while on the job. Similarly, 76% reported alcohol use. Fifteen percent reported using alcohol while on the job.

As was the case with polydrug activities, strong opposition to employers' rights to engage in private activities voiced by Garland et al.'s (n.d.) participants was mirrored in the current sample, with 98% of students in opposition to these employer rights. Students in the current sample fared well on the knowledge test of legal and illegal employer actions. Only 15% of students would have failed this test with scores below 70%. Over 40% would have passed with scores above 90%. However, students in the current sample did not fare so well with respect to the test investigating union knowledge. Thus, currently sampled students' experience in the workplace seems to be reflected in their knowledge about workplace issues. Additionally, students involved in this project held strong attitudes toward various categories of workplace rights or issues thereby demonstrating that exposure to sources of information provided a cognitive base from which strong attitudes were formed through affective evaluation.

## Discussion of Hypothesis Tests

Four of the seven hypotheses proposed were clearly supported. To recount:

### 1. Affective Evaluation Between Union Knowledge and Union Attitudes

- Hypothesis 1: Factual knowledge about unions will be positively associated with attitude toward unions.
  - Operational Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) positive correlation between factual knowledge about unions and attitude toward union.

### 2. Affective Evaluation - Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Rights Issues

- Hypothesis 2A: Exposure to polydrug activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities.
  - Operational Hypothesis 2A: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between exposure to polydrug activities and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities.
- Hypothesis 2B: Exposure to work situation (e.g., part time, temporary, seasonal, or full time employment experience) will be positively associated with attitudes toward employers' rights to conduct normative activities.
  - Operational Hypothesis 2B: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) positive correlation between exposure to work and normative rights issues and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct normative activities.
- Hypothesis 2C: Factual knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities will be negatively associated with attitudes toward employers' rights to conduct private activities.
  - Operational Hypothesis 2C: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between factual knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities and attitude toward employers' rights to conduct private activities.

### 3. Consonance Between Union and Rights Attitudes

- Hypothesis 3A: Attitude toward private rights issues will be inversely related to attitude toward unions.
  - Operational Hypothesis 3A: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between attitude toward private rights issues and attitude toward unions.
- Hypothesis 3B: Individuals with a negative attitude toward employers engaging in activities that constitute polydrug activities (i.e., drug testing or polygraphs) will have significantly more positive attitudes toward unions than individuals with positive attitudes toward employer rights in the polydrug area.
  - Operational Hypothesis 3B: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between attitude toward polydrug rights issues and attitude toward unions.

Hypothesis 3C: Attitude toward normative rights issues will be inversely related to attitude toward unions.

- Operational Hypothesis 3C: There will be a significant ( $p < .05$ ) negative correlation between attitude toward normative rights issues and attitude toward unions.

To reiterate, Hypotheses 1, 2(B), and 3(B) were not supported, while Hypotheses 2(A), 2(C), 3(A), and 3(C) were. Of those hypotheses not supported, nonsignificant findings were reported for Hypotheses 1 and 3(B). Lack of statistically significant support for Hypothesis 1, which stated that factual knowledge about unions will be positively associated with attitude toward unions, should not be surprising given other results. Namely, over 80% of students scored below 70% on the knowledge test demonstrating a lack thereof. Furthermore, students in this sample generally expressed a neutral attitude toward unions. One could not reasonably expect a significant correlation between a lack of knowledge and a neutral attitude. Theoretically, beliefs or knowledge form the base upon which affective evaluation for the formation of an attitude is conducted. Lack of a knowledge base leaves nothing as the base for affective evaluation. Therefore, when asked their attitude or asked to affectively evaluate their knowledge, students, having nothing to affectively evaluate, espoused a neutral attitude toward unions.

Lack of a significant correlation in the case of Hypothesis 1 does not undermine the theoretical connection between beliefs and affective evaluation. Rather, lack of a significant correlation supports the theoretical connection between knowledge and attitudes. With nothing to affectively evaluate (i.e., beliefs or knowledge), students should not espouse polar (i.e., positive or negative) attitudes. However, a more stringent and convincing test of this theoretical link would shed more light on the nature of this relationship. Such a test would require individuals that did, in fact, have correct factual knowledge regarding unions as demonstrated by passing knowledge test scores. Greater variance in the range of test scores would add more credence to a test of this theoretical link. Future research should capitalize upon students enrolled in labor relations courses to provide this variance. While the current sample did include some students enrolled in labor relations courses, it also included individuals yet to take such courses.

Hypotheses 2(A), 2(B), and 2(C) were proposed as tests of affective evaluation of knowledge and attitudes toward rights issues. In each case the analyses were designed to assess the relationship between knowledge or its proxy experience and the attitude resultant from its affective evaluation. Hypothesis 2(A), which stated that exposure to polydrug activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct polydrug activities, was supported. In this case, ex-

perience with or exposure to polydrug activities (e.g. drug use) was used as a proxy for knowledge since an individual's knowledge with respect to this issue is unlikely to come from formal education. This hypothesis was strongly supported. Thus, it appears that individuals who have either participated in or been exposed to polydrug activities such as drug or alcohol use are opposed to employers having the right to engage in actions that might detect such activity.

Hypothesis 2(B) was the only hypothesis of those tested that resulted in significant findings in contradiction to the hypothesis. This hypothesis stated: exposure to work situations will be positively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct normative activities. Essentially, this hypothesis stated that the more experience an individual has had in the workplace, the more the individual would accept and support the employer's right to conduct basic business related activities such as scheduling and appraising work, and determining pay and hours. While a positive correlation was hypothesized, a significant negative correlation ( $r = -.17, p < .01$ ) was found. Thus, it would appear that the more exposure an individual has had to work, the more the individual disagreed that employers should be allowed to engage in these normative activities. This appears to be quite a contradiction and quite counterintuitive. If the employer is not to conduct these activities basic to the enterprise, who should? Recall that 69% of those surveyed neither agreed nor disagreed with an employers' right to engage in normative activities while only 30% agreed that employers should be allowed to engage in such activities. Thus, students may be undecided regarding who should conduct these activities. Several plausible alternative explanations exist. Perhaps, based on their own employment experience, these students believe that employers do not know the job as well as the employees and that the employees, therefore, should have a role in making these decisions. Further, these students may have been exposed to concepts such as employee participation, total quality management, quality circles, or work teams at work or school. Alternatively, as these participants were students, the majority of whom will soon be labor force participants, they may be over-valuing the worth of the education or the depth of their intellect. This may lead them to believe that they are equipped to make normative decisions themselves without relying upon the employer and have earned the right to do so. Also alternatively, never having had full time work experience, the majority of respondents may believe that a certain degree

of autonomy comes with a full time position or they may simply have not considered things such as performance appraisal and determination of compensation given their participation only in temporary, seasonal, summer, or part time work. A plausible alternative explanation exists in that this finding may be an artifact of the questionnaire itself. Nearly half the questions on the survey dealt with unions. Given that this sample was grossly lacking knowledge in the area of unions and union activities, and that this group was generally inexperienced with respect to work, students may have been sensitized to the concept of unions and attributed this set of activities to them. One final methodological difficulty could be responsible for the obtained result. It is possible that work experience was not a good proxy for knowledge in this case.

From a theoretical perspective, limited work experience may have resulted in an insufficient cognitive base which in turn, when subjected to affective evaluation, produced an apparently contradictory attitude. Only further empirical work designed to investigate the nature of this relationship can resolve this apparent contradiction. Future work would require a sample containing individuals with full time work experience. Perhaps adult or continuing education participants could be used. Further, a factual knowledge test could be included to allow comparison of the quality and utility of these two types of measures.

Support was found for Hypothesis 2(C) which stated: factual knowledge about legal and illegal employer activities will be negatively associated with attitude toward employers' rights to conduct private activities. Thus, it would appear that individuals with greater knowledge about activities that employers can legally engage in have more negative attitudes toward employers' rights to engage in activities that inquire about nonwork related information. This finding is not startling given the descriptive statistics regarding knowledge about rights issues and attitude toward employers' rights to engage in these activities. Only 15% of students scored below 70% on this knowledge test, thereby demonstrating that their knowledge regarding rights issues was much greater than their knowledge of unions. Furthermore, 98% of students disagreed with employers' rights to engage in private activities. From a theoretical standpoint, this finding supports the link between knowledge and attitudes resultant from affective evaluation as it would appear that

knowledge about the legal boundaries of employers' actions was affectively evaluated resulting in an attitude that was not tolerant of illegal inquiries for personal information.

Hypotheses 3(A), 3(B), and 3(C) were proposed as tests of the consonance between attitudes toward unions and toward employment rights issues. Hypothesis 3(A) stated that: attitude toward private rights issues would be inversely related to attitude toward unions. This was found to be the case as attitude toward employers' rights to engage in private activities was negatively correlated with attitude toward unions. Thus, individuals who had a negative attitude, thereby objecting to employers' rights to engage in activities investigating nonwork related information, had a positive attitude toward unions. Following the rationale for this hypothesis, then, it would appear that individuals that value their right to privacy might see the utility of unions in the protection of those rights. Consonance between these two attitudes was, therefore, demonstrated.

The other hypothesis test resulting in nonsignificant findings was the test of Hypothesis 3(B) which stated: attitude toward polydrug rights issues will be negatively associated with attitude toward unions. This test was posited as one of three tests for consonance between attitudes toward unions and attitudes toward rights issues. Lack of a significant finding may be due to the fact that individuals did not understand how unions could help them protect this series of rights which included some illegal activities (e.g., drug use). This interpretation is plausible because scores of the test of factual knowledge regarding unions demonstrated that individuals in this sample had relatively little factual knowledge in this area. Furthermore, even students with little knowledge regarding unions and their activities would probably understand that unions could be of help regarding work issues (i.e., normative rights issues) or activities that are clearly illegal for the employer (i.e., private rights issues) such as inquiring about race because they are likely to associate unions with the workplace even if they lack factual knowledge about unions. Alternatively, since drug use is illegal and alcohol consumption can be illegal (i.e. underage consumption or being legally drunk), perhaps students realized that unions could not aid in their defense where illegal activities were concerned.

The final hypothesis tested, 3(C), stated that: attitude toward normative rights issues would be inversely related to attitude toward unions. This was found to be the case with the statistical

analyses producing a negative correlation. Thus, if the logic originally underlying the hypothesis is to be believed, individuals who have a positive attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities (i.e., activities necessary in the normal course of business) have a negative attitude toward unions, possibly because they view unions as usurping an employer's rightful authority to make necessary business decisions (e.g., scheduling work or determining pay). However, an alternative interpretation of these findings is also possible in light of other findings regarding attitude toward normative rights issues and attitude toward unions. Recalling that 69% of students indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with an employers' rights to engage in normative activities, and that these students generally had a neutral attitude toward unions, these results could be interpreted as indicating that those with a positive attitude toward unions reject or question the notion (i.e., have a negative attitude) that employers should have the right to engage in these activities. More stringent analyses would be required to determine the exact nature of this relationship. Such analyses are not performed here because the nature of the relationship was not hypothesized a priori and would, thus, constitute post hoc atheoretical analyses.

## **Discussion of Correlates of Attitudes Toward Unions**

Before embarking upon discussion of results for research questions 4 and 5, several warnings must be made to aid in the interpretation of the results. In general, caution must be exercised when discussing and interpreting correlates. Lack of exposure to unions, in any form, for students comprising the current sample must be considered when interpreting results. Caution must also be exercised in interpreting the sign of correlative relationships where no hypotheses have been formulated. The post hoc nature of the analysis and rationalization must be dually noted to prevent undue weight being ascribed to the findings and their interpretation. Thus, these findings and their interpretation should be considered only as preliminary results.

The significant correlation between age and factual knowledge regarding unions should be no surprise, because knowledge generally increases as a function of age. However, the negative corre-

lation between attitude toward unions and each of several other variables such as work experience in a unionized organization, having been laid off from a job, and frequency of discussions regarding unions at home, respectively, need to be interpreted carefully. It is necessary to keep in mind that very few individuals had worked in unionized organizations, had ever been laid off, or had ever discussed unions at home for that matter. It is highly likely that the lack of experience in these realms is also reflected in neutral attitudes toward unions rather than in positive attitudes toward unions in keeping with the theoretical model's premise that attitudes are the product of affective evaluation of beliefs or knowledge. A better test of this relationship would intentionally sample individuals with experience in unionized organizations, with unionized family members, and possibly in geographic areas that have been subject to layoffs.

Attitude toward unions appears to positively impact the extent to which one considers unionization when making job and career decisions and the extent to which one desires a unionized job. This stands to reason and requires no rationalization. The positive correlation between political beliefs (e.g. conservatism or liberalism) and attitude toward unions is not counterintuitive either. One plausible rationale underlying this association is that conservatives generally value a market orientation including those of the employer to operate freely in the enterprise and, therefore, do not condone unionism, whereas political moderates are more likely support government intervention in the form of legitimization of collective action through legislation thereby condoning unionism as an option for individuals. Perhaps the most interesting and informative correlates of attitude toward unions are the extent to which one values job security, good wages and protection against unfair employer actions, which were all positively correlated with attitude toward unions. This may bode well for organized labor, because it appears that students consciously valuing or actively seeking these things have positive attitudes toward unions and possibly indicates that individuals see the instrumentality of unions in gaining these valued ends.

## **Discussion of Correlates of Attitudes Toward Employment Rights Issues**

The same caution warranted for analysis and discussion of correlates of attitudes toward unions is warranted for analysis and discussion of correlates of attitudes toward employment rights issues. Age was found to be negatively correlated with attitude toward employers' rights to engage in private activities. This correlation may be a result of the fact that both work experience and knowledge, in general, increase as a function of age. Gender emerged as a significant correlate in several respects. Gender was negatively correlated with exposure to polydrug activities (male exposure was higher than female exposure), work experience (males had more work experience than females), and attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities (males' attitudes were more negative than females' attitudes) and private activities (males' attitudes were more positive than females' attitudes). The emergence of gender as a significant correlate perfectly demonstrates the necessity for exercising caution in interpretation. Male students had had more exposure to polydrug activities and work than had female students. Males students also held more negative attitudes toward employers' right to engage in normative activities. However, female students held more negative attitudes toward employers' rights to engage in private activities. Furthermore, the positive correlation between one's own employment history in unionized organizations and factual knowledge regarding legal and illegal employer activities stands to reason. While experience in organizations (regardless of union or nonunion status) is likely to result in increased knowledge regarding the legality of employer activities, experience in unionized organizations is likely to have an effect that further increases knowledge in this area, because unions strive to protect employees from unfair and/or illegal employer actions. Interestingly, type of opinions regarding unions expressed at home was found to be negatively correlated with one's attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug and normative activities. Literal interpretation of this correlation would indicate that individuals having heard negative attitudes toward unions expressed at home were more likely to express positive attitudes toward an employer's right to engage in polydrug and normative activities. However, as previously mentioned, most students in this sample indicated that unions had never

been discussed at home. Thus, this correlation is likely to be an artifact of the nature of the sample. This correlation could indicate, however, that individuals may hold neutral attitudes toward unions and still have very polarized attitudes in the area of employment rights. Or this correlation may indicate that attitude toward unions is formed on the basis of information other than that gained through exposure to discussion of unions in the home.

Approximately 43% of individuals participating in this project were raised in rural areas, while approximately 48% of respondents were raised in suburban areas. Thus, interpretation of the negative correlation between type of area in which one was raised and attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities indicates that individuals raised in rural areas oppose employers having the right to engage in polydrug activities more so than do individuals raised in suburban areas.

A sampling effect is likely to be responsible for the positive correlation between race and each experience with polydrug activities (Caucasians had the most exposure followed by Hispanics and then Blacks) and knowledge regarding the legal boundaries of employer activities (Hispanics had the highest knowledge followed by Caucasians and then Blacks) and, as such, colors interpretation of these findings. Since the majority of the sample was Caucasian, these correlations must be interpreted as indicating that Caucasians have had more exposure to polydrug activities and have had significantly more knowledge regarding the legality of employer activities than do individuals of other races. Again, a more diverse sample would be required to provide an adequate test of the robustness of this apparent relationship. Yet another instance of the nature of the sampling clouding the interpretation of a correlation is evident with respect to the negative correlation between political beliefs (i.e., conservatism or liberalism) and attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities (Conservatives had more positive attitudes than did moderates). Political moderates predominated in the current sample. Thus, this correlation is best interpreted as political moderates opposed employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities. Again, a more diverse sample would be required to adequately test this apparent relationship.

Interestingly, degree of factual knowledge regarding the legality of employer actions was found to be positively correlated with the extent to which the individual valued protection from unfair

employer actions, job security, good wages, and good working conditions. Three of these valued ends (protection against unfair employer actions, job security, and good wages) were found to be positively correlated with attitude toward unions. The connection between factual knowledge and valued ends indicates either that more knowledgeable individuals place more value on certain ends, or that those that value these ends are more knowledgeable with respect to the legality of employer actions. The positive association of these ends with attitudes toward unions further indicates that the role of unions in attaining these valued ends may be recognized by students.

## *Theoretical and Empirical Conclusions*

What conclusions can be drawn from the present work and what answers can be proffered for the research questions proposed? With respect to the first research question, which inquired about the relationship between factual knowledge about unions and attitude toward unions, only limited conclusions can be drawn. The results of the present study do not indicate that knowledge and attitude toward unions are not related as one key variable, namely factual knowledge, was generally absent in this sample. Based on the theoretical framework underlying this work, the lack of a cognitive base regarding unions in the sample resulted in the logical outcome of affective evaluation being a neutral attitude regarding unions. However, as was mentioned, more stringent tests which provide clearer insight into the nature of this relationship are required.

One conclusion that can be drawn, however, is that this sample differed little from those typically drawn for research in this area and the results of this hypothesis test were very similar to those of previous research. Doubt was cast upon the results of previous research because of the convenience nature of the samples involved. The similarity of those convenience samples and their results to the deliberate sample drawn for this work lends credence to the results of previous works. Reliance upon convenience samples, however, should still be avoided where possible.

Are factual knowledge and/or exposure to employment rights activities related to attitude toward rights issues? Clearly, a strong relationship exists between knowledge and/or exposure to employment rights activities and attitude toward these rights, in answer to the second research question. In all cases, strong correlations were found. In two cases, the correlations between knowledge/experience and attitudes within the realm of rights issues were in the expected direction. Thus, the series of hypothesis tests (i.e., 2(A), 2(B), and 2(C)) designed to answer this question result in an affirmative answer. While one correlation was in the opposite direction of that expected, this does not denigrate the proposition that knowledge regarding rights issues and attitudes toward rights issues are related. It only indicates that the logic underlying the hypothesis and the expected direction of the correlation were incorrect. More work targeted at investigating this relationship would be required to correct this logic error. Clearly, where a strong or complete cognitive set exists as the basis for affective evaluation, polar attitudes emerge.

The clarity of results with respect to affective evaluation and cognitive beliefs or knowledge within the realm of rights issues suggests that a similar relationship may exist within the realm of knowledge about and attitudes toward unions. This notion is only reinforced by the fact that students had greater knowledge regarding employment rights issues than unions. Future tests of affective evaluation regarding unions should target students that have received labor education, and possibly contrast or compare them with students who have received instruction regarding business administration or management.

The third research question concerned the consonance or lack of dissonance between attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues. Two of the hypothesis tests designed to answer this question resulted in statistically significant outcomes, while the third was statistically nonsignificant, but approached significance. Clearly, the more individuals valued their right to privacy, and thus, the more they disagreed with employers' rights to engage in activities to determine private information, the more positively they viewed unions. With respect to polydrug issues, it appears that individuals feel unions can be of no help in protecting them from employer actions in this realm as the hypothesized consonance between attitude toward employers' rights to engage in polydrug activities and attitudes toward unions did not emerge. Since a rather large number of individuals

admitted to engaging in polydrug activities, it does not appear reasonable to conclude that these individuals do not need to be protected or are not personally concerned with such activities (e.g., “I don’t do drugs, why should I care about these issues?”). Limited tolerance for drug testing was demonstrated in this sample as 49% of participants believed employers should be allowed to require drug tests of all employees and 57% agreed employers should be allowed to test for drug use at work, but only 34% agreed employers should be allowed to test for drug use off the clock, and only 6% agreed employers should be allowed to require drug tests of suspicious applicants. Perhaps the protectiveness of individual privacy rights displayed by this sample does not extend to protection of the rights of individuals that use illegal substances while at work. Perhaps individuals feel that employers should have the right to drug test in the workplace for workplace use of drugs since drugs are illegal, but that they do not have the right to test based only on suspicion or for drug use outside the workplace. Or, perhaps, respondents failed to recognize that drug use outside the workplace could very well result in a positive drug test administered in the workplace leaving the organization unable to determine whether drug use occurred “on” or “off” the clock. Students may view drugs within the workplace as within the purview of employers’ normative rights while they view use outside the workplace as within the purview of privacy rights. Either way, it seems clear that individuals either do not understand how unions could help them or do not perceive a role for unions in this regard as statistical support for the hypothesized consonance between attitude toward rights issues and attitudes toward unions did not emerge. The strong link between attitude toward privacy rights and attitude toward unions would seem to indicate that individuals perceive that unions can be of help in protecting privacy rights. Since drug use could be considered a personal and private matter, it is reasonable to assume that individuals could also see the utility of unions in protecting privacy in this matter. Perhaps individuals realize that unions could not be of significant help as drug use is illegal.

It was hypothesized (Hypothesis 3(C)) that individuals would support employers’ rights to engage in normative activities and would view unions as usurpers of employers’ rightful dominion and therefore have a negative attitude toward unions. However, analyses demonstrated that individuals were opposed to employers’ rights to engage in normative activities and had neutral attitudes

toward unions. Therefore, while the predicted direction of the correlation was correct, the underlying logic has been demonstrated to have been incorrect as individuals did not support employers' rights to engage in such activities and attitude toward unions was not negative. This should not, however, lead to the conclusion that these two attitudes are dissonant. Rather, attitude toward employers' rights to engage in normative activities and attitudes toward unions appear to be consonant in that individuals do not support such employer rights, but may perceive unions as one entity that should contribute to or control such normative activities.

## *Practical Implications*

The genesis of the current research arose from the notion that unions attempting to reverse their decline or employers wishing to remain union free could both better attain their objectives if a set of volatile issues important to employees could be identified and capitalized upon. This work has demonstrated that issues related to both privacy of information and use of drugs or alcohol are of great concern to students. Also of great practical significance is the fact that these students will be the employees of tomorrow and therefore represent an important group that could be targeted by unions to increase membership or could be targeted by employers in their efforts to remain union-free. The current work has demonstrated that students comprise a cognizant and critical group that must be recognized and addressed as the demographics of the workforce continue to change. Both unions and employers would be wise to take advantage of this important group. This is especially true for unions, since students seem to have far more knowledge regarding employment than they do regarding unions. The lack of factual knowledge regarding unions and the neutrality of attitudes displayed regarding unions indicates that unions should attempt to address these issues through socialization and education or their foothold in the workplace will most probably continue to erode. Employers, however, need to become increasingly aware of the intolerance displayed regarding employer control of activities central to the business enterprise (e.g., scheduling, determining pay,

appraising performance). Perhaps this intolerance could serve as a niche in which unions could strive to provide additional input for employees.

## *Caveats*

The current project was definitely not exhaustive given all possible tests for the proposed model. Thus, one of the major limitations of the tests of the theoretical model is their incompleteness. However, the tests chosen for inclusion were those representing the central linkages of the model. The current project is neither labeled nor intended as the definitive test of the theory or model. It is only preliminary in nature. Labeled and conducted as such, it represents a valid first step in investigating the relationships in question.

Another possible limitation of the current research which relates to its preliminary nature is its descriptive nature. Some individuals would argue that descriptive work does not constitute an adequate contribution to the literature. However, as aforementioned, soundly designed and executed descriptive work provides the foundation for predictive and explanatory efforts. Additionally, this descriptive work was well suited to the scope of the requirements for the project both in terms of the resource expenditures required and temporal limitations.

The remaining limitations are a function of the implementation of the research. Its design as field research utilizing a survey of students opens the project to three possible criticisms. The conduct of the project as a field project subjects it to criticism by those who feel field methods are not stringent enough or lack control. However, the current project, because it is focused on knowledge and attitudes, is appropriately conducted as a field project where the respondents were most likely to be comfortable in responding honestly and thoughtfully. No significant contribution to results could be gained by the increased control engendered by laboratory settings. Although several methods are available for utilization in field settings, a questionnaire was chosen for the current work. The justification for selecting this method is rather simple: it is expedient, cost effi-

cient, and provides the possibility of collecting a larger sample than would be possible with other field methods. Criticism stemming from the choice of data collection method can be rebutted in two ways: (1) the benefits gained through use of a survey outweigh the limitations imposed by the method on the data collected and (2) given the nature of the proposed project, other field methods become infeasible. Finally, the selection of a sample comprised of students may subject the proposed work to criticism. Reliance upon students as convenience samples has led many individuals to question the external validity of empirical works that utilize student samples. However, since the population of interest is future work force participants, the selection of a student sample is appropriate for the current work.

Further criticism may stem from the types of analyses conducted, namely correlations. It can be argued that correlations are weak tests of hypotheses since the possibility that a significant correlation between two entities is caused by a third unknown untested variable cannot be discounted. Along the same lines, the chance of finding a significant correlation between variables rises simply as a function of sample size. However, given the lack of consistently demonstrated relationships (or correlations) in the literature, the current research stood to contribute more to the literature as a function of investigating correlational associations on the basis of theory than it did through more stringent atheoretical conjecture (e.g., post hoc atheoretical factor analysis). Future work can soundly rest upon the bases demonstrated here to further investigate the variables and relationships of interest. Low Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients may also cause concern to some. However, items included to assess knowledge or experience and attitudes were selected on the basis of theory. Improvements in the psychometric qualities of scales could likely be gained through refinement of the items and scale. Development of psychometrically sophisticated measures, however, was not a goal of the current research. Certainly, improvements in the psychometric qualities of measures would improve findings (i.e., increase statistical significance of results), but all but one Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient were at an acceptable level (i.e.,  $\alpha = .70$  or greater). The only unacceptable reliability coefficient was for the factual knowledge regarding unions test and the items comprising this test were diverse. Therefore, low reliability among a group that demonstrated low knowledge in this regard is neither shocking nor fatal.

Concern regarding the external validity or generalizability of measures designed for employees, but utilized with students, can now be laid to rest as their generalizability to student populations has been demonstrated. One caveat regarding generalizability of results is necessary, however. Since all universities participating were from the Southeast and the majority of participants had been raised in the Southeast, further research will be necessary to demonstrate the generalizability of these measures to student populations beyond the Southeastern United States.

Future work utilizing student samples is necessary in the areas of knowledge about and attitudes toward unions and employment rights issues. These efforts should include pre-post designs to assess the impact of education and its effect on attitudes. Student samples should be drawn that include individuals with full time work experience, individuals who have been exposed to unions, and individuals from around the country. Measures should be refined to hone their psychometric qualities. Additionally, a knowledge test in the area of normative employer activities and items designed to assess the propensity for collective action (i.e., how likely one is to view group membership and activity as valuable) should be included.

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## **Appendix A. Sample Items from the Literature**

### ***Examples from Willoughby & Keon (1985) and Willoughby & Barclay (1986)***

#### **General Attitudes toward Unions (GUATT)**

- The growth of unions has made our democracy stronger.
- If it were not for unions, there would be little protection against favoritism on the job.
- Labor unions hold back progress.

#### **Attitudes toward National Unions (NUATT)**

- It is practically impossible to select different officers in national unions.
- The officers of national unions, as compared to chief executives of organizations, are paid too much.

#### **Attitudes toward Unionism (UATT)**

- Employees should have the right to join a union.
- Unions represent the wishes of members.
- Unions are a prime cause of strikes.

#### **Attitudes toward Union Effectiveness (UEFF)**

- Unions cooperate with management on disciplinary matters.
- Unions are generally reasonable in their claims.

#### **Attitudes toward union leaders (ATTOLDRS)**

- Union officers are interested in the welfare of their members.
- Labor leaders, as compared to business leaders, do the most good for the country.

## **Attitudes toward the Economic Impact of Unions (ECONIP)**

- Unions have the right among of power by the economic sanctions they possess to deal with large corporations.
- Economic power of unions should be limited by the Federal Government.

## **Attitudes toward Local versus National Unions (LOCVNAT)**

- Local issues are more critical to the well being of the individual union member than national and state economic issues.

## ***Examples from Amann and Silverblatt (1987)***

### **Attitudes toward Unions**

- Should individuals be required to join or pay dues to a labor union if they do not want to do so, even though the union may get wage and benefits increases for them?
- Should government workers be allowed to strike?
- The overall welfare of the nation would:
  - Improve if more workers belonged to unions
  - Improve if fewer workers belonged to unions
  - Be neither better nor worse off if more or less workers belonged to unions.

### **Perceptions of or Attitudes toward Big Business**

- How much confidence do you have in American business?
- How much do you trust the leaders of large business?
- Which is the most responsible for inflation? (Big business, Big unions, Federal Government)

### **Big Labor Image**

- Big labor political activities:
  - Influence who gets elected to public office
  - Influence laws passed
  - Influence how the country is run
- Union - Member Relations
  - Require members to go along with decisions
  - Have leaders who do what's best for themselves
- Union-Employer Power
  - Are more powerful than employers

## ***Examples from Bramel and Ortiz (1987)***

- Labor unions impose too many restrictions on the way management runs the business.
- Strikes are often the only means workers have of getting better working conditions.
- Unions cause unnecessary bad feelings in the workplace.

- If there were no unions, workers would get ripped off.

## Appendix B. Student Attitudes toward Unions and Employment Rights Questionnaire

1. What is your age?
  - a. Less than 18
  - b. 18 - 24
  - c. 25 - 34
  - d. 35 - 44
  - e. Over 45
2. Gender?
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
3. Indicate your major (e.g., management, organization behavior, law)
4. What is your current Grade Point Average?
5. What is your class standing?
  - a. Freshman
  - b. Sophomore
  - c. Junior
  - d. Senior
  - e. Graduate Student
6. Please indicate the title of any personnel, management or labor relations courses you have taken
7. Father's Occupation
8. Has your father ever been a union member?
9. Is your father a union member now?
10. Mother's Occupation
11. Has your mother ever been a union member?
12. Is your mother a union member now?
13. Has anyone else in your family (other than your parents) ever belonged to a union?  
If Yes: What family member?
14. If another family member has belonged to a union (if you answered question 13 yes) what is their current membership status?
  - a. Is now a member
  - b. Is not currently a member
15. Have you ever done temporary work?
16. Have you ever done seasonal work?
17. Have you ever held summer jobs?
18. Have you ever held part time jobs throughout the school year?
19. Have you ever held a full time job other than during summer?
20. Have you ever worked in an organization which was unionized?
21. Have you ever been a union member?
22. Are you currently a union member?

23. Do you ever consider whether or not the workers in an organization have a union when you are applying for or taking a job?
24. Have you ever been fired from a job?
25. Have you ever been laid off?
26. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your race?
27. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your gender?
28. Have you ever been discriminated against because of your religion?
29. Have you ever been sexually harassed on the job?
30. Have you ever been arrested?
31. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
32. Have you ever stolen from a company for which you worked?
33. Have you ever used an illegal drug?
34. Do you currently use an illegal drug?
35. Have you ever used alcohol?
36. Do you currently use alcohol?
37. Have you ever been under the influence of an illegal drug while at work?
38. Have you ever been under the influence of alcohol at work?
39. Have you ever smoked cigarettes?
40. Do you currently smoke cigarettes?
41. Opinions expressed in your home when you were growing up were predominately:
  - a. Pro-Union
  - b. Anti-Union
  - c. Neither, opinions expressed were neutral
  - d. No opinions regarding unions were expressed
42. How frequently were unions discussed in your home when you were growing up?
  - a. Very often
  - b. Often
  - c. Occasionally
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
43. Opinions expressed in your school when you were growing up were predominately:
  - a. Pro-Union
  - b. Anti-Union
  - c. Neither, opinions expressed were neutral
  - d. No opinions regarding unions were expressed
44. How frequently were unions discussed in school when you were growing up?
  - a. Very often
  - b. Often
  - c. Occasionally
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
45. What are your current religious beliefs?
  - a. Christian Non-Fundamentalist
  - b. Christian Fundamentalist
  - c. Moslem
  - d. Jewish
  - e. Agnostic or Atheist
  - f. Other
46. In what part of the country were you raised?
  - a. Northeast
  - b. Midwest
  - c. Far West
  - d. Southeast
  - e. Southwest
  - f. Outside of the United States

47. Indicate the state (or country) where you were raised
48. Were you raised in:
- A rural area
  - A suburban area
  - An urban area
49. What is your race?
- Asian
  - Black
  - Caucasian
  - Hispanic
  - Other
50. What are your current political beliefs?
- Conservative
  - Moderate
  - Liberal
51. Do you desire a unionized job after graduation?
52. Do you consider the extent of unionism in a job when making a career choice?
53. Would you work for a company who produced products that in your opinion are unethical (e.g., cigarettes)?
54. Would you continue to work for a company if you discovered it was engaged in unethical activities (e.g. producing a product that is known to be dangerous)?
- How much do you value each of the following things?
55. Protection against unfair actions by an employer.
56. Job security
57. Good wages
58. Good working conditions
- How much influence have the following had on the formation of your attitudes toward unions?
59. Television
60. Newspapers
61. Immediate Family members
62. Other family members
63. Teachers
64. Movies
65. Friends
66. Books
67. Fellow workers
- How much influence have the following had on the formation of your attitudes toward those rights you believe you deserve in your employment (e.g., scheduling work, drug testing, performance evaluation etc.)?
68. Television
69. Newspapers
70. Immediate Family members
71. Other family members
72. Teachers
73. Movies
74. Friends
75. Books
76. Fellow workers provided.
77. In right-to-work states if the company and the union agree, all employees can be required to join the union and/or pay union dues.
78. If you work for a business where a union has negotiated fringe benefits such as medical insurance, you must join the union to receive these benefits.

79. Even if workers feel that a safety hazard presents an immediate danger, they do not have the right to leave their worksite without the permission of the foreman or other person in charge.
80. If s/he wants to, your boss can legally fire you for joining a union.
81. Federal government employees can be legally fired for striking.
82. If you are fired for joining a union, your boss must pay you any wages lost because you were fired.
83. It is legal for an employer to hire only persons who are already union members.
84. The percentage of working people who are in unions has been increasing over the last 30 years in the U.S.
85. Employers must pay their workers at least one and a half times their regular wages for hours worked beyond 40 hours a week.
86. The majority of working people in the U.S. are members of unions.
87. You can be refused a job because you are a member of a union.
88. If a union calls a strike, it cannot legally prevent you from working.
89. Unions are governed by federal law.
90. Workers can be required to join a union in:
  - a. All states
  - b. Some states
  - c. No states
  - d. Not sure
91. How does an organization go from being non-union to unionized?
  - a. The workers decide
  - b. The management decides
  - c. The government decides
  - d. The managers and workers decide together
92. If it were not for unions, there would be little protection against favoritism on the job.
93. I think the best person should be kept on the job regardless of seniority when layoffs occur.
94. Unions impose too many restrictions on employers.
95. Employees of a firm have better compensation and working conditions when all of them belong to a union.
96. Unions should have something to say about whom the employer hires.
97. Union rules often interfere with the efficient running of the employer's business.
98. We need more laws to limit the power of unions.
99. The high wage demands of unions reduce chances for employment.
100. The growth of unions has made our democracy stronger.
101. The selfishness of employers can be fought only by strong unions.
102. Employees should not have to join a union in order to hold a job.
103. If a majority of workers in an organization vote to have a union, the others should be required to join.
104. So much of union policy is set by national unions that there is not much point in members attending meetings of their local union.
105. It is practically impossible to elect different officers in national unions.
106. National unions exercise too much control over the affairs of their local unions.
107. National unions take their share of the membership dues but give the locals little in return.
108. Employees should have the right to join a union.
109. Teachers and other public employees should have the right to collectively bargain.
110. Gains made by employees are chiefly due to unions.
111. Laws regulating union activity are too strict.
112. Unions represent the wishes of members.
113. It is proper for unions to campaign for political candidates.
114. Management is the major cause of strikes.
115. Employees in the private sector should have the right to strike.
116. Employees in the public sector (e.g., local, state, and federal employees) should have the right to strike.
117. Union leaders are effective leaders of their organizations.
118. Unions represent the wishes of only a few leaders.

119. Unions are generally reasonable in their demands.
120. Union officers are interested in the welfare of their members.
121. Union leaders, as compared to business leaders, do the most good for the country.
122. Unions tend to weaken employee discipline.
123. Unions have the support of the majority of their members.
124. Unions try to abide by their labor agreements.
125. Unions cooperate with management on disciplinary matters.
126. Management has a reasonably free hand in running unionized organizations.
127. Unions have too much power to influence the nation's economic well-being.
128. Economic power of unions should be limited by the federal government.
129. Actions by unions tend, at times, to hurt the national economy and should be closely regulated by the federal government.
130. Unions are often unfairly restricted by the President of the United States when strikes are ended forcibly before bargaining issues are settled.
131. Unions definitely do not have enough economic power to adequately protect their members from large organizations.
132. The national union, because of its political and economic influence at the national and state levels, may be of more benefit to the individual union member than the local union.
133. The local union can be of more benefit to the individual union member than the national union, because the local can more effectively protect the individual member from management.
134. The local union is more important than the national union because it deals more effectively with local issues.
135. The overall welfare of the nation would:
  - a. Improve if more workers belonged to unions.
  - b. Improve if fewer workers belonged to unions.
  - c. Not be affected by changes in unionism.
136. Should individuals be allowed to refuse to join or pay dues to a union if they do not want to do so, even though the union may get wage and benefit increases for them?
137. How much confidence do you have in American business?
138. How much do you trust the leaders of big business?
139. Unions may be OK for some people, but I don't think I will ever join one.
140. In general, do you approve or disapprove of unions?
  1. Approve
  2. Disapprove
  3. Don't know
141. If you work at a job that is dirty, dangerous, and stressful, you need a union.
142. By demanding higher wages and benefits, unions cause inflation.
143. Unions cause unnecessary bad feeling in the workplace.
144. Without unions, women's pay relative to men's pay would be even worse than it is now.
145. Most top level union leaders are more concerned with getting rich than with improving the welfare of members.
146. Employees who belong to a union have better wages and working conditions than employees who do not.
147. Strikes are often the only means workers have of gaining better working conditions.
148. Unions are un-American.
149. We need more laws to increase the power of unions.
150. A worker could gain more by asking the employer individually than by presenting requests through the union.
151. Even "white collar" workers and professionals need unions to assure themselves good wages and working conditions.
152. Unions influence who gets elected to public office.
153. Unions influence what laws get passed.
154. Unions influence how the country is run.
155. Unions protect workers against unfair actions.
156. Unions improve job security.

157. Unions give members their money's (dues') worth.
  158. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their sex.
  159. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their race.
  160. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their color.
  161. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their religion.
  162. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone because they they once belonged or currently belong to a union.
  163. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone who is not qualified for the job.
  164. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone who has been convicted of a crime.
  165. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their marital or family status.
  166. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their age if they are over the age of 18?
  167. An employer can legally refuse to hire someone on the basis of their personal financial history.
  168. An employer can legally require a job applicant or an employee to take a drug test.
  169. An employer can legally require a job applicant to take a polygraph test.
  170. An employer can legally determine what work will be performed by employees.
  171. An employer can legally determine how much employees will be paid.
  172. An employer can legally determine what hours employees will work.
  173. An employer can legally appraise the quality of an employee's performance.
- EMPLOYERS SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO:**
174. Evaluate the quality of an employee's work.
  175. Examine arrest records of employees, even if no conviction resulted from the arrest.
  176. Examine arrest records of employees, only if the arrest was followed by a conviction.
  177. Know whether female job applicants are currently pregnant.
  178. Know whether any of their employees are living with a person of the opposite sex who is not their spouse.
  179. Discharge female employees who become pregnant.
  180. Prohibit dating between supervisors and subordinates.
  181. Prohibit dating between any employees of the organization.
  182. Determine the nature of the work to be performed by employees
  183. Transfer employees to other locations, even if the employee doesn't want the transfer.
  184. Review a job applicant's credit history.
  185. Review a job applicant's personal income tax return.
  186. Review an employee's personal bank statement.
  187. Require all job applicants to submit to drug tests.
  188. Require only those job applicants who look like potential drug users to submit to drug tests.
  189. Test employees to determine if they use illegal drugs during working hours.
  190. Test employees to determine if they use illegal drugs during nonworking hours.
  191. Require polygraph tests for all new job applicants.
  192. Require polygraph tests for existing employees.
  193. Require physical exams for all new employees.
  194. Require physical exams for all job applicants prior to hiring.
  195. Require physical exams for new job applicants only if the job requires strenuous work.
  196. Not hire a job applicant because s/he has cancer.
  197. Discharge an employee because s/he has cancer.
  198. Contact a job applicant's previous employer, even without the applicant's permission.
  199. Hire special investigators to verify a job applicant's resume information.
  200. Hire special investigators to investigate a job applicant's moral character.
  201. Know how employees spend their time in nonworking hours.
  202. Know an individual's religious affiliation.
  203. Know whether a job applicant has ever been a member of a union.
  204. Refuse to hire a job applicant because the applicant previously belonged to a union.
  205. Know an employee's marital status.
  206. Know whether an employee is engaged in an extramarital affair.
  207. Deduct wages from any employee who is believed to be stealing from the employer.
  208. Know the political affiliations of job applicants and employees.

209. Discharge an employee because s/he does not believe in God.
210. Determine how much an employee should be paid for the work he/she performs.
211. Discharge an employee for coming to work intoxicated.
212. Discharge an employee for attempting to form a union among the employees.
213. Refuse to hire an individual because he/she is homosexual.
214. Discharge an employee for excessive absenteeism.
215. Discharge an employee for failing a polygraph exam.
216. Discharge an employee who tests positive for illegal drugs.
217. Discharge an employee who tests positive for AIDS.
218. Ask a job applicant's sexual preference.
219. Base hiring decisions on how well the job applicant's spouse fits the image of the corporation.
220. Base hiring decisions on how well the job applicant fits the image of the corporation.
221. Refuse to hire anyone who does not possess the skill necessary to perform the job.
222. Refuse to hire anyone who smokes cigarettes.
223. Evaluate an employee's job performance.
224. Know whether a job applicant intends to take maternity leave during the course of their employment.
225. Assign work to employees.
226. Move production to lower cost areas within the United States.
227. Move production to lower cost areas in other countries.
228. Know whether job applicants are likely to become disabled due to poor health.
229. Require job applicants to submit to psychological tests.
230. Refuse to hire a job applicant because a psychological test reveals a pro-union orientation.
231. Refuse to hire a job applicant if the employer believes that the individual might transmit disease to customers or co-workers.
232. Investigate whether the information on an employment application is correct.
233. Discharge employees who use illegal drugs during nonworking hours, even if drug use does not affect performance.
234. Discharge employees who use drugs during working hours, even if the drug use does not affect performance.
235. Dismiss employees who drink alcohol on the job, even if the use of alcohol does not affect performance.
236. Dismiss employees who drink alcohol on their lunch hour, even if the use of alcohol does not affect performance.
237. Require employees to work overtime, even if the employees don't want to work overtime.
238. Restrict an employee's access to information in his/her own personnel file.
239. Deny an employee access to his/her personnel file.
240. Disclose potentially damaging information about an employee to an inquiring third party without the employee's permission.
241. Prohibit an employee from dating a competitor's employees.
242. Prohibit an employee from moonlighting.

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