
3. The Success and Failure of a Religious Club

A Psychological Approach

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ANALYZING AN INSTITUTION: APPROACH AND CONCEPTS

The objective of our approach is to understand the psychological state of mind of the people of Wiltshire and to formulate hypotheses and interpretations about Wiltshire Church in relation to its environment at particular points in time. Finally, we try to arrive at a statement describing the primary task of Wiltshire Church—its normative function in the community—that could have significance for those involved in its future.

In formulating these working hypotheses, we make a number of assumptions that are derived from a theoretical framework developed by the Grubb Institute of Behavioural Studies, in England, from its study of groups and social systems. A term that describes this framework is *systems psychology*. A brief introduction to it will reveal some of the assumptions behind our analysis of Wiltshire Church.

The concepts of general systems theory are used to describe groups and institutions. The tacit psychology of the Old Testament is a conception referred to by theologians as “corporate personality.” The Pauline image of the church as body is a systems notion: “We are members one of another.” When viewing an organization systemically, the actions and experiences of individual members reflect not only their unique personal history and orientation toward life but also ideas and images that are held by the group corporately. Thus, when we are observing or being told

about the behavior of particular individuals, we consider how this behavior is transmitting hopes, fears, and conflicts that are the property of the larger social system.

In terms of a theoretical model, institutions and organizations can be construed as open task systems of activity. As an open system, an institution can be studied by examining the processes by which it interacts with its environment. Yet, a system can also be identified in certain respects as independent of other systems, so that we can say that it has a boundary that separates it from its environment.

Whenever an input into the system is changed into an output, the process of transformation is called a *task*, which is susceptible to analysis and definition. A task is different from an aim or objective of the system. Whereas an aim refers to what people would like the system to be doing, a task describes what is actually happening. By making this distinction, the realities of the system can be separated from the fantasies held by those both within the system and outside it.

Organizations perform many tasks. But the concept of "primary task" has proved useful in sorting out the priorities among the various tasks performed. The primary task is that one process that keeps the organization existing, viable, and stable.

This brief description of an organizational model can be a useful conceptual framework for understanding systems. But in working directly with the experience of people, it is necessary to develop a language for communicating about their own experience of relatedness to the other persons and social systems that make up their world. To do so, we draw upon W. R. Bion's unconscious "basic assumptions" that influence the behavior of groups.

Bion suggested that in any group it is possible to discern two types of mental activity. The first he called "work-group" activity. This is rational thought directed toward carrying out the task for which the group has been constituted. He referred to the other kind of mental activity as "basic assumption," which is usually unconscious and held in common by all members of the group. This may be seen as directed toward defending the individual against anxieties about the survival of the group. Bion describes three recurring basic assumptions, each of which gives rise to

characteristic patterns of relatedness between group members and between leader and members. The three basic assumptions may be summarized as follows:

Dependence. The unconscious assumption that the group's survival depends upon being sustained and protected by an all-powerful, all-knowing leader (who may be a person, present or absent, an institution, or an idea).

Expectancy (Bion's term for this is *Pairing*). The unconscious assumption that the group's survival depends upon producing a new leader (person, institution, or idea) who will deliver the members from their present difficulties. Groups frequently produce pairs of members who are regarded as though they are the potential parents of this new messiah.

Fight-Flight. The unconscious assumption that the group's survival depends upon destroying or evading an enemy (person, institution, or idea) that threatens it.

Both work-group and basic assumption activity include thought, words, actions, intentions, hopes, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes. Work-group activity is overt and can be studied by observation. Basic assumption activity is covert and unconscious and therefore cannot be directly observed but can be deduced from other evidence and interpreted in working hypotheses that can then be tested by looking for further evidence and modified accordingly. This describes our approach to analyzing Wiltshire Church in the next section.

These two types of mental activity occur continuously and simultaneously: sometimes basic assumption activity will reinforce work-group activity, sometimes work against it. Whenever persons are involved in task systems, these levels of mental activity will constitute part of the processes being carried out. This will occur particularly where the organization largely focuses on processing information rather than products, such as happens in churches.

Recently, the Institute has attempted to integrate the systems model and the patterns of dependent, expectant, and fight-flight relationships in the following way. Each organization has a dual tendency: to preserve and assert its individuality as an auto-

mous whole (fight-flight) and to function as an integrated part of a larger whole (dependence). In order to engage with the purposes of the large system, a group must be ready to subordinate its own purposes and depend upon the system, thus construing that world as potentially or actually nurturing and secure. But systems survive and develop, not only through self-assertive and integrative activities, but through reproductive activities (expectancy). Under normal conditions hope is the driving force for work that is intended to bring about its fulfillment.

In analyzing an organization, our approach is to collaborate with its members and attempt to *describe* the realities of the situations rather than to *evaluate* them. If the members of the organization can see their situation in greater depth, then they can decide whether or not they want to change and may also see some way of doing so. We follow this descriptive approach in the present analysis.

WILTSHIRE CHURCH AND ITS ENVIRONMENT: FOUR HYPOTHESES

We consider evidence about Wiltshire Church in three stages in its history: prior to 1970, in the early 1970s, and at the time of the research (1981). The analysis of evidence leads to the formulation of hypothetical statements about the church in relation to its environment.

Prior to 1970

In 1840 Joseph Adams paid for the construction of the first Methodist church building. The present building, completed in 1909, was given by Harold Blakely, a descendent of Joseph Adams. It was modeled after an Anglican church he had seen in England, except that the material was the same sandstone used in the Adams Company buildings. The chairman of the church's board of trustees for thirty-five years, until his death in 1969, was the head of the Adams Company. He personally made up the church's deficit each year. The church was described as the "company church" in a "company town" and the previous pastorates as a "safe chaplaincy." This information leads us to Hypothesis 1:

Wiltshire Church was developed as a "private chapel" of the Adams Company in order to establish a dependent relation between the company and the congregation (the employees).

That the church was private can be seen from an observation made by the researchers: "While charitable concerns, especially among individual members, were attended to from 1846 to 1970, there was no discernible pattern of active religious presence [in the community] on behalf of the church as an institution or of the pastor." Though the church was ostensibly part of the Methodist denomination, it appears to have been more a private chapel than a representative of a major Christian denomination in the community.

For more than a century Wiltshire Church was dominated by managers of the Adams Company. This had the effect of controlling their employees, even though it might have been unconscious.

The weakening effect of this paternalism was made evident when one of the Adamses built the fellowship hall in 1950 and challenged the congregation to match his gift. The present pastor comments, "If you want a visual picture of the mentality of the Adams Company employees, look at the two structures. Fellowship Hall, built by Adams, has cut stone, leaded glass, and oak wainscoting. The matching Sunday school wing is the cheapest form of cinder block and industrial sash."

By the 1960s a new kind of resident began to appear in Wiltshire, whose business interests were outside the town and therefore differed radically from the time when the majority of the residents were employees of the Adams Company. Some of these new residents joined existing congregations or founded new ones, but there was a substantial proportion whose needs could not be met by churches with strong cultural, ethnic, or denominational identities, such as the Roman Catholic, Jewish, or Lutheran congregations.

By now the influence of the Adams family in the town had waned, and its domination of the Methodist church ended with the death of Ralph Adams, the chairman of the church administrative board, in 1969.

At the same time the last of the Adams "chaplains" also departed.

In the Early 1970s

The situation can be characterized as a town with residents looking for somewhere to go to church and a church looking for people to come to it. From 1950 to 1970 the town quadrupled in population. "Wiltshire residents by 1970 were predominantly young, upper-middle-class families whose sources of income were Springfield-based businesses and professions." These young executives and their families were looking for something different from Wiltshire than the older residents. For them it represented relaxation rather than work, a place where they could enjoy themselves. Their heavy emphasis upon children represented an investment for the future. Wiltshire residents joke about "buying a school not a house." The town was referred to as "child-oriented"; 35 percent of the population was under 18.

The overall picture is that of young executives looking to the future. They have fought their way into an ideal community, and they are providing their children with good schools; so the prospect is full of hope. With so many like-minded people, it would be natural for them to seek out a means by which these hopes could be reinforced.

In some respects, Wiltshire Church appeared to be the last place that they would wish to go. Among the other churches it was a poor performer. For example, between 1960 and 1970 the Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic churches increased their memberships between 31 and 44 percent, whereas Wiltshire Church had a net loss of members.

About this time a new minister, the Reverend Sid Carlson, was appointed. He "had had success with helping other congregations grow." He had the clear understanding that "the bishop expected him to straighten this place up." From his vitae we know that in his three previous pastorates he had achieved remarkable changes in short periods of time. His background suggests the kind of person who is a go-getter, a troubleshooter, who has the ability to size up a situation and take rapid action to capitalize upon it. He

possessed many of the same characteristics as the new executives on the church's doorstep. He was seen as "a man 'who knew how to take charge of a situation *in the best corporate sense*'" (our emphasis). Like a good businessman, he "checked out" the town before he decided to take the assignment; he discovered that the Congregational church would be his "major competition." Within the first year after taking the assignment as pastor, he convinced the administrative board to dissolve itself. He cleaned the rolls of lapsed members. He fired the secretary and the choir director and dealt decisively with an uprising of the choir. These are assertive behaviors that businessmen could understand and admire.

These circumstances provided the potential for a powerful mixture. And it soon came. Once Sid Carlson began his ministry the new residents poured in over the threshold. Now the position of Wiltshire Church in relation to the other churches was reversed. In the decade between 1970 and 1980, when the population increased 21 percent, all the Protestant churches declined in membership except the Methodist church, which increased 69 percent!

We therefore offer Hypothesis 2, concerning the state of the church at this time:

Wiltshire Methodist Church had become an exciting place, where the needs and hopes of the young executive families could be fostered through a pairing between them and the new pastor.

From our understanding of psychological behavior, it is not surprising that there should be a dynamic pairing relationship between congregation and pastor. In a community or organization where a previous leader has been looked up to and admired and then fails—that is, the dependent relationship has lost credibility—the leader is frequently replaced by a new relationship of pairing. The pairing symbolizes the idea that if only the pair can get together, they can create a new leader. This new leader would be a "messiah," arousing expectancy and giving them hope. We therefore suggest that the town of Wiltshire, which in the past had depended on the Adams Company, was now looking for a new form of leadership. They now found it, not in a person or in an institution, but in an idea: hope. Symbolically, the new execu-

tives and Sid Carlson were a reincarnation of the original Adams family.

Many of the feelings of the congregation, as one of the pair, were expressed through the administrative board, for it was one of the first things Sid Carlson rejuvenated and it was through it he exercised his power. Their response to his ministry provides important evidence as to the state of the church.

Another important factor was the church building. If the church had been a modest wooden structure like most of the other Methodist churches in that locality, it is less likely that the new residents would have been attracted by Sid Carlson, however dynamic he had been. The architectural copy of an old stone English church gave it the desirable image of being more established than it was and thus lent an air of respectability, status, and prosperity to fit the self-image of the executives.

During the 1970s the church continued to grow in its attractions. "The best show in town' and 'in' church were frequently used to describe Wiltshire Church by members, visitors, community residents, and even staff." Interviews with laypersons at all levels of involvement reflected the attraction of Wiltshire Church: "provocative preaching, excellent music, and an emphasis on church school and youth work."

The minister lacked interest in broader connections with the denomination as well as the wider social-political scene (though in previous pastorates he was active in both). One member said, "I think Sid is really turned off by Methodism; he sees it as bureaucratic and cumbersome." Carlson said of himself, "I look on myself as a minister of this Methodist church with a minimal interest in impacting major social and economic problems in the community . . . for the most part that is a very peripheral part of our lifestyle."

We see here that not only has the church gathered together from the community a particular type of person, it has also reached the stage of drawing a boundary around itself, separating itself from community and denominational obligations and focusing on its own inward needs and interests. This gives rise to Hypothesis 3:

Wiltshire Methodist Church had become a club that existed to cater to the needs of its members.

A club can be defined as "an association of persons meeting periodically at some house of entertainment for social intercourse."¹ The church had the characteristics of a club whose regular meetings were on Sunday mornings, with very little activity by members of the congregation in functions and special programs during the week and with little interest outside itself. "The total projected church budget for 1981 was \$155,000, with \$9,000 (6 percent) allocated for mission and benevolence. Given the resources of the congregation, clergy and lay leaders agree that the financial contributions to the church are 'terrible' and 'depressing.'"

As a club, Wiltshire Church was not demanding of its members regarding their financial support. Neither did it demand a high level of commitment in other directions: "One lay leader said that there were two explicit expectations for membership: a financial contribution and occasional worship participation. Issues of belief or commitment were generally assumed." These slack obligations are evidence that there was something unrealistic about the hope generated by the pairing relationship of Sid Carlson and the church membership. If the hope had been taken seriously, efforts would have been made by the congregation to develop the church's activities in order to build it up as a community that could provide a much more secure base for confidence in the future.

But here was evidence of the pastor's insight into the businessmen's hearts. They wanted a place to isolate themselves. This was what Wiltshire offered. As the mayor said of herself: "I can go at a rapid pace as long as I have a period of time to restore that energy." So Carlson offered his congregation a private club where they could come and go as they liked without too much interference in "their quest for privacy." It cannot escape our notice that there was a strange similarity developing between this private club and Adams's private chapel.

Such clubs are not expected to act corporately in society, but their members could be encouraged to act individually. Carlson therefore turned his exhortation toward the members of the con-

¹ *Shorter Oxford Dictionary.*

gregation, calling the church "the place that provides nurture and caring for those who must go out of the sanctuary and do battle in a fundamentally positive and exciting world. Yet it is a world filled with tension, threats, and distractions to the love of God and neighbors to which we are all called." But though individual members of the church had responsible positions in the world and the community, it appeared that the pastor's challenge had little practical effect. The researchers reported that the mayor was discouraged by what she saw as "inability of people to transfer their religious beliefs . . . and apply them to day-to-day pragmatic decisions required by government." Speaking from personal experience in working at this issue of lay witness in the world, we can say that it demands considerable spiritual insight and understanding of theological issues, elements that appeared to be lacking from the pastor's "good sermons," according to some of his hearers.

At the Time of the Research

"Between 1975 and 1980 the population of Wiltshire had only increased from about 21,000 to 22,400, not the dramatic jump of previous years. In those same years property values had skyrocketed . . . interest rates had gone from 8.5 to 16 percent. Alan [from whose point of view the case study is written] found fewer families moving in and out of Wiltshire. Several, like himself, had been transferred to executive positions in main offices in Springfield and would stay there. From observations made by longtime residents, Alan also learned that current 'commuter' residents were assuming a stronger role in local issues."

This is a picture of a community that is beginning to settle down. The businessmen were no longer young; they were becoming more settled in their work, and there was less need for a retreat. Moreover, their children were growing up and making their own lives. There was less intensity of hope; in fact, by this time hope might even be replaced by anxiety about the future for children going into the uncertain world. With this change in the mood of the town from expectation to a search for more dependability, what would be the effect on the church that had apparently mirrored the prevailing state of mind of its inhabitants?

Wiltshire Church is changing, too. Members of the congregation are seeking spiritual growth, theological depth, and a nurturing community, and offering service to the community and beyond. But the associate pastor "believed the leadership was out of touch with those members in the congregation who want to 'spend less time and attention on ourselves,' and to address the community not only of Wiltshire but of the people in Springfield as well."

The pastor himself is changing his behavior. "The senior pastor admitted that he was attempting to withdraw from his usual directive pastoral leadership style." About the same time he began to study for a doctor of ministry degree and, more significantly, began to worry about retirement, having turned 50. Sid Carlson is beginning to realize that he is no longer needed as the charismatic to pair with the congregation to generate hope for the future. For the congregation, the "future" has already come. The members have settled down, while he is left up in the air, feeling increasingly hopeless. There is something sad about his belated search for security, for instead of seeking it through the church, he looks elsewhere. He puts himself under psychiatric care; he considers a nonclergy profession and precipitates a crisis in the administrative board when he asks them to help him buy a house away from the church building. Personally, he is wanting his own form of "privacy," but the church that earlier provided it for its members cannot now provide it for him.

This analysis leads to the formulation of Hypotheses 4, about the church at the time of the study:

Wiltshire Church is in a state of collusion between the pastor and congregation about the myth of success.

It is important to remember that much of the material from the case study and the background statement that we have used as evidence for the past of Wiltshire Church was also given to the researchers as descriptions of the present. Although the situation of the church has altered since 1970 along the lines we have indicated, there appear to be members of the congregation who hold the same opinions about the pastor and the effectiveness of his ministry as they held in the early 1970s. Also, those members who are openly criticizing his ministry today would probably have held

the same opinion since the beginning of his ministry.

The divisions in the church under Sid Carlson are not of recent origin. Yet, the persistence of the myth of the "best show in town" and the judgment of the pastor and several lay leaders "that the 'quiet majority' of the congregation was satisfied with the present tone and direction of the church" indicate that the internal conflicts of the congregation were having little effect on the reputation of Wiltshire Church. What is even more worthy of notice is that the critics of the lack of spiritual depth of the pastor have still remained to worship with him. Despite their own feelings, therefore, they have contributed to the story of success. There is surprisingly little data about people leaving the church, even after the conflicts in the administrative board as a result of Sid Carlson's outburst on feeling let down over the housing issue: "They don't give a goddamn about me."

At this present time there is chaos and confusion and lack of direction. Yet, there remains a wish to go on as before. The associate pastor, who became a spokesman for a good proportion of the congregation, is held to his limited contract by board members who probably would admit the truth of what he said and who were criticizing Sid Carlson's conduct among themselves. Carlson had stayed well beyond the length of the normal Methodist pastorate, and no mention is made about any intention to leave in the research reports.

This line of reasoning leads to our hypothesis about collusion. We do not suggest that it is conscious but that unconsciously both Carlson and the congregation cannot face the realities being presented to them, because to do so would force them to revise their beliefs about the value of what had been done in the preceding years. Yet, to deny this unconsciously requires constant effort and energy. As a result, the stress has become too great for key members of the church and of the administrative board, and they have resigned. Such actions seem to be the only way the pairing relationship can ultimately be broken.

There are some indications that an undercurrent mood of the congregation is veering away from pairing with Sid Carlson to looking for a pastor who will take seriously their human condition of frailty instead of trying to build on their search for success as

Carlson did. The associate pastor during his brief stay in 1980-81 became a kind of litmus paper signifying this trend on the part of the congregation.

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ANALYSIS: THE PRIMARY TASK

In this section we consider evidence from the study again in the light of the foregoing analysis and attempt to state a primary task that has persisted in Wiltshire Church throughout its history. This leads us to some concluding comments about functional religion in society.

Wiltshire Church was used by the Adams family as a way of reinforcing its relations with its employees. It created a dependent environment whereby it could meet the emotional needs of the employees and at the same time provide emotional satisfaction for the Adams family in meeting these needs. The gift of the new stone church could be seen, on the one hand, as a nice church for the congregation and, on the other hand, as a memorial to the Adams family. Since the Adams factory was the largest employer in Wiltshire, it could be said that Wiltshire Church became a focal point for meeting the day-to-day human needs of many people of the town.

As time went on, the significance and power of the Adams Company diminished, and the church correspondingly diminished in its influence. Its pastors were older men. The church seemed almost at the point of collapse when the company's influence came to an end in 1969 with the death of the last Adams's trustees.

Because the people of Wiltshire no longer needed to use Wiltshire Church for its original purpose, the church was ready for a new phase of life. It was reconstituted to meet the needs of a particular section of the population that symbolized and represented the town's Shangri-la mentality. This time the emotional needs were not so much for dependence on some munificent provider but for expectancy, some hope for the future. In place of the dependent relationship between the congregation and the Adams family, there was a pairing relationship between the new pastor and the new members of the congregation. This expectancy found additional focus in the attention paid to children as the

symbolic hope for the future. Because the expectancy was founded on a fantasy (the "idea" of hope, never to be realized), it was bound to fail.

We can now define the *primary task* of Wiltshire Church, which seems to characterize it from its foundation to the present: *To meet the emotional needs of its current congregation insofar as these reflect the dominant needs of the town of Wiltshire.* By "emotional needs" we refer to those feelings that people long to experience in order to have a sense of well-being in relation to their environment. When there are changes in the environment, the pattern of emotional needs will alter—hence the shift from "dependent" relationships to "expectancy" relationships in Wiltshire Church. By "dominant needs" we are using shorthand to suggest that during the period under discussion, there were people in Wiltshire who epitomized a social condition prevailing in the town as a whole and that they had a common pattern of emotional needs.

The evidence that Wiltshire Church was carrying out some function on behalf of the town is implied in its description as "a village community church." While being neither the oldest nor the most established church in Wiltshire, it was nevertheless seen in a special way. Rather than being firm in its denominational character, it was a church that took on the color of its surroundings.

The conditions that made Wiltshire Church susceptible to this function in the town can be related to a character trait that had been present throughout its history. It was a church founded by bosses for their workers. The building was out of character, pseudomedieval English church architecture. Its government remained in the hands of the Adams family, who took responsibility for its financial state and continued to patronize it. The new pastor used devious means to assess the town and church before he accepted the position. It was called a Methodist church, but it did not behave like one. As far as Wiltshire was concerned, it was like a country club; yet it wasn't one. The church gave support to the idea of Shangri-la, which was a fiction.

From this it appears there was a flaw running through the church and its history. Wiltshire Church possessed a quality that

made it susceptible to being exploited, as distinct from struggling to maintain its authenticity as a church. Alongside this, however, it is important to note the evidence that shows that a minority of the congregation persisted in seeking that authenticity.

Wiltshire Church's reflecting the social and cultural conditions of Wiltshire helped to create a pseudofunctional religion. We define functional religion as that activity whereby men and women withdraw from the stress and strain of working, social, and family life to meet in the presence of God to celebrate his holiness, his power, and his love. Functional religion also implies a form of spirituality and worship that enables worshipers to question the values they usually take for granted in their daily life, so they can go out not only renewed in spirit but in a mood to question and challenge the prevailing values and assumptions of the world in which they live. Thus, there is a constant process of withdrawal and re-entry, characterized by acceptance of vulnerability, openness to change, and willingness to challenge.

At first sight, Carlson's statement that the church is "the place that provides nurture and caring for those who must go out of the sanctuary and do battle in a fundamentally positive and exciting world" seems to describe this sequence. But closer reading of the total case indicates that because the church was meeting the "presenting needs" of its congregation, it was not in a position to cause the members to question their fundamental values, hence the pseudofunctional activity. Instead of challenging the world of work, the church members went along with it; and the clergy simply tried to enable the congregation to deal with its ill effects.

We would make a sharp division between two ways of construing the human condition. One is to see humans as having *needs*—physical needs, social needs, economic needs, cultural needs. Consequently, institutions and agencies like families, government, businesses, schools, hospitals, and theaters evolve to satisfy those needs. To the extent that institutions can discern those needs and gather the resources to meet them, they are likely to be welcomed and successful. This is the way we have described the actual functioning of Wiltshire Church—bearing in mind that it is in no way peculiar compared with many other churches.

The other way to describe the human condition is to try to understand what it is about humans that causes them to have needs. If we say, for example, that a man needs food, we are implying that he is hungry. As we interact with our environment, we are constantly reacting to what is available that we think, rightly or wrongly, could satisfy a real or imagined inner state. But probably less frequently, we turn inward and try to understand the fact that we are contingent beings. As living organisms we depend on our environment for life—that is, we are always *in need*. This inward reflection in order to understand the actual relations between ourselves and our contexts is primary, and consequently the identification and pursuit of things to satisfy us is secondary. Functional religion in our opinion is that activity that provides the space and symbols to further the exploration of the nature of these primary relations.

Churches seeking to be functional in this manner will therefore inevitably question the personal and social values of their members. But churches setting out to meet the needs of their members will be more prone to respond to those needs as they reflect and reinforce, rather than challenge, the prevailing values of the society from which the congregation comes. Wiltshire Church is in this latter category. Evidence for the power of assimilation to surrounding social values is seen when Sid Carlson indicated that he wanted to copy the way of life of some of his successful church members and give up his pastoral ministry to achieve it.

The Christian gospel indicates that the priority for human beings, whatever their state, is to perceive their relations with their context in terms of God, and to accept the love of God as offered in Jesus Christ. This can be represented as human beings *in need* responding to God, rather than God being expected to respond to human beings presenting their *needs*. The promised outcome of the gospel is that those who get this right will become God's servants to those who are helpless and incapable because of their lack of food, health, justice, and freedom. It was the failure to follow these priorities that kept the members of Wiltshire Church from turning outward to the needs of the disadvantaged in their own and in other communities.

SUGGESTIONS FOR RELATED READING

- Bion, W. R. *Experiences in Groups*. New York: Basic Books, 1961.
 Bion, a British psychoanalyst, developed innovative theories about group behavior that have influenced the work of the Tavistock Institute and The Grubb Institute. This book elucidates his theories and the experiences that informed them.
- Boisen, Anton T. *Religion in Crisis and Custom: A Sociological and Psychological Study*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973.
 Boisen traces the recurrent social process in religion from institutionalization (custom), to re-organization involving a new religious movement (crisis), to institutionalization again.
- Group Relations Reader*. Edited by Arthur D. Colman and W. Harold Bexton. Sausalito, Calif.: GREX, 1975.
 Reprints and original papers collected under the auspices of the A. K. Rice Institute, the American counterpart of the Tavistock Institute in England. The articles deal with both theory and practice related to group relations. Of particular importance is Isabel E. P. Menzies, "A Case-Study in the Functioning of Social Systems as a Defense Against Anxiety."
- Miller, E. J., and Rice, A. K. *System of Organizations*. London: Tavistock Publications, 1967.
 Miller and Rice put forth a theory of task systems based upon their consultation and research. The book contains both theory and case studies.
- Reed, Bruce. *The Dynamics of Religion: Process and Movement in Christian Churches*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1978.
 A study of the nature of religion as a social phenomenon, based upon the work of The Grubb Institute. The book develops the "oscillation" theory of religion and examines the implications of this theory for the organized church.