Spillovers From Cooperative and Democratic Workplaces:
Have the Benefits Been Oversold?

Edward S. Greenberg
University of Colorado, Boulder

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Mark Snyder, Brandon Sullivan, and John Sullivan

Scholars and practitioners generally agree that employee cooperation in the workplace is beneficial for both employees and their companies. Employees in cooperative settings tend to report higher levels of morale, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship, commitment to the organization, and trust in organizational leaders, as well as lower absenteeism, tardiness, and intention to quit, all of which contribute to better organizational performance. Research regarding the degree to which these cooperative arrangements in the workplace spill over into employees' lives outside of work is less clear, however. In this chapter, I will examine spillover effects on employees who are involved in a subset of cooperative workplace arrangements, namely those related to decision-making on the job. I am particularly interested in examining possible spillover effects among employees in worker-owned and/or worker-run companies (namely, producer cooperatives and employee stock ownership firms or ESOPs) where employee/owners meet, deliberate, and decide both broad and specific company policies, and in workplace teams in conventional firms where employees are responsible for deliberating and deciding certain questions related to production or delivery of a service. If cooperation in the workplace produces spillover effects, one ought to see such effects in these two types of cooperative decision-making settings.

One cannot examine all possible spillover effects, of course. My focus in this chapter will be on those areas of potential spillover effects of cooperative decision making most often cited by advocates for worker-owned and managed companies, and for teams in conventional workplaces. For the former, enhancement of democratic citizenship has been the possible spillover effect that has received the most attention; for the latter, employee well-being, defined mostly in terms of mental and physical health, and work-family conflict, has garnered the most attention. I will ask, then, whether participation in decision-making by employees in worker-

owned and worker-run companies have important spillover effects on their roles as citizens in the larger society and whether being on work teams in conventional companies positively or negatively affects employees' well-being outside the workplace. I focus on empirical research that addresses these questions, some from secondary sources and some from my own several research studies devoted to these topics. Though I find some empirical evidence of positive spillovers to both citizenship and well-being, there is less than might be supposed, given the enthusiastic literature that extols the positive benefits of workplace democracy and work teams. I find this conclusion both troubling and unavoidable.

Workplace Spillover in General

Jobs and a range of workplace practices have substantial spillover effects on employees. It is well established, for example, that the sorts of jobs people do and the kinds of workplaces where they do their jobs have consequences for them off the job. Researchers have demonstrated, for example, that jobs and workplaces that are highly stressful or that lack the opportunity for people to use their capacities or exercise autonomy on the job have adverse effects on a wide range of physical and mental health outcomes, ranging from increased cardiovascular disease and mortality, to increased depressive symptoms and personality disorders, including powerlessness, anxiety, and depression. (Cappelli, Bassi et al. 1997) Kohn and Schooler show that jobs with low complexity and latitude adversely affect both job attitudes (like satisfaction) and a generalized sense of personal distress, including a sense of powerlessness and anxiety. (Kohn and Schooler 1983) Karasek and Theorell report that high job stress and worry about job loss have important negative mental health outcomes, including depression and heightened feelings of anxiety[1] (Karasek and Theorell 1990) Work stress and strain have been shown to contribute to feelings of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and depersonalization. (Taris, Schreurs et al. 2001)

Long term work stress, moreover, has been shown to be associated with depression and physical disorders. (Pearlin and Radabaugh 1976; LaRocco, House et al. 1980; Aneshensel 1985; Kandel, Davies et al. 1985; Phelan and et.al. 1991) Several researchers have shown that feelings of job insecurity and job dissatisfaction increases the sense of powerlessness among employees (Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt 1987). Persistent feelings of job insecurity are strongly associated with a range of mental and physical health problems (Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt 1987; Wilkinson 1996; Ferrie, Shipley et al. 1998a; Ferrie, Shipley et al. 1998b). And, Marmot and his associates have shown that status inequality in a hierarchical organization, all other things being equal, has strong effects on mental and physical health. (Marmot and al. 1997; Marmot and Wilkinson 1999a; Marmot, Siegrest et al. 1999b)

Considering positive workplace spillover effects, job satisfaction has been shown to enhance a range of well-being indicators.(Diener and Seligman 2004) Several studies show, for example, that job satisfaction is positively associated with general life satisfaction (Rice, Near et al. 1980; Near, Smith et al. 1983; Heller, Judge et al. 2002; Diener and Seligman 2004), good marital relations (Doumas, Margolin et al. 2003; Rogers and May 2003) , and overall sense of personal well-being (Warr 1999; Diener and Seligman 2004).

Askenazy's meta-analysis of empirical studies on the effects of innovative work practices in the United States---including total quality management, flexible workplace practices, job rotation, and autonomous work teams---reports a mix of positive and negative spillover effects. While innovative work practices improves efficiencies and profits for business firms, and enhances employee job interest and involvement, they have also diminished workplace health and safety, primarily because many of these innovations bring increased time and turnaround pressures, more decisional responsibilities, and more social pressures from other employees to

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perform at consistently higher levels. (Askenazy and Cepremap 2001)

This brief review---a look at the proverbial tip of the iceberg, as it were---demonstrates that jobs and workplaces have multiple and important spillover effects on people's lives outside the immediate work-setting, some being good for employees, some not so good. What we know less about, however, and what is at stake in this chapter, is whether innovations in the workplace designed to increase cooperation in decision-making among employees have spillover effects, and if so, of what sort and to what degree?

Spillover from Participation in Cooperative and Democratic Arrangements at Work

In the next sections of this chapter, I examine the empirical standing of claims about the positive effects on employees of participation in cooperative workplace decision-making, focusing on the effects of such participation on citizenship and on personal well-being, examining both the secondary literature and results from several of my own empirical studies.

Spillovers in Worker-Owned and Worker-Operated Companies There is a workplace spillover tradition that assumes the existence of a strong association between participation in decision-making at the workplace and participation and civic-mindedness in conventional politics in the larger democratic society.

Theories of Democratic Spillover

Participatory democratic theorists believe that participatory practices within social institutions are both rational for society, good for the development of human capacities, and a moral right in any society that advertises itself as a democracy. It is widely believed among these thinkers that democracy begets more democracy, that practicing participation in one social institution provides the learning necessary for practicing participation in other social realms. [2] (Pateman 1970)

Among participatory democratic theorists, the workplace represents the most important setting for the education of democratic citizens primarily because of the presumed centrality of work in shaping people's outlooks, the tendency of workplaces to draw together large numbers of people who might be persuaded to act together in decision-making units, and the well-known influence of workplaces in shaping people's psycho-social outlooks. The idea here is that if workplace arrangements encourage democratic participation within the walls of the firm, workers in such settings are more likely to be participatory and civic-minded citizens outside; workplace arrangements that discourage participation or fail to teach democratic skills or nurture democratic aspirations are likely to depress participation in other social institutions, especially in the world of conventional politics. (Pateman 1970; Dahl 1985; Dahl 1989)

Citizenship education in participatory workplaces might happen in a number of ways. Several scholars have suggested that the workplace and the larger political sphere share, as it were, similar authority patterns, so that lessons learned in the one sphere easily can transfer to others (Almond and Verba 1963; Sigel and Hoskins 1977; Mason 1982; Sobel 1993). Other scholars suggest that practicing democracy increases employees' sense of personal efficacy which they carry with them to other social institutions; thus, personal efficacy developed in democratic workplaces helps nurture feelings of political efficacy, an orientation that has long been associated with the propensity to participate in politics (Elden 1981; Lafferty 1989; Greenberg and Grunberg 1999). Still others believe that practicing and learning civic activities in the work setting creates a set of skills—such as organizing meetings, speaking in public, deliberating with others, and so on-- that is transferable to other settings (Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995). The most optimistic participatory democratic theorists suggest that the experience of working together to reach decisions, especially in settings where democratic discourse is part and

parcel of the working environment, encourages people to take into account the views and interests of others, to see beyond one's own self-interest and gain a sense of commonality, and, as a result, to become more public-spirited. (Cole 1919; Pateman 1970; Greenberg 1986; Mill 1991)

Empirical Research on Political Spillover

While there is some support in the research literature for the existence of some of the democratic spillover effects specified above, the research leaves much to be desired, either because of the methods used or because of the mixed results that have been reported. It is probably fair to say that the definitive test of the theory has not yet been done.

Much of the research examines the citizenship spillover issue indirectly, inferring a relationship but not examining it directly. One indirect approach to the assessment of the political spillover question has been to demonstrate the existence of an association between some degree of job autonomy in the workplace and political participation outside of it, the argument being that those with some degree of control over their jobs are more likely to develop the skills and confidence to act as citizens. This view is supported by research showing, for example, that people in low status, non-supervisory, and repetitive unskilled jobs (i.e. low autonomy jobs) are less likely to participate in conventional politics than people in high status, supervisory, and/or highly skilled (i.e. high autonomy jobs) jobs (Sobel 1993; Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995).

Another indirect approach to the political spillover question has been to examine whether an association exists between participatory workplace democratic arrangements and the development of personal and political efficacy, political efficacy having been shown to be associated with political participation. (Campbell, Converse et al. 1960; Almond and Verba 1963; Milbraith and Goel 1971; Verba and Nie 1972; Barnes and M. Kasse 1979; Elden 1981;

Sigleman and Feldman 1983; Rosenstone and Hanson 1993; Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995; Schur, Eaton et al. 2004)[3]   One of the first to make the claim about forms of workplace participation and political efficacy were Almond and Verba in their classic work *The Civic Culture* where they reported that "being consulted on the job" and "feeling free to protest management decisions at work" are associated with "feelings of subjective political competence," the feeling that individuals could influence the action of government and government officials. Unfortunately, the *Civic Culture* did not include very many specific questions about the many possible forms of participation in decision making on the job; questions that asked respondents if they were consulted on the job by supervisors, or if they felt free to protest management decisions, do not represent much of a basis for making broad claims about the impact of workplace participation on feelings of political efficacy.

As to direct assessments of the simple spillover thesis—that is, the purported association between participation in decision making on the job and political participation in the larger society--there is little to report. As I suggested in an earlier article, "studies that empirically investigate the link between participation in workplace decision making and participation in politics outside the walls of the enterprise are relatively rare." (Greenberg, Grunberg et al. 1996; Carter 2003) The few studies that address the issue are typically marred by small sample sizes, non-random sampling, and/or case-study approaches. Having said that, there is some, but not overwhelming support, for the political spillover thesis. Menachem Rosner has shown, for example, that it is precisely those who participate in kibbutz governing institutions who are most likely to participate in the governing affairs of the larger kibbutz movement and in Israeli politics. (Rosner 1976)   Stephen Smith, in a study of 1400 workers in 55 U.S. firms characterized by a wide range of decision-making environments, reported that those most

involved in decision-making within their firms are somewhat more likely to be active in the affairs of their communities than others. (Smith 1996) A study by Peterson in several firms in upstate New York showed a similar result, though the study involved only a very small sample and a very low response rate. (Peterson 1992) A study of a 6,000 employee worker co-managed Canadian steel firm offered anecdotal evidence that, in the period after the co-management system was introduced, employees increased their activities in voluntary organizations in the community and did so with new sets of skills and a sense of confidence learned in the workplace. (Savory-Gordon 2003)

Two studies using national random samples also have confirmed the existence of a small but statistically significant spillover between participation in decision-making in firms and political participation outside the firm. William Lafferty's Norwegian democracy project surveys found such a relationship (Lafferty 1989), as did a study by Richard Sobel using data from the 1985 National Election Study pilot survey. (Sobel 1993). In both cases, the spillover effects were statistically significant but modest in scale.

My own research on this question shows mixed and weak results. In a study comparing workers in U.S. producer cooperative firms—where worker/owners run all the affairs of the company-- with workers in closely matched conventional firms in the wood products industry in the Pacific Northwest, I reported the following: (Greenberg 1986)

- Workers in democratically-run producer cooperatives were no more politically efficacious than workers in conventional firms.
- Workers in democratically-run producer cooperatives were slightly more likely to be involved in community affairs (contacted a public official, written a letter to the editor, or worked with others to solve some community problem) and in attending government

meetings and hearings than workers in conventional firms (though levels of involvement for both groups was extremely low), but they were no more likely to participate in election campaigns or vote.

- In a supplemental panel survey of the same respondents done five years after the first survey, workers in the co-ops were more likely than workers in the conventional firms to be more involved in campaign activities, community affairs, and attending meetings (though not on voting), though overall levels of activity in all areas of political participation were extremely low for both groups.

- Perhaps most striking of all, workers in the more democratic producer cooperatives were significantly more likely than workers in conventional firms to describe their involvement in politics in terms of self-interest rather than in terms of the general good, suggesting that the slight gain in participation from workplace cooperation did not lead to gains in civic-mindedness. Interestingly, co-op workers became less civic minded over time, while conventional workers did not change at all on this dimension.

- In a follow-up study done 10 years later comparing workers in democratically-run firms (producer cooperatives and employee-stock ownership firms) with workers in matched conventional union and non-union firms in the wood products industry, my colleagues and I were rather startled to discover that workers in the more democratically-run firms were much less likely than workers in conventional firms to be active in politics (voting, campaign activities, community involvement). The surprising result, we found, could not be explained by a drop off in participation in the democratically-run firms but seemed best explained by the economic troubles these firms were experiencing at the time. (Greenberg, Grunberg et al. 1996)

So where does this leave us on the question of the potency of participation in decision-making in the workplace for encouraging positive spillovers on democratic citizenship? One must conclude, I believe, that while much has been made about this dynamic in the theoretical literature, the empirical evidence for its existence is not strong. The empirical evidence suggests either mixed outcomes---spillover occurs in some cases and settings and not others—or fairly modest spillover effects.

Well-Being Spillovers From Work Teams   Many companies have introduced one form or another of teams in the workplace in hopes of improving their performance. Work teams generally are made up of a small number of employees who take on many responsibilities customarily done by supervisors. The most effective teams, according to the management literature, are granted a great deal of autonomy in achieving goals set by upper management. Typically, team members direct their own work, set their own schedules and work assignments, and coordinate with other teams and divisions within the company. The most effective teams are granted the necessary authority to make decisions that are essential to their area of responsibility, and take collective credit or blame for their performance. In their most highly developed form. the self-managed work team "…is a group of individuals who have been given the responsibility to complete a whole task and to make the decision as to how to complete it." (Elloy and Terpening 2001) Of course, few teams reach this level of autonomy in American firms, though teams of one kind or another have become common.

Many claims have been made about the positive benefits of work teams for organizations, particularly for teams of the semi-autonomous variety, though the empirical evidence in support of these claims is meager. The evidence that teams have a positive impact on organizational performance and on the development of positive employee attitudes is mixed; what little

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empirical research exists shows positive results only some of the time, and these tend to be quite modest.[4] After reviewing this research, Glassop reached the following conclusion about the status of team effects: "In sum, while many benefits [of teams] have been cited for organizations and employees alike, the literature lacks consistent empirical evidence to support their widespread adoption" (Glassop 2002)

My main concern in this chapter, however, is not with team impacts on organizational performance per se, or on the development of more positive work-related employee attitudes, but on their possible spillover effects. Here I want to examine the question of whether involvement in work teams affects employees in their lives away from the job, to see whether this form of small group participation in workplace decision-making has positive or negative benefits (or some combination) for employees outside the walls of the firm.

There are only a few studies that look directly at team spillover effects on employee well-being. Again, as with employee participation in running producer cooperatives and ESOP firms, the results on spillover are mixed. While investigators have long believed that being on a work team will have beneficial mental health outcomes, only a few empirical studies support this position. Wall and Clegg found higher levels of psychological well-being among employees on autonomous work (Wall and Clegg 1981) . Van Mierlo and her colleagues reported that employees who say they are members of highly autonomous work teams show less psychological fatigue than their peers (van Mierlo, Rutte et al. 2001), while Froiland reports that work team membership helps reduce feelings of burnout (Froiland 1993). Elloy and his colleagues report that participation in the activities of semi-autonomous work teams tends to moderate feelings of emotional exhaustion (Elloy and Terpening 2001). Greenberg and his colleagues report that members of work teams have a stronger sense of mastery than non-team

colleagues in a down-sizing firm (Greenberg and Grunberg 2004). Another study by Friedman and Casner-Lotto found that being a member of an effective work team contributed to a general sense of self-confidence (Friedman and Casner-Lotto 2002). On the other hand, van Mierlo reports that a number of researchers have found a number of negative mental health spillovers as a result of intense time and effort demands placed on employees by virtue of being on teams (van Mierlo, Rutte et al. 2001).[5]

Empirical studies that link participation on work teams to physical health are rare, and those that do exist, oddly enough, show negative spillover effects. Askenazy summarizes literature on high performance work places, one component of which involves participation on teams, and finds associations with heightened levels of occupational stress and injuries (Askenazy and Cepremap 2001) and speculates that the high pressure environment in high performance workplaces may be to blame. Anderson-Connolly and his colleagues found that being on teams decreased satisfaction and increased reports of bad health symptoms among non-managerial employees in a large manufacturing company, for reasons that are not entirely clear (Anderson-Connolly, Grunberg et al. 2002).

Preliminary Report on Well-Bing Spillovers From Work Teams

Because the literature on team spillover effects is so underdeveloped and because the research that exists shows very mixed results, I will take the liberty of using data on teams (as-yet-unreported) from a research project my colleagues and I are conducting in a large American manufacturing firm. [6] The project looks at the impact of corporate downsizing, job reengineering, and teaming on employee well-being over time. Information on teams and employee involvement in team activities were collected in two waves, two years apart, using a longitudinal-panel design.[7] In the project, we define well-being primarily in terms of mental and

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physical health, though we also pay attention to the issue of work-family conflict.

The company in our study does not keep records on teams, per se, so we depend upon individual-level, self-reports from employees on their team experiences. While this may represent a problem from one point of view, it represents a real advantage in another sense, given our belief that a team is not fully a team unless it is perceived as such by employees. Belanger, Edwards, and Wright note that relatively few studies examine workers' own reports of how team work impacts their attitudes toward their job or company and the same must be said about possible spillover effects. (Belanger, Edwards et al. 2003) Other investigators have found that internal subjective experiences, more than external objective assessments, creates the link between job redesign or enrichment (teams being one example) and employees' attitudes toward their work and company, and again, the same may be the case when it comes to spillover effects. (Niehoff, Moorman et al. 2001; Sikora 2002)

Teams come in a variety of forms. Some are given more responsibilities than others. Some have more information related to their projects. Some but not others have access to an independent budget to accomplish team goals. Some are relatively free from direct supervision by supervisors, while others work on a shorter leash, as it were. Teams also vary in what might be called their "social atmospherics." Some teams, for example, are more cooperative in their activities than others; some teams are better than other teams in achieving their objectives. Some teams provide social support and affirmation for their members, while others are filled with social conflict and tension. Members in some teams are able to actively participate in team decisions, while on others, decisions are made in practice by one or a handful of others. Most existing empirical research on teams does not take account of the wide variability of teams, particularly in the variability of the experiences of members on teams. I will focus here on these

latter aspects, partly out of necessity, partly out of theoretical importance.

We are interested, then, in the subjective aspects of team functioning viewed from the perspective of the individual employee that might be associated with spillover effects. But what aspects of team functioning should be of primary interest? Based in part on our own in-depth interviews and focus groups with employees and managers of the company in question, and based in part on the extant literature on work teams, we have identified four aspects of the team experience for examination of possible team spillover effects.

Team membership There is some evidence that simply being in an environment where workers participate in decision-making has modest spillover effects on social attitudes and political participation (Almond and Verba 1963; Verba, Schlozman et al. 1995) so it is not unreasonable to assume that the more intensely participatory environment of a small work team may have spillover effects as well. On the other hand, being on a team may also contribute, as we have shown, to higher time and effort demands on employees. These pressures may well contribute to negative spillovers in the areas of mental and physical health and may also create more work-family conflict as overburdened employees try to balance work and family obligations.

Participation in team decision-making. The research literature supports the notion that employees in work organizations seek more participation in decision- making, generally like the experience of playing such a role, and report a wide range of positive outcomes from the experience, including greater commitment to the work organization (Pateman 1970; Elden 1981; Mason 1982; Greenberg 1986; Greenberg and Grunberg 1994; Levine 1995; Freeman and Rogers 1999; Shadur, Kienzle et al. 1999; Applebaum, Bailey et al. 2000). Kirkman and Rosen note that "winning" teams are characterized by employees who can exercise freedom and

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discretion in decisions. (Kirkman and Rosen 2000)These "winning" teams spur on employees to put in the extra effort to be more innovative and boost quality and production levels (i.e., these employees are more committed to helping their organization succeed). Given evidence of these strong effects within organizations and on basic outlooks, spillovers may well exist across a wide range of well-being outcomes, particularly those involving mental and physical health.

Harmonious and supportive teams. Here we refer to aspects of the team experience that are perceived to provide social support, harmony, cohesion, and positive social relations: being respected by other team members, feeling free to communicate ideas, working easily and well with others on the team, and so on. This social dimension of teams, rather than the task collaboration nature of teams, may serve as the foundation for employee evaluation of their relationship with the organization, their attitudes towards their jobs, and their general outlooks. Costa notes that team trust and cooperation are positively related to attitudinal commitment, for example. (Costa 2003) Perceptions of social support or coworker solidarity in the workplace have also been shown to be positively associated with organizational commitment (Cordery, Mueller et al. 1991; Cohen and Bailey 1997; Parris, Business et al. 2003) and job satisfaction and morale (Belanger, Edwards et al. 2003). Diener's review of the research literature leads him to conclude that close cooperation and social support in general and in the workplace are associated with various dimensions of well-being, including better mental health (Diener and Seligman 2004). Dovey and Onyx report that membership on teams with high levels of team spirit encourages members to be more involved in community organizations and to be more skilled in organizational affairs (Dovey and Onyx 2001). Spillover effects to mental and physical health seem plausible, then, and it may well be the case that working in a supportive work team environment causes members to take fewer negative aspects of their jobs home with them.

Team effectiveness. Teams in organizations vary widely in their effectiveness in carrying out team missions and meeting objectives defined by the team itself and by the organization. Lester, Meglino, and Korsgaard (Lester, Meglino et al. 2002) found that team member beliefs in team effectiveness were related to higher levels of motivation and satisfaction. Kirkman and Rosen (Kirkman and Rosen 2000) include employee confidence in their collective effectiveness as one feature of a "winning team." Bayazit and Mannix (Bayazit and Mannic 2003) also note that member beliefs in the team's effectiveness can be a key factor in turnover intentions. In general then, research supports the idea that employees who believe they are members of teams that perform at high levels of effectiveness are more positive about organizations that provide opportunities to feel a sense of accomplishment and to be a part of group that is respected by other employees, supervisors, and top management. It is not unreasonable to expect that these positive outcomes, to the degree that they contribute to job satisfaction and higher levels of work morale, may spill over into the mental and physical health parts of employees' lives.

Having identified four important aspects of the team experience,[8] I turn to a brief examination of their relationship to the following well-being outcomes: mental health (depression and mastery or self-efficacy), physical health (bad health symptoms and alcohol dependency), negative health behaviors (bad outcomes from drinking), and work-to-family conflict. In the table below, I report the results of a series of regression equations that examine these relationships over time. In each equation, I am interested in the impact of Time 1 team experience variables on Time 2 well-being outcomes (roughly two years later), taking into account a range of control variables.[9] Time 1 scores for each of the spillover dependent variables and Time 2 scores for the team variables also are included as a way to partial out their effects in equations that are designed to examine the over-time effects of team experiences on

important well-being outcomes.

The story conveyed by the summary table is very straightforward. Team experiences at Time 1 have very few effects on well-being outcomes at Time 2. Only three of the twenty-four cells show a significant result—the quality of team social relations decreases depression scores and increases work-family conflict, while having a say in team decision-making decreases scores on the bad health measure. Though not reported in the table—my aim here is simply to determine if team experiences have any spillover impact at all on well-being--the effects in all three cases are quite small.[10] The implications of these results is quite clear: employee experiences on teams has little on no impact on a wide range of well-being outcomes. To be sure, they might well have an impact on other indicators of well-being not examined here, but in terms of the outcomes examined in the studies my colleagues and I have been conducting, the results are quite disappointing.

Summary Table

Impact of Team Experiences at Time 1 on

Well-Being Outcome Variables at Time 2

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Mastery	Depression	Bad health symptoms	Alcohol dependency	Negative outcomes from drinking	Work-family conflict
Member of a workplace team or not	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Degree of say in work team decision making	ns	ns	*	ns	ns	ns
Perceived Team Effectiveness	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Degree of team harmony and support	ns	*	ns	ns	ns	*

Notes on table:

1. Columns 1-6 report the statistical significance of team variables at Time 1 for equations in which the spillover dependent variables at Time 2 are regressed on team independent variables at Time 1. Time 1 scores for the spillover dependent variables and Time 2 team variables are included in each equation. [11]

2. Because each has been shown to affect one aspect or another of the well-being outcomes under consideration, the following controls are included (T2): age, sex, tenure in the company, job rank, job stress, sense of security, perceived organizational support, and trust in top management.

3. * indicates statistical significance at .05 or better; ns indicates "not significant."

Observations About Disappointing Empirical Findings

It is well-established that employee participation in cooperative decision-making within firms has many benefits for individual employees and the firms for which they work. For the most part, however, these mostly beneficial outcomes—whether from participation in democratic decision-making arrangements at the level of the firm, division, or section, or in workplace teams of one kind or another—seem to stay mostly inside the walls of the organization. Contrary to the hopes and expectations of many theorists and practitioners, the available empirical research on these cooperative decision-making arrangements in the workplace does not support claims about spillovers into the lives of employees outside the organization. While there are compelling theoretical arguments to suggest that such spillovers should exist, researchers who have examined the question empirically report mixed and disappointing results. Some researchers report weak positive spillovers; others report weak negative spillovers; still others report no effects at all.

The question that immediately jumps to mind is why the results look like they do. One possibility is that the participation-cooperation treatments we encounter in the real world of work organizations are not very substantial. The treatments, that is to say, are not very strong in most cases. I suspect that a wide range of positive experiences at work, including participation in workplace decision-making, while having good outcomes in terms of employee attitudes about the job and the work organization, may not be of sufficient magnitude to matter much for individual well-being when set against other possible influences such as family and friends, health and safety, and income and economic stability, among other things. In fact, it is hard to imagine what might go on in the workplace of a positive nature that might compete with these other life domains to significantly influence citizenship and well-being on a sustained basis.

The notion that weak treatments may be relevant to the weak spillover effects found in the research literature is the finding in my own earlier research that only intense and sustained face-to-face cooperative decision making seems to matter. I found that it was only in producer co-operatives and ESOPs where decision-making was closest to what is typically called "direct democracy"---where decisions about everyday production issues, as well as longer-term planning, are done in face-to-face settings, with full information available to employees---that a small but significant spillover from cooperative decision making to political participation occurred (though political participation remained quite low even in these cases). Where decision-making was indirect and distant---that is, when employee decision-making participation was confined to periodic election of a board of directors or a leadership team that made day-to-day and long-term decisions—positive spillover did not occur at all. This suggests that spillover is most likely to occur in what one might call "rich" participatory environments but not in firms where cooperative decision-making is intermittent, relatively uninformed, and confined to indirect/representative forms of democracy. (Greenberg 1986) I need hardly remind the reader that such intense and long-duration direct democratic arrangements are rare in the United States and are unlikely to become much more common in the near future.

Regarding citizenship spillover effects, it may be, as Hibbing and Theiss-Moore suggest in their chapter for this book, that many people do not find participation in decision making intrinsically satisfying or beneficial to them, so that even if cooperation in the workplace happens, this may not result in spillovers to political participation. (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2006) Not everyone wants an increased "voice" in public affairs, that is to say, an orientation that is unlikely to be changed by participation in cooperative decision making at work, especially

if, as in many instances, participation in workplace decision making is itself grudging or episodic.

At a more general level, it may be that scholars, practitioners, and activists have over-emphasized the importance of jobs and workplaces in the larger scheme of things. Could it be that ideological commitments and/or long-held beliefs in the social sciences about the centrality of work have caused many of us to have prejudged the issue? Perhaps scholars, practitioners, and activists, expecting and assuming that what goes on at work has profound effects on individuals, have seized upon compelling anecdotes, supportive but narrow case studies, empirical but unsystematic studies, and weak results in well-designed studies, as evidentiary confirmation of their preconceptions. I have no doubt, to be sure, that some aspects of work, broadly defined, have significant spillover effects. For example, there is a considerable body of literature showing that being unemployed—being without a job, that is to say-- has profound effects on people, given the centrality of employment for income, self-regard, and social interaction, among other things. There is also a considerable body of research showing that occupations matter to people in important ways and affect their well-being across a broad range, no doubt because occupations are tied to things such as income, social networks, training experiences, and social identities, among other things. But there is less reason to suppose that the everyday routines of working--- things such as work pace, autonomy, mild stress, mild social conflict, relationships with supervisors, and so on--- have much spillover associated with them.

Let's Not Throw Away the Baby With the Bathwater

Despite these disappointing findings about citizenship and well-being spillovers, there is no reason for people and organizations to abandon efforts to enhance cooperative and democratic decision making in workplaces. Perhaps most importantly, even without very many positive

spillover effects, we know from a massive research literature that cooperation and collaboration in work organizations contributes to the improvement of a broad range of employee job related attitudes and behaviors and to better organizational performance. We should not allow disappointment about spillover effects to diminish the significance of these very real achievements of workplace cooperation and participation in decision making.

Nor do we need to abandon entirely the hypothesis that cooperative decision making in work organizations may have positive spillovers to citizenship and well-being. Spillover might occur under certain circumstances, with specific populations. For example, it could be that positive spillover effects for citizenship and well-being are more likely to occur among people with little experience in democratic practices in the larger society, whose habits of participation have not yet set, and for whom cooperative democratic practices at work represent relatively new and significant experiences; young people and people in newly emerging democracies come to mind.[12]

Cooperative decision making may also have more spillover effects in more economically successful firms where the benefits of cooperation are clear. As my colleagues and I have shown, in economically troubled firms, where decisions made by employees or employee-owners are about cuts in pay and benefit, or about putting off plans to upgrade plant and equipment, the participatory experience is unlikely to be a positive one that encourages further participation either inside or outside the firm.(Greenberg, Grunberg et al. 1996)

Certain occupations may also be more open to the salutary effects of participatory decision making in work organizations than those who have been studied by social scientists so far. High end occupations, including software engineers, university professors, and health care professionals, are well studied, for example. So too are assembly line workers in routinized work

settings. The former already enjoy a substantial voice in decisions about their day-to-day work, so additional participatory opportunities may fall under the category of diminishing returns. The latter have little opportunity to participate in meaningful cooperative decision making, even in firms where teams and consultative arrangements exist, because they are not invited to decide the most important matters associated with the work they do and how they carry it out. This leaves a range of "in-between" occupations where expectations about high involvement are not well established and where rigid hierarchical controls are less evident. Retail sales, financial services, and technical services delivery, to take but a few examples, fit such a profile. There may well be others.

It appears, then, that schemes for participatory democracy in work organizations are still worth pursuing. Employees and firms would be best served, however, given the evidence, if proponents would make more modest claims about the spillover benefits of such arrangements.

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[1] also see Price, Van Ryn and Vinokur 1992.

[2] The notion that workplaces might be schools for democracy where people are educated for participation has an impressive pedigree. Rousseau, J.S. Mill, G.D.H. Cole, John Dewey, Robert Dahl, Carole Pateman, and others, for example, have suggested that employees who are involved in democratic forms of activity within firms are likely to gain the skills, confidence, and knowledge that equips them for participation in normal politics, as well as a taste for the joys of democratic life (

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[3] My own research in worker-owned and run producer cooperatives showed no such connection, however. See Greenberg, E. S. (1986). <u>Workplace Democracy: The Political Effects of Participation</u>. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press.

[4] The purported benefits of teams to organizational performance are tied by most analysts to improvements in employee job and work-related attitudes. It has been shown, for example, that involvement in work teams contributes to better morale and job satisfaction among employees

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Wellins, R. S., W. C. Byham, et al. (1991). <u>Empowered Teams</u>. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass,

Mitchell, T. R., B. C. Holtom, et al. (2001). "Why People Stay: Using Job Embeddedness to Predict Voluntary Turnover." <u>Academy of Management journal</u> **44**(6): 1102 (21 pages).

Levine, D. and T. L. D'Andrea (1990). Participation, productivity, and the firm's environment. <u>Paying for Productivity</u>. A. S. Blinder. Washington D.C., Brookings Inst.**:** 183-237. There is also a body of research which suggests that membership on work teams reduces employee stress and burnout, which presumably adds to their productivity and commitment. (

Froiland, P. (1993). "What Cures Job Stress? a) Wellness programs; b) Brown-bag stress seminars; c) Less work and more control over the job." <u>Training</u> **30**(12): 32. My colleagues and I found, however, that being on a work team reduced job satisfaction among non-supervisory workers, probably because of the increased work load and conflicting responsibilities involved in team membership.

Anderson-Connolly, R., L. Grunberg, et al. (2002). "Is Lean Mean? Workplace Transformation and Employee Well-Being." <u>Work, Employment and Society</u> **27**(1): 7-31.

[5] Also see Barker on this point.
Barker, J. R. (1993). "Tightening the Iron Cage: Concertive Control in Self-Managing Teams." <u>Administrative Science Quarterly</u> **38**: 408-437.

[6] My co-PIs on this project are Leon Grunberg and Sarah Moore of the University of Puget Sound. Our consultant and frequent co-author is Patricia Sikora.

[7] The overall study involves four survey waves, over nine years, using a longitudinal panel design. Published papers, working and conference papers, and details of the study design and analysis strategies can be found on the project web page at www.colorado.edu/ibs/PEC/workplacechange.

[8] Definitions and measurement of these four aspects of the team experience, as well as for measures of depression, mastery, physical health, alcohol dependency, negative outcomes from drinking, and family-work conflict are described in detail in
Greenberg, E. S., P. B. Sikora, et al. (2005).
For each team measure, we performed a combination of item and scale analyses, including item-to-total correlations, exploratory factor analysis, and Cronbach's internal consistency analysis.

[9] Complete results of the regression analysis are available upon request.

[10] In each case the coefficients are quite small: the coefficient in the team social relations-depression equation is only -1.96 on a 49 point depression scale; the coefficient in the team social relations-work-to-family conflict is only .30 on a 30 point conflict scale; and the coefficient in the say in team decision-making-bad health equation is -.05 on a 14 point bad health scale.

[11]   With the exception of having a say in team decisions. Questions for this scale were not included in the Time 2 survey questionnaire.