

2015

Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare Vol. 42, No. 4 (December 2015)

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(2015) "Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare Vol. 42, No. 4 (December 2015)," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 42: Iss. 4, Article 1.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.3933>

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol42/iss4/1>

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Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

VOLUME XLII
NUMBER 4
December, 2015

The JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE is edited and published by the SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5354.

JSSW is sponsored jointly by Western Michigan University, the College of Health and Human Services, and School of Social Work. The substantial support of the University of California, Berkeley in the publication of the journal is gratefully acknowledged.

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Letter From the Editor: Empiricism

ROBERT D. LEIGHNINGER, JR.

What does an editor do with a manuscript which makes an argument that should be published but contains a premise that encourages misunderstanding? In this case, he publishes the article and writes an editorial.

Empiricism is a kind of epistemology, which is the philosophy of knowledge; it asks us how we know what we think we know. The term "empirical" is widely used in the social sciences, and particularly social work, often incorrectly. To some it seems to mean good, trustworthy knowledge, as opposed to, I suppose, bad, unreliable knowledge. "We now have empirical evidence," they say. To some it means quantitative knowledge, as opposed to qualitative or anecdotal knowledge. The problem is that all evidence is empirical.

Empiricism is the branch of epistemology that argues that there is a world independent of our consciousness and we can know it through our senses: sight, smell, touch, etc. Another branch of epistemology, called idealism or rationalism, believes that knowledge is hard-wired, we're born with it. They acknowledge the existence of an outside world, but it is the idea of a thing that is real, not individual examples of it. A third and newer epistemology, pragmatism, sees knowledge as a process of constructing an external world from a combination of ideas and empirical experience. This has had an important influence on both sociology and social work, and has itself been misapplied. But we don't need to get into that here.

The course of empiricism, beginning in the seventeenth century with John Locke, has been what sociological theorist Gunter Remmling called "the road to suspicion." The confidence that we could describe and understand the outside world through our six senses was gradually eroded. Locke, and George Berkeley, and John Hume after him, became increasingly frustrated with our ability to describe and share

perceptions of this external world. They kept finding ambiguity in sense perceptions that at first looked clear and unequivocal. Things like distance, color, and size were limiting observers' ability to agree on what they were seeing. Hume finally went back to theology.

Confidence returned with the successes of the twentieth century physical sciences to make reliable observations and predictions. Social scientists decided they, too, could reach an inter-subjective, testable world. If they could only observe and measure carefully enough, they would have knowledge that all could share (Popper, 1935/2002). "Hard" science would allow everyone to see the same thing. But eventually it became clear that everyone didn't see the same thing. All sorts of things got in the way: culture, gender, race, and many other things influenced our perceptions. When we ask questions about those things on a questionnaire, usually called "face sheet data," that's why. We want to be able to control the influence of those factors on the results of the questionnaire.

The conviction that science was hard and universal was itself gradually eroded, but empiricism has survived. Most of us agree that there is an outside world and that we can share some aspects of it. It's just much harder than the old textbooks said it should be. The physical world has remained pretty stable. Bengalis and Nigerians, Muslims and Jews all agree that falling out a four-story window is a bad idea because of a thing called gravity. But even physics has been humbled by the task of explaining how the Newtonian universe of masses and gravitational pulls was replaced by the Einsteinian universe of relativity and uncertainty. Could it have been a "scientific revolution" (Kuhn, 1970)?

Research in the social sciences involves consulting experience, using our senses, assembling evidence, and collecting data. Call it any of those things, but they are all empirical activities. We observe, we interrogate, we count things, we construct experiments. Usually these activities are guided by theory, or at least hunches, which may not be empirical. Or we may just be fishing, which is not recommended but sometimes makes useful discoveries. What comes out of these activities—empirical evidence—may contradict, support, or modify our theories and hunches. And now we know more than we once did.

That's the old textbook model of science. But is it guaranteed that, if we do the research right, others will agree with the result or even understand the result? No it isn't, for all the reasons noted earlier. But some people cling to the textbook model and the firm belief that universal knowledge will be discovered. Those people were once called positivists, a term we don't use much anymore, but they are still around. Those of us who still hope for shareable knowledge but who recognize how difficult it is to arrive at I call "diminished positivists." We still believe in an empirical world, and we still rely on sense data to understand it, but we also take pains to understand our own assumptions, control our own biases, and remain open to other interpretations of our evidence, realizing that the same evidence may look very different when placed in a different context constructed from different assumptions.

The article that provoked all of this, "Is Community-Based Work Compatible with Data Collection?" by Murphy, Franz and Callaghan, addresses the important topic of how to evaluate properly a community program. They argue, quite correctly I think, that a quantitative research design, imposed from outside by externally-funded researchers, will often not lead to a useful understanding of what is really going on in the community. It is essential to know what the members of that community perceive is happening. And there are lots of ways to do it, though unfortunately they don't go into that. This is an important issue to consider. Too often residents of the community being studied are treated like cows to be milked for data. An early response to this, paying respondents for interviews, is still demeaning to the participants and may lead to less than valid results. Beginning with the design of the research and extending to how the findings are disseminated, community members need to be full participants. This paper raises these issues, which is why I think it is important to publish it.

What bothers me is that the authors feel the need to assert that to do a proper job of assessment they must assault empiricism. From my perspective, all the things they are doing or might do are very much empirical. They are not reaching into the realm of idealism, empiricism's old opponent. Nor are they opening a door into pragmatism, though their citation of Kenneth Gergen (2009), an apostle of social constructivism, suggests that they might get there. What they are doing

is cautioning us that community members will have different perceptions of the community program that may not be congruent with those of the researchers. And these perceptions are not just biases but perhaps a different sense of reality. The early empiricists, beginning with Berkeley, confronted this problem and were increasingly frustrated by it. But in the end we are left with the acceptance of an external world—basic empiricism—and we continue to struggle to share it.

The heart of this problem is in the section called "Esoteric Knowledge?" "Esoteric" means available to only a small group. The first paragraph on this section distinguishes between knowledge as a "record" and as an "empirical baseline." The record would be on-going and changing. It would require constant reinterpretation. Fine. And you can do the same thing with an "empirical baseline."

The next paragraph says that knowledge is constructed and emergent. It is "not just lying around waiting to be harvested." This, they say, violates the basic principle of research. This is true enough if we're talking about textbook scientific method of the 1950s. The paragraph concludes with the judgment that such knowledge cannot qualify as empirical because of the existence of conflicting values and perspectives. This is wrong. The whole history of empiricism, as we've seen, is an ongoing confrontation of this problem. Conflicting perspectives have been recognized since the time of Locke. Sharing knowledge is difficult. But unless the authors are giving up on it, and I don't think they are, then they are still in the realm of empiricism.

Health officials, we are told in the third paragraph, often don't consider local information empirical. That's their problem, and our problem is to convince them otherwise. The authors then assert that, though community-based work *is* empirical, the term is used differently from what is intended by empiricists. They cite Doyal and Harris to support this, though they don't say what the difference is. I've looked through Doyal and Harris, a dense but useful book, and I can't find such a difference. It is another version of the road to suspicion, traveling beyond Remmling into the worlds of Popper, Quine, Wittgenstein, and Kuhn. Nonetheless, these authors conclude that shareable knowledge, through empirical

experience, remains possible.

Later in the paragraph, the authors say that empiricists "eschew" subjectivity. I would say, rather, that the whole tradition of empiricism is trying to transcend it. And in the next two paragraphs, the authors finally agree that this is possible. In the case of community research, this requires involving community members in all aspects of the research process. But, they maintain, this can happen "without the help of standard empirical referents." They don't say what those referents are, but what else can they be but the pieces of the world we all experience with our senses?

The only people these authors have a legitimate quarrel with are the hard-shell positivists of the 1950s, who believed the physical sciences, the "hard" sciences, were the proper role model for the social sciences. Some of them might have taken the positions that the authors work so hard to oppose. But those people are only a part of the empiricist tradition, and their period of dominance is long past. At least I hope it is.

Now for a final note on the substance of the article. I hope the next paper these authors send us will be on the details of how they conduct community research. It is not that difficult to include those you are studying in the study itself. Here are two techniques from my own experience in program evaluation. When constructing and/or pilot-testing a survey instrument, attach to each item the question: "will this information be useful to you?" And at the end: "what else would you like to know?" When the research is completed, invite everyone to a conference where you lay out the data and compare notes on interpretation. I'm sure they have many more techniques that would be very useful to all community researchers and program evaluators. There are also some tricky power-sharing issues to confront. We need more work in this area.

So, if you want to make this editor happy: (1) remember that "empirical evidence" is a redundancy; (2) don't confuse empirical with quantitative; and (3) stay attuned to diverse perceptions and interpretations of your work.

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Is Community-based Work Compatible with Data Collection?

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Although community-based projects have introduced a successful model for addressing many social problems, less consideration has been given to how such projects should be evaluated. This paper considers whether the philosophy underlying community-based practice is compatible with data collection. Specifically at issue is whether empirical indicators are helpful to summarize a project. Although having valid knowledge is important, this paper makes a distinction between merely collecting data versus understanding the course of a project. The key point is that community participation requires a unique perspective on how knowledge is negotiated and interpreted.

Key words: community-based philosophy, community health, social theory

There are many types of community-based work. Sometimes the focus is building a facility, such as a health center, while others involve training and capacity building. The centerpiece of each of these modalities, however, is community participation (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008). Local knowledge, in short, is expected to guide each of these endeavors. Popular epidemiology provides a current example of this approach (Brown,

1997). In this case, community members provide insight into the effects of pollution or other maladies that may easily escape the assessments of professional epidemiologists.

Most of these projects usually entail some sort of data collection. For example, they are often initiated with a needs assessment or diagnostic, while their evaluation requires the systematic generation of data (Rossi & Freeman, 1993). Many have argued the development of Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR) can potentially lead to policy change as a result of linking projects with successful evaluation (Freudenberg & Tsui, 2013). Furthermore, grantors of project funds often require researchers to demonstrate proof of need and effectiveness, and thus demand evidence that is accessible and objective. Due to pressure from the academic community, project success is thought to hinge on the ability to produce persuasive and publishable data. In such cases, anecdotal claims are not usually deemed acceptable for these purposes.

The issue at this juncture is whether data collection is compatible with a community-based orientation, even though the language of data collection pervades most community projects. Their validity, in fact, is linked regularly to the data collection that occurs. Of course, reliable knowledge is desired. Whether data collection is appropriate for adequate documentation, however, is an altogether different issue.

The point of this reflection is to examine whether data collection constitutes a mode of gathering evidence that violates the spirit of community-based work. Does data collection entail a syndrome of practices that removes the garnering and analysis of facts from the control of a community? If so, then this way of thinking about the generation and use of knowledge is inappropriate (Murphy, 2014). The basic concern is whether usable knowledge should be viewed as a product of a data collection process.

At the root of this incompatibility is the contention that community-based projects, as Kleinman (2008) suggests, are shaped by a moral experience. Those who work within this framework are motivated by care and want to improve the lives of disadvantaged persons. Essential to this activity is the formation of an alliance between community-based workers and local persons which is predicated on solidarity. Data

collection in many ways, however, negates the kindness, sensitivity, and interest that are vital to this dialogue. Simply put, data collection is aloof and is an adjunct to a truly community-based intervention.

Community-based Philosophy

The key element of community-based work is participation (Leung, Yen, & Minkler, 2004). Specifically, community members are supposed to be involved intimately in every phase of a project. Many critics even argue that a community should control these endeavors entirely. The argument is that community-based work is built from the ground-up, rather than imposed by outsiders (Minkler, 2005). Sometimes these programs are referred to as grassroots efforts.

This participation is thought to result in better research or service delivery. Because community members possess local knowledge and are instrumental in the development of these projects, any products are presumed to be valid and sustainable (McTaggart, 1991). These persons will be committed, for example, to any findings or programs that are created and implemented.

In this regard, participation is not simply a fad but has real, pragmatic appeal. If persons are committed to programs and support these projects in the long-term, money is saved and more services can be offered. The problem, however, is that participation is regularly viewed primarily in logistical terms (Mendez, 2010). The question asked most often is: what factors impede participation? The reality is that participation does affect how well research is received or how a clinic operates. These practical aspects, therefore, should not be overlooked.

However, there is a more profound side to participation. An epistemological shift is announced by this focus on participation that is important, especially in community-based work (Murphy, 2014). That is, the usual dualism that encourages the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity is no longer acceptable. How knowledge is approached is thus changed significantly.

Traditionally, valid knowledge is divorced from subjectivity, that is, values, beliefs, and commitments. This distinction allows science to be differentiated from ideology. With

subjectivity moved to the periphery of research or social planning, emphasis can be placed on sound evidence. As Emile Durkheim (1955/1983) proclaimed, facts can be treated as if they are "things" and can be clearly enumerated. In this way, projects are thought to have a firm foundation.

But in community-based work, this dualism is deemed to be passé. Due to the pervasiveness of participation, interpretations and perspectives are never overcome. In everyday practice, these so-called subjective considerations are a vital part of community-based work. After all, local definitions provide access to how a community understands, for example, health or deviance. Rather than an obstacle to achieving objectivity, and something to be eliminated, valid knowledge is tied to how behavior or events are interpreted and organized. Personal and collective experiences, along with an intimate grasp of community life, are crucial to the success of projects rooted in community-based philosophy.

Community-based practitioners are not alone in their rejection of dualism. In some philosophical circles, dualism has been overcome. The postmodern emphasis on language games, and the phenomenological focus on the *lebenswelt*, or "life-world," are examples of this trend (Murphy, 2012). The problem, however, is that communities are still identified mostly by social indicators—empirical referents related to boundaries and membership. Additionally, "evidence-based" practice, a euphemism for positivism, has become the watchword for many contemporary practitioners (Brownson, 2011; Reid, 1994).

Some community workers have chosen another route. In a recent publication, the leaders of Partners in Health have introduced the work of Berger and Luckmann, particularly their emphasis on social construction, to justify the community-based orientation extolled by this health organization (Farmer, Kim, Kleinman, & Basilio, 2013). In this regard, Arthur Kleinman (1997) has stressed the importance of local worlds to characterize communities and focus attention on how persons define health and cure. Those who advocate the use of narrative medicine, furthermore, believe that local knowledge holds the key to creating relevant and effective interventions (Charon, 2006).

Community-based practitioners, similarly, covet this so-called experiential dimension. Their belief is that the insights

found in this realm validate research and ensure the proper development of social programs (Minkler, Blackwell, Thompson, & Tamir, 2003). Participation, therefore, is not merely a pragmatic matter. The pool of definitions and values held by a community can offer an important glimpse into how research should be conducted and service programs implemented.

A community-based strategy, however, is not necessarily synonymous with a qualitative orientation. Using a qualitative methodology, for example, does not require that local persons control a project, construct the instruments that are implemented, or formulate policy recommendations. A qualitative strategy, in the absence of this intimate community involvement, may not facilitate the generation of accurate or relevant information. In fact, collecting qualitative data may not deviate far from traditional data collection. For example, even empowerment evaluation, unless community control is well established, may only guarantee sufficient buy-in so that the goals set by outside planners are adopted (Fetterman, 2005).

Collection of Data?

Why is data collection so problematic? After all, similar to all research or planning strategies, a community-based format relies on sound evidence. Furthermore, well-documented projects can be shared with the academic community and spur future undertakings. Nonetheless, there is something detrimental about the confluence of practices that constitute data collection. Indeed, the result of this process may undermine community-based work.

When conceived as data collection, for example, this process constitutes usually one phase of a project. In this regard, most projects begin with a needs assessment. Once these data are amassed, project design is usually initiated. The needs assessment, although it informs an entire project, represents a single stage. The aim is not to build a portfolio of information, but to establish a baseline.

As a result, data collection has a short duration. Samples are taken and persons contacted until enough data are gathered, even in many qualitative studies. This process, in other words, is basically an in-and-out strategy. Time is devoted to this aspect, and then the focus shifts to other activities. Due to

this change in attention, data are analyzed and used, instead of being integrated further into a community. The generation of information is thus truncated, since additional interpretation, revision, or reflection by community members is curtailed.

Furthermore, often this data collection is undertaken by outside experts. In many projects, a special person is hired to write and implement the evaluation plan or some other facet of the plan. When this practice is followed, a project begins to drift away from the control of a community. In some instances, the data may be literally carried away for analysis and interpretation.

In community-based projects, community members are supposed to generate and own any information collected (Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). In effect, they control the interpretation and use of the data. However, when data are removed for analysis, this intimacy is lost. What occurs, accordingly, is that data are transformed into commodities and processed. The relevance of this knowledge to a community thus becomes dubious, once the socially embedded character of facts is compromised.

The use of computer programs in qualitative research, such as Nvivo or Atlas, may facilitate this drift. Although safeguards are in place to prevent the automatic objectification of information, this process is hard to avoid. The conceptual world-view that subtends computerization, referred to by Papert (1980) as a "micro-world," can easily begin to shape data according to technical criteria. Additionally, community members would have to be trained in this technology, so that they could control data use. Such an undertaking is not impossible, but it is not part of the agenda of most qualitative researchers.

This de-contextualization may be taken even further. Professional standards, for example, are invoked typically to direct data collection. Standard protocols are thus followed to select samples or conduct interviews, and the ethical safeguards imposed by many IRB committees distort community-based work. Without a doubt, when community members are researchers, the traditional confidentiality criteria become confounded; confidentiality becomes a process that is collectively negotiated. In general, these professional standards often disrupt the implementation and impetus of this philosophy.

Where data reside, and how they should be obtained, are issues that should be resolved by a community. After all, the sampling frame is their life-space, and entry depends on familiarity with a neighborhood. How boundaries are defined locally, along with crucial opportunities, is essential for determining a proper sample.

Ethical principles, accordingly, do not exist in a vacuum. What persons believe to be a breach in confidentiality is not necessarily uniform across communities. Behavioral codes depend, for example, on friendships and other measures of solidarity. The typical researcher–subject relationship, which delimits secrecy, is very formalized and is not usually applicable to communities. However, when researchers are simultaneously neighbors, intimacy may be permitted that violates the usual researcher–subject bond. However, this influence of solidarity is not acknowledged in standard ethical codes related to research.

Reliance on professional standards brings up another, equally problematic, issue. Specifically, the quality of data and their utility are determined by a professional audience. The rigor of a research design and analysis, for example, are part of the culture of science and are foreign to many communities (Pickering, 1995). The scientific validation of data, nonetheless, depends on whether these criteria are met.

However, the significance of data is not necessarily a scientific question. Certain findings may seem logical, and even be statistically significant, but are locally irrational and thus irrelevant. The quality of data in community-based work is more of an existential issue. In other words, do data conform to the experiences of communities, or are they judged by certain methodological rules? In community-based work, experience trumps everything else (Krieger, 2001).

In sum, the problem is that data collection, even qualitative data collection, can easily become a virtual process. Community-based work, on the other hand, occurs in a context that is established by participation. Accordingly, the acquisition of knowledge should adhere to the cultural guidelines adopted by a community and directly involve these persons. So, why is this activity not considered data collection? Stated simply, data are too impersonal.

Esoteric Knowledge?

The thrust of garnering knowledge in community-based work is to build a record rather than to set a typical empirical baseline. As an outcome of an on-going activity, information is generated continuously, modified by any additions, and available for local (re)interpretation. The idea is to create a situation where reflection is encouraged, so that initial findings can be expanded and better understood.

What is important to note is that this local knowledge does not simply emerge and cannot be collected (Gergen, 2009). Both of these metaphors misrepresent how knowledge is produced in community-based projects. In short, information is not lying about waiting to be harvested by persons who have the proper tools. This knowledge, instead, is constructed through participation and must be coaxed into the open. The problem with this orientation, from the traditional viewpoint, is that the basic principles of research seem to be violated. Specifically, knowledge cannot qualify as empirical, due to the ubiquity of often conflicting values and perspectives.

This new role for community members has many advantages. Due to their involvement in every phase of social planning, information remains enmeshed in a community. The result is that both the validity and use of any findings are improved. Local knowledge, as Fals Borda (1988) maintains, reflects how persons identify and evaluate issues such as clinical treatment and other interventions. On the other hand, this knowledge can be viewed as esoteric, with little generalizability. After all, contrary to empirical indicators, interpretations are not considered to be objective and, thus, easily detectable and universally applicable. Local participation, in other words, muddies the waters and may hopelessly compromise research or service projects.

In this regard, health officials are often concerned that this local information is not empirical. Although community-based work is empirical, this term is used differently in this context than is intended by empiricists (Doyal & Harris, 2013). Empiricists are interested in the objective characteristics of events or behavior, whereas community-based practitioners focus on how these activities are defined and classified. While

traditionally empiricists eschew subjectivity—by emphasizing quantifiable data—community-based practitioners stress how health, illness, and other phenomena are interpreted (Meyers, 2006).

Empirical, in terms of this broader definition, is not necessarily synonymous with quantification. Because interpretations are assumed to be real, influential, and capable of being shared, and are not purely subjective and esoteric, this information can be studied in a systematic manner in a variety of ways. The point of any technique that is adopted is to enter the world that is constructed by community members. Even a questionnaire, usually treated as a quantitative practice, could be designed and implemented to communicate with a community and facilitate entry into this domain.

In the absence of an objective base, are community-based investigations or projects condemned to limited relevance and appeal? In a health project that is under development in a Hispanic neighborhood in Los Angeles, this issue was constantly raised with researchers. Health officials regularly voiced their fears that any outcomes could not be applied beyond the community in question, and thus their investment of funds was questionable.

In order to address this issue, the researchers had to point out first that generalizability is not necessarily a methodological issue but an existential question (Henry, Zaner, & Dittus, 2007). Findings, for example, have limited relevance, based on the adherence to certain values and commitments. Additionally, we had to illustrate that interpretations are not automatically esoteric and can be corroborated by others. In other words, a process is available whereby different communities can share and make judgments about the relevance of information, without the help of standard empirical referents.

Neither persons nor communities exist in an atomistic way; these individuals and groups share an experiential space and are open to one another. Phenomenologists, for example, refer to this connectedness as inter-subjectivity (Schutz, 1962). Interpretations, accordingly, are available for collective review. As part of this process, identical empirical indicators can be understood to have very different interpretations. This recognition, furthermore, allows persons to realize the importance of

interpretations, while encouraging the acknowledgement and incorporation of different viewpoints into a planning strategy.

Persons can undertake this sort of reflection due to the active nature of the mind (Reynolds & Herman Kinney, 2003). As part of participation, and the associated interpretation, everyone is capable of self-interrogation. Accordingly, they can recognize the limited validity of any particular interpretation, thereby allowing other renditions to be encountered. Through the give and take that pervades participation, mutual understanding can be achieved, if not the acceptance of a particular viewpoint. This recognition of difference—a base for commonality and generalizability—is achieved without recourse to a standard empirical referent. Local knowledge, in this regard, can be evaluated by other communities and adopted, if deemed to be relevant.

Community Mapping: An Example

In social planning, community mapping has become very important. This process is defined usually as a process whereby members identify the knowledge bases, institutions, social relationships, resources or assets, and needs and goals of their community (Corbett & Lydon, 2014). The product is different from most needs assessments, in that the outcome is more holistic. The point of a mapping project is to provide an integrated portrayal of a community, rather than garner an array of often disparate data.

Although mapping has been used in the context of community-based work, geographic information system (GIS) output guides most of these projects (Fornace, Drakeley, William, Espino, & Cox, 2014). Some critics have rebelled against this trend and proposed a less abstract process. New developments, such as "critical community mapping," are now available (Parker, 2006). Nonetheless, although community input is sought, these alternatives rely heavily on empirical indicators to identify resources and demarcate boundaries. In the end, a community is still treated as a material entity that is associated with objective features. Location, for example, is geographical, while space is calculated in physical instead of experiential terms.

When viewed in this manner, a community is disembodied (Krieger, 2005). True community mapping, on the other hand, provides community members with a unique status in the process. The point of this activity is to enable community members to control the mapping process. Their input does not merely supplement empirical data but serves to identify resources and other facets of a community. How members experience their communities is thus elevated in importance.

At the root of community-based mapping is the assumption that communities are constructed, and thus consist of multiple and often conflicting viewpoints (Perkins, 2008). A community, in other words, is not an object but an on-going invention. To borrow from Melvin Pollner (1991), a community is an "accomplishment." This discovery does not mean that the features of a community are vague or unknown, but that their identification cannot be derived from empirical indicators.

Space, for example, is not geographical but is situated and linked to personal or collective movements. The center and periphery of a community are thus not associated with standard spatial or empirical coordinates, whereby a central location can be easily calculated. Where persons walk to conduct their everyday affairs, for example, determines distance and location, rather than the usual spatial measurements. A centrally placed community health center may not be located at the geographic center of a community, but instead reflects local movements and definitions of accessibility. Distance and location are embedded in practice, according to a community-based philosophy (Parker, 2006).

Community-based mapping is thus not a technical undertaking. Rather, community members are engaged, often through a "walkabout" in a neighborhood (Lydon, 2003). Throughout this process these persons come out of their houses, begin to discuss the mapping activity, identify key issues, and regularly debate boundaries and the location of resources. This "open air" conversation reveals the multiple realities present in a community and the contentious nature of asset identification. As a result, the resulting map is contextualized, while priorities and contrasting viewpoints are revealed. In short, the biographical or interpretive character of a community is exposed, in contrast to the results from a GIS

rendition.

Through the dialogue that often emerges from the walk-about in a community, various interpretations arise and are confronted. Unique interpretations, along with more commonly held opinions, are debated, often modified, and sometimes dismissed. But even outlooks that might be considered initially to be quite esoteric are recognized, often understood, and criticized. Nothing, in other words, seems to be beyond comprehension, given enough time and effort. All that seems to be required is a commitment to dialogue until ideas emerge and participation is thorough.

Conclusion

The principle message of this manuscript is that community-based researchers or planners should not be obsessed with data. More important, in fact, is interpretation. In most cases, data are confined to surface analysis, while interpretation relates to community expression. This difference is taken to heart by community-based workers.

At the core of this distinction is the moral dimension that is ignored by data. The standards that guide data collection are indifferent to participation, expression, and solidarity. The dialogue that is necessary to gain entrée to a community is thus unimportant. Valid data, in the traditional sense, are untainted by the contingency associated with these experiential features.

Interpretation, on the other hand, is not necessarily clean but unfinished, modifiable, and replete with ambivalence. But neither is community life tidy. Facts, for example, are neither divorced from values nor clashes of perspectives. For this reason, in community-based work, data are considered to be abstract, possibly even lifeless. Data are thus a distraction.

Despite the value of data in professional circles, proper interpretation is more important to communities. Specifically, local knowledge is grounded in a manner consistent with daily affairs in a community, and thus should be the focus of research and social interventions. Due to the local approval of this knowledge, community-based workers might fare better if they develop an obsession with community storylines instead of data.

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Impact of Community Investment in Safety Net Services on Rates of Unsheltered Homelessness Among Veterans

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Unsheltered homelessness among veterans has declined rapidly since 2009; however, more than one-third of veterans experiencing homelessness stayed in places not meant for human habitation during 2014. Research has identified a negative relationship between federal spending on the social safety net and community-level rates of homelessness, but not specifically for veterans. The present study assessed whether investment in veteran-specific safety net resources predicted changes in the rate of unsheltered veteran homelessness. Increases in Veterans Affairs (VA) medical care expenditures were significantly associated with a decline in unsheltered veteran homelessness, perhaps explained by additional VA resources aimed at identifying and housing these veterans.

Key words: Homeless, veterans, safety net, unsheltered, community-level

On one night in January 2014, approximately 30% of all people experiencing homelessness in the United States—177,373 people—were staying in an unsheltered situation such as a car, park, or some other location not intended for human habitation (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD], 2014a). This segment of the homeless population is of particular concern given that people experiencing unsheltered homelessness are often chronically

Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, December 2015, Volume XLII, Number 4

homeless (Cousineau, 1997; Levitt, Culhane, DeGenova, O'Quinn, & Bainbridge, 2009; O'Toole, Gibbon, Hanusa, & Fine, 1999; Shern et al., 2000; Tsai, Kaspro, Kane, & Rosenheck, 2014), unemployed, and have attained low levels of education (O'Toole et al., 1999; Shern et al., 2000). Unsheltered homeless status is also associated with serious mental illness (Larsen, Poortinga, & Hurdle, 2004) and substance use disorders (Cousineau, 1997; Larsen et al., 2004), which are often co-occurring (Shern et al., 2000) as well as poor physical health (Gelberg & Linn, 1989; Lam & Rosenheck, 1999; Macnee & Forrest, 1997; Nyamathi, Leake, & Gelberg, 2000), that may be further impacted by lack of access to care (Lam et al., 1999; Nyamathi et al., 2000).

Among the 49,933 veterans who were homeless at one point in time in January 2014, more than one-third were living in an unsheltered situation. While this represents an almost 42% decrease in the number of unsheltered veterans between 2009 and 2014, the majority of veterans experiencing homelessness in five states were unsheltered, and more than two-thirds of those in three major cities—San Jose, Los Angeles, and Fresno, CA—were unsheltered (HUD, 2014a). These statistics are even more alarming given that the estimates of unsheltered veteran homelessness may be undercounts based on the methods used to enumerate this population (Hopper, Shinn, Laska, Meisner, & Wanderling, 2008).

While rates of unsheltered homelessness among veterans were exceedingly high in some states and communities, in 16 states fewer than 10% of veterans experiencing homelessness were staying in unsheltered situations, illustrating the wide variation in rates of unsheltered veteran homelessness across the country. Given the vulnerability of the unsheltered homeless population, the deleterious effects of living in an unsheltered situation, and the uneven geographic distribution of the unsheltered veteran population across the country, assessing the relationship between community-level characteristics and changes over time in rates of unsheltered homelessness is important.

Research examining the extent to which the size and scope of the social safety net explains geographic variation in rates of homelessness is of particular importance, as it may have direct

implications for how safety net resources should be allocated to address homelessness. Prior studies using community-level data have identified a number of components of the social safety net that may significantly impact rates of homelessness. Most saliently, increased federal spending on homeless assistance programs has been linked to decreased rates of homelessness at the community-level (Hudson, 1998; Moulton, 2013; Tucker, 1987, 1989), and communities that have invested more heavily in permanent supportive housing units have experienced steeper declines in chronic homelessness over time (Byrne, Fargo, Montgomery, Munley, & Culhane, 2014). More general features of the social safety net, including increased spending on alcohol, drug, and mental health services (Elliott & Krivo, 1991; Honig & Filer, 1993; Troutman, Jackson, & Ekelund, 1999) as well as higher Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and General Assistance benefit levels and recipient rates have also been found to have a significant relationship with decreased rates of homelessness (Burt, 1993; Honig & Filer, 1993; Raphael, 2010).

Although there is evidence that the social safety net may be influential in reducing rates of homelessness, there has been insufficient focus on the unsheltered veteran population. Not only is this a sizeable population, it is a population for whom specific financial, housing, and healthcare resources are dedicated through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The objective of the present study is to assess the extent to which community-level indicators of investment in veteran-specific safety net resources—controlling for mainstream social programs as well as indicators of other social support within communities—are related to changes in the rate of unsheltered veteran homelessness over time (Rosenheck et al., 2001). We hypothesize that increased levels of social safety net investment in one year will lower rates of unsheltered veteran homelessness in subsequent years.

Methods

Sample

The study sample is a set of 231 geographic units, referred to as Continuums of Care (CoCs), which are organized around

providers of homelessness assistance. Each of the CoCs in the sample received federal homelessness assistance funding from HUD and provided point-in-time (PIT) counts of the numbers of individuals, including veterans, experiencing homelessness in their communities during 2009-2012. We included only metropolitan CoCs in the sample, based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA, 2014) Economic Research Service's rural-urban continuum codes because of (1) the greater concentration of veterans experiencing homelessness in these communities, and (2) the lesser degree of missing data, particularly for cost and safety net variables.

Data and Measures

The objective of this study was to determine, using longitudinal data, the relationship between the volume of veteran-specific safety net services and a reduction in the rate of unsheltered homelessness among veterans across geographies over a four-year period. Each of these variables, described in the following sections, were measured either at the county or state level. CoC-level characteristics—other than local homeless-specific housing inventory and homelessness rates—are nonexistent. Therefore, those variables measured at the county level were either summed or averaged across the counties included in a CoC, which was the unit of analysis for homelessness rates in the model presented here. A full explanation of this methodology is described elsewhere (Byrne, Munley, Fargo, Montgomery, & Culhane, 2012). For state-level variables, we assigned the same value to all CoCs within a state.

Dependent variables. As part of the strategic planning and application process for federal homeless assistance funding from HUD, CoCs must conduct PIT counts of persons experiencing homelessness within their jurisdictions on a single night during the last week of January. The count includes families and individuals who are living in both sheltered and unsheltered homeless situations and enumerates persons in specific homeless sub-populations, such as veterans and chronically homeless individuals. Using the PIT counts of persons experiencing homelessness for 2009 through 2012, we calculated the proportion of veterans in each CoC who were unsheltered.

Independent variables. We collected independent variables related to community and VA safety net services and other

descriptors of the social environment at the county or state level, including the following:

- Number of veterans and military service members in each CoC (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011);
- Proportion of counties in each CoC that are considered to be Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) in which there is a deficiency of primary medical, dental, and mental health providers or facilities (Community Health Status Indicators Project Working Group, 2009);
- Average number of volunteer hours per resident (Corporation for National and Community Service and the National Conference on Citizenship, 2012);
- Proportion of individuals responding to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) who have no social support (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008);
- Proportion of the population—including both children and adults—that is affiliated with a religious congregation (Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2010);
- Proportion of income contributed to charity (Chronicle of Philanthropy, 2012);
- Number of non-profits per 1,000 individuals in the community (Chronicle of Philanthropy, 2012);
- Proportion of households living in poverty who were receiving SSI (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011);
- Per capita expenditures on Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) from federal funds (National Association of State Budget Officers, 2009);
- Ratio of the number of Section 8 or Housing Choice Vouchers to the number of households living in poverty (HUD, 2008);
- Proportion of total state expenditures that are directed toward Medicaid (National Association of State Budget Officers, 2009);
- Proportion of veterans receiving either VA compensation or pension payments (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011);
- Number of HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) vouchers allocated to the community (HUD, 2014b); and
- VA's average annual expenditures for medical care

per veteran, which includes supportive services such as case management and homeless programs (VA, 2012).

Table 1. Data Sources and Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N=231)

	Year(s) Measured	Descriptive Statistics		
		Mean	SD	Median
<i>Dependent Variable</i>				
Unsheltered veterans/homeless veterans (%)	2009	24.9	28.0	14.0
	2010	27.9	28.6	13.2
	2011	30.0	27.4	22.2
	2012	30.9	27.1	24.7
<i>Independent Variables</i>				
Number of veterans in CoC (1,000 individuals)	2006-2010*	41.6	42.3	30.8
Number of military service members in CoC	2006-2010*	849	3,514	0
Counties in CoC considered health professional shortage area (%)	2009	2.0	8.0	2.0
Average volunteer hours (per capita)	2008-2010	34.1	7.8	34.1
Individuals with no social support (%)	2008	19.9	4.0	19.3
Religious adherence (%)	2010	47.9	1.0	47.2
Income contributed to charity (%)	2008	4.6	1	4.7
Number of non-profits (per 1,000 individuals)	2009	1.2	0.6	1.1
Households in poverty receiving SSI (%)	2005-2009*	31.1	8.2	30.5
TANF expenditures (per capita)	2009	\$15	\$19	\$8
Subsidized units/households in poverty (%)	2008	24.7	11.1	23.2
Medicaid spending/total state expenditures (%)	2009	21.2	5.6	20.0
Veterans receiving pension (%)	2005-2009*	1.1	0.5	1.1
Number of HUD-VASH vouchers	2008	31.3	95.9	0.0
	2009	63.5	136.9	35.0
	2010	92.3	178.5	35.0
	2011	114.2	211.2	60.0
Average VA medical expenditures/veteran (in \$1,000s)	2008	1.5	0.8	1.3
	2009	1.7	0.9	1.5
	2010	1.9	1.0	1.6
	2011	1.9	1.0	1.7

Notes. *5-year estimates.

Data for the independent variables were collected for the time period as close to or prior to 2009 as possible using the best estimates available; we expected little variation from year to year among community-level variables. For veteran-specific independent variables that varied over time—HUD-VASH vouchers and VA medical expenditures—we obtained

data from the year previous to each year of study (2008-2011 inclusive), as we assumed that data for independent variables measured during the year prior to each PIT estimate of homelessness would have the most meaningful impact on homelessness rates in the following year (e.g., 2008 HUD-VASH vouchers would affect January 2009 PIT count of homeless veterans). Table 1 lists the full set of variables, the years of measurement, and descriptive statistics.

Statistical Analysis

We computed descriptive statistics for all study variables. We then developed a statistical model to evaluate the association between state- and community-level indicators of safety net services and rates of unsheltered homeless veterans among all homeless veterans. We selected a linear mixed-effects model to account for clustering due to: (1) longitudinal measures of homelessness rates and several of the safety net variables; and (2) CoCs nested within states. We included random intercepts at both the CoC and state levels and tested random slopes for all time-varying predictors included in the model (i.e., time, HUD-VASH vouchers, VA medical expenditures). Using the likelihood ratio test, we determined that random slopes did not significantly improve model fit. We controlled for the veteran population as well as the active duty military population working on bases located in each CoC. Analyses were conducted using the R environment for statistical computing (R Core Team, 2013). This study was approved by the Institutional Review Boards of Utah State University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Philadelphia VA Medical Center.

Results

Results of the multilevel model are summarized in Table 2. Several predictors were significantly associated with geographic variation in the proportion of veterans experiencing homelessness who were staying in unsheltered situations. For instance, the proportion of religiously adherent individuals and the number of non-profits within a CoC were negatively associated with unsheltered veteran homelessness; there was, on average, a 2% decrease in unsheltered veteran

Table 2. Results of Multilevel Model for Rates of Unsheltered Veterans per CoC (N = 231)

Fixed Effects	Estimate	SE	t-value	p
Intercept	52.45	19.62	2.67	0.009
Time	0.57	0.97	0.59	0.554
Number of veterans in CoC (per 10,000)	-0.28	0.45	-0.62	0.539
Number of military service members in CoC (per 1,000)	0.17	0.55	0.31	0.757
Counties in CoC considered health professional shortage area (per 1% change)	-5.80	4.79	-1.21	0.227
Average volunteer hours (per 5 hours)	-0.92	1.38	-0.67	0.506
Individuals with no social support (per 5% change)	3.08	2.29	1.35	0.180
Religious adherence (per 5% change)	-2.12	0.83	-2.56	0.011
Income contributed to charity (per 1% change)	3.85	1.60	2.40	0.018
Number of non-profits (per 1,000 individuals)	-8.29	3.55	-2.34	0.020
Households in poverty receiving SSI (per 5% change)	-0.34	1.12	-0.30	0.762
TANF expenditures (per \$100 change)	15.37	15.04	1.02	0.317
Subsidized units/households in poverty (per 1% change)	-2.86	16.28	-0.18	0.861
Medicaid spending/total state expenditures (per 5% change)	-2.38	2.14	-1.12	0.274
Veterans receiving pension (per 1% change)	-4.60	3.48	-1.32	0.188
Number of HUD-VASH vouchers	0.02	0.01	1.46	0.145
Average VA medical expenditures/ veteran (per \$1,000)	-7.03	2.18	-3.22	0.001
Time x Average VA medical expen- ditures/veteran (per \$1,000)	1.26	0.50	2.52	0.012
Random Intercepts	SD			
CoC	15.98			
State	10.36			

homelessness with every 5% increase in religious adherence ($p = .011$) and for every additional non-profit per 1,000 individuals, unsheltered veteran homelessness dropped by an average of 8% ($p = .020$). Conversely, the rate of unsheltered

veteran homelessness increased by 4% for every 1% increase of charitable contributions within a community ($p = .018$).

There was a significant interaction between VA medical expenditures per veteran and time. As VA medical expenditures increased by \$1,000 within a community, the rate of unsheltered veteran homelessness decreased. However, the strength of the association diminished over time, indicating that veteran medical expenditures had a larger effect on reducing unsheltered veteran homelessness in 2008, but less so through 2011.

Discussion

This study yielded mixed findings with respect to whether relatively more robust veteran-specific safety net resources in a community were associated with lower rates of unsheltered veteran homelessness. As hypothesized, we found that communities with higher VA medical expenditures per veteran had, on average, relatively fewer unsheltered veterans among their homeless veteran populations. This finding suggests that communities with relatively greater VA resources to provide medical care and supportive services may be better equipped to help unsheltered veterans get off and stay off the streets, depending on how these resources are allocated. Higher levels of medical care expenditures may indicate that more resources are directed to purposes that help unsheltered veterans access permanent housing or support formerly unsheltered veterans to remain permanently housed. These resources could be supporting expanded outreach efforts by the Health Care for Homeless Veterans program to identify unsheltered veterans and help them access permanent housing—potentially through the HUD-VASH program—or providing more intensive healthcare, case management, and other supportive services to maintain the housing stability of formerly unsheltered veterans who do move in to HUD-VASH or other permanent housing.

Alternatively, a higher level of per veteran VA medical care expenditures may not imply additional resources directed to purposes that are not directly geared towards helping veterans access permanent housing; rather, these resources may be allocated to increased spending on inpatient

hospitalizations or stays in short-term substance abuse treatment programs for veterans who might otherwise be on the streets. Unfortunately, the available data on VA medical care expenditures did not include any detail on how resources were allocated or expenditures made. Additional research is needed to better understand how and why increased VA medical care spending might translate into lower rates of unsheltered homelessness and, ideally, to assess whether spending specifically on VA specialized homeless programs might have an impact on veteran homelessness.

While the finding with respect to the measure of VA medical care expenditures was in line with expectations, the lack of significant associations between unsheltered veteran homelessness and both VA pension receipt and HUD-VASH voucher allocation was unexpected. The HUD-VASH finding is particularly noteworthy, especially in light of the substantial reductions in recent years in the number of homeless veterans in unsheltered situations. Since 2008, Both VA and HUD have made significant investments in HUD-VASH, which provides a deep rental subsidy through HUD's Housing Choice Voucher program combined with supportive medical, behavioral, and mental healthcare provided at VA facilities across the country. High need, chronically homeless veterans, many of whom are unsheltered, are a priority population for the HUD-VASH program; it is surprising that we did not find evidence of a relationship between HUD-VASH voucher allocations and the share of the homeless veteran population living in unsheltered situations. This may imply that HUD-VASH vouchers have been targeted to the segment of the chronically homeless veteran population who are not unsheltered but are living in residential homeless assistance programs, particularly those operated or funded by the VA. It is likely that these veterans are easier to identify and enroll in the HUD-VASH programs than their unsheltered counterparts, who are often more difficult to engage.

It is also noteworthy that measures of more general safety net resources and the social environment were found to have significant associations with the rate of unsheltered veteran homelessness. It is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the specific relationships that were identified but, taken together, they suggest that the broader service environment

in a community is an important determinant of the extent to which homeless veterans remain unsheltered. This points to the potential value of the VA working in concert with other service systems to help address unsheltered veteran homelessness. In this respect, recent efforts by the VA, including the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program and the 25 Cities Initiative, which involve partnerships with community-based agencies, city governments, and local housing authorities to address veteran homelessness, should be seen as positive developments.

Apart from its substantive findings, this study makes an important methodological contribution to the existing body of research. Specifically, while previous studies have examined community-level determinants of the overall rate of homelessness—as well as rates of family, individual, and chronic homelessness—the present study represents, to our knowledge, the first attempt to examine community-level determinants of veteran homelessness. As the measures used in this study are all publicly available, there is ample opportunity for future research to build on this study to improve understanding about how community-level factors may have an impact on veteran homelessness, and in turn to inform interventions to address these factors.

This study has a number of limitations that are important to acknowledge. First, the analysis was limited to urban jurisdictions and, therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to non-urban locations. Second, enumerating the number of homeless veterans living in unsheltered situations is a challenging process. While communities are required to use a methodological approach that meets guidelines established by HUD, communities nonetheless employ enumeration methods that have a range of methodological rigor and may alter these methods from year to year, which likely influenced the findings of this study, although the extent of this influence is impossible to determine. Finally, while data on VA medical care expenditures were available for the present study, data on VA expenditures specifically for homeless assistance programs were not. As such, it was not possible to assess whether resources directed exclusively to addressing veteran homelessness had their desired impact, although this remains an important question to address.

Acknowledgement: This project was funded by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans. The contents of this article do not necessarily represent the views of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the U. S. Government.

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Ebb and Flow: A Multiple Streams Analysis of Change in Kansas Domestic Violence Policy

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State domestic violence legislative interventions shape the way states define and respond to domestic violence. In 2010, Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson signed into law Substitute House Bill 2517, which included a strategy to track domestic violence offenders from the time of arrest through the court system, and an expansion of the statutory definition of domestic violence. The following policy analysis uses a multiple streams framework to examine this policy change, including the motivations and actions of key policy entrepreneurs. We also discuss the implementation of the bill as passed and implications for domestic violence victims and policy activists in other states.

Key words: policy analysis, domestic violence, Kansas, multiple streams framework, implementation

Domestic violence is a national issue in the United States which is addressed in the policy arena at the federal and state levels. Studies reveal the importance of well-crafted and aggressive domestic violence laws. Some argue that the decrease in national rates of reported domestic violence incidence over the last twenty years (Catalano, Rand, Smith & Snyder, 2009) is related to the passage of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 and its subsequent three reauthorizations. Dugan (2003) found, through an analysis of National Crime Victimization Survey data obtained from 529,829 households with 0.5% of

them reporting domestic violence, that state domestic violence laws impacted the probability of domestic violence occurring in a household. Furthermore, state laws impacted the likelihood of incident reporting and recidivism in domestic violence cases. However, the ability of domestic violence legislation to keep victims safe after criminal legal system involvement is not well studied or understood (Dugan, 2003).

The impact of domestic violence state laws is also found on the definitional and conceptual level, because domestic violence legislative interventions shape the way states define and respond to domestic violence (Miller, 2004). For instance, a state which defines domestic violence as a discrete act of assault may seek only to prevent and punish physical violence. Yet, it is widely understood that domestic violence encompasses many more complex interactions, including elements of emotional and financial coercive control (Outlaw, 2009; Williamson, 2010) which may be difficult to address through legislation.

The state of Kansas has recognized domestic violence as a social problem for decades, with a governor's task force assigned to study the issue as early as 1983 (Gottlieb & Johnson, 1983). Kansas state policies to address domestic violence have not dramatically changed over time, but instead have evolved in gradual ways. A recent example of these gradual changes took place in 2010, when the Kansas legislature passed Substitute House Bill (HB) 2517, which was signed by then-Governor Mark Parkinson. This bill included a "case designation" strategy to identify and track domestic violence offenders through the legal system from the time of arrest, an expansion to the statutory definition of domestic violence, and required assessment of and referral to appropriate programs for domestic violence offenders.

Considering the influence of domestic violence state laws in defining and framing policy responses to domestic violence, their critical analyses are extremely relevant to policy analysts and policy makers, as well as to the domestic violence field and criminal legal system. The following analysis provides a critical examination of domestic violence policy reform in Kansas over the last two decades, with a focus on the passage of Substitute HB 2517 in 2010. Using the multiple streams policy analysis framework, we analyze each stream as the window of

opportunity arose for this policy change, the motivations and actions of policy entrepreneurs in domestic violence policy reform, and the implications and implementation of the bill as passed. However, as we explore in the discussion, there is much progress to be made when addressing domestic violence in Kansas and beyond; therefore, we conclude by offering suggestions for future policy reform.

Multiple Streams Policy Analysis Framework

The multiple streams policy analysis framework, used recently in several policy analyses, including child sexual abuse prevention (Anderson, 2014) and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2009 (Gates, 2010), builds on the writing of John Kingdon (2003). Kingdon's multiple streams framework suggests that within the public and political system multiple streams flow—the problem, policy and politics streams. The rather independent streams move or stall the introduction and passage of legislation. These streams shape the emergence of a social "problem" and the development of a policy solution to address that social problem. A coupling of these streams allows a "policy window" to open, through which policy changes can pass. Windows only open for a brief time, limiting the opportunity for policy-making movement.

Policy Entrepreneurs and Focusing Events

When a policy entrepreneur—individuals or organizations who promote policy changes and identify problems and solutions—brings together two streams, a policy "window" develops through which policies move from being ideas to becoming laws (Zahariadis, 2007). Policy entrepreneurs work during these limited window openings to help couple a solution to a problem or political stream (Kingdon, 2003). In addition, focusing events—defined as a singular event that draws intense public attention to an issue—within the problem stream may ease the work of policy entrepreneurs or contribute to the opening of a policy window.

Overview of Problem Stream

Zahariadis (2007) states that the problem stream "consists of various conditions that policy makers and citizens want

addressed" (p. 70). These conditions wait to be recognized as a problem that needs to and can be solved through policy change. During any given period of time, a legion of so-called conditions exists in the stream, some of which rise to the designation of a problem in the public and political system, while others do not. The problem stream also contains the definitions of recognized problems, which can evolve alongside conditions in the political stream.

Overview of Political Stream

The political stream contains what Zahariadis (2007) describes as "three elements: the national mood, pressure-group campaigns, and administrative or legislative turnover" (p. 73). National mood, or the attitudes towards problems and acceptance of available solutions, is reflected in the mood of the state. Administrative and legislative turnover also affects recognition of problems and whether solutions are found acceptable as well as the prioritization of problems and solutions. The impact of legislative turnover is evident after legislators take office and limit focus to the particular problems that they want addressed.

Overview of Policy Stream

The policy stream contains the policy ideas or solutions to solve problems. Development and acceptance of solutions can be fast or slow. In a typology set forth by Durant and Diehl (1989), the policy stream may have varying styles of idea processing, ranging from the sudden emergence of new ideas, or quantum style, to a slow churning of old ideas, or gradualist style, which must be taken into account by policy entrepreneurs (Zahariadis, 2007). Thus, an understanding of the policy stream informs our understanding of the behaviors and decisions made by policy entrepreneurs, as well as the entities and individuals that comprise the political stream.

The Ebb and Flow of Kansas' Domestic Violence Policy HB 2571

The multiple streams approach lends itself to understanding the passage of Substitute HB 2517 because it illuminates

the motion within different streams of policy making that allowed the bill to become law when previous iterations of the bill, proposing similar changes, did not. Domestic violence policy in Kansas viewed through the multiple streams framework reveals a relatively placid policy stream (Gottlieb & Johnson, 1983; Zahariadis, 2007). Previous Kansas' domestic violence policy changes shared certain components: defining domestic violence, defining intimate relationships, officer discretion to arrest suspects, or other law enforcement policies, and data collection policies (who collects, and what to collect). Each change expanded or modified one or more of these components, and in only a few cases, introduced new components modeled on the policies of other states.

Over the last three decades, none of these domestic violence policy components changed radically. This slow, gradualist type of idea processing in the policy stream reflects the state of the political stream in Kansas (Durant & Diehl, 1989; Zahariadis, 2007). Many of the policy solutions in Substitute HB 2517 existed in the policy stream prior to 2010. For example, the proposed case designation in Substitute HB 2517 was introduced in three previous bills, however, these bills failed to come to vote. Yet, they contributed to the creation of a policy window for Substitute HB 2517 by making solutions available in the policy stream, garnering acceptance for these solutions, and priming the political stream so that when the problem stream reached a critical moment, a window did open for policy change in Kansas.

The Problem Stream in Kansas

The problem stream contained several domestic violence related "conditions" waiting to be recognized by policy makers and citizens as problems to be addressed through policy change. The multiple streams framework posits that policy makers recognize these conditions through three means: indicators, feedback, and focusing events (Kingdon, 2003; Zahariadis, 2007). When analyzing the problem stream of passage of Substitute HB 2517, three types of indicators—or factual information that demonstrates the condition—stand out.

The first of these indicators was domestic violence prevalence data. Particularly convincing may have been the data

of domestic-violence-related deaths provided by the Kansas Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board (FRB). Developed by Executive Order 04-11 in 2004 by then-Governor Katherine Sebelius, the FRB began to provide the Governor's office analysis of annual domestic-violence-related deaths data to document the extent of problem.

In addition to the evidence provided in the FRB annual reports, the second indicator may have been a 2007 report from the Docking Institute of Public Affairs and the Kansas Governor's Grants Program. This report, which was widely disseminated following its publication, including press releases from the Governor's office (Office of Governor, 2007), and was picked up by news outlets, identified domestic violence as the third most important women's health issue in Kansas, following cancer and heart disease (Wolfe, Ray, & Zollinger, 2007). This report also documented that almost 91% of women who had received domestic violence services in Kansas stated their situation improved after they received services (Wolfe, et al., 2007).

Data collected through the Kansas Incident Based Reporting System on domestic violence incidents and arrests made from 1992-2012 provide the third indicator in the problem stream. For example, in 1992, the number of incidents of domestic violence was 20,817 with 7,721 arrests (39%), while in 1993, after the 1992 passage of the Mandatory Arrest law, the number of incidents was 16,690 with 10,971 arrests (66%) (Kansas Bureau of Investigation [KBI], 2012). Domestic violence homicides are another data point used to illuminate the problem of domestic violence in Kansas. In 1993, there were 41 homicides, the greatest number of domestic violence homicides since 1992 when data was first collected (KBI, 2012). The second highest number of domestic violence homicides occurred in 2009, the year HB 2517 (Kansas Legislature, 2010a) was introduced in the legislature. These three indicators drew policy makers' attention to move domestic violence from a condition to problem.

Along with these indicators, feedback—the second element of the problem stream—shaped the policy process of HB 2517. This feedback was Colorado's "case designation" state domestic violence law, which was the model for HB 2517 and similar previous bills in Kansas that failed to pass (Harvey, 2010).

The case designation was a component of Colorado's law that allowed law enforcement to label domestic violence cases in arrest reports and to track the outcome of the cases through the court system; interventions for both victims and offenders could be offered, and it allowed special handling of these cases as the court system developed new strategies for combating domestic violence (Colorado Legislature, 2012; D. Miles, personal communication, June 16, 2014).

As there were no evaluative studies conducted on the Colorado law, the FRB brought Retired Deputy District Attorney from Colorado Springs, Douglas J. Miles, then acting independently as a consultant on domestic violence policy, to Kansas to educate the FRB about the successful implementation of the law in Colorado (D. Miles, personal communication, June 16, 2014). Acting as a policy entrepreneur, the FRB started shaping the condition of domestic violence as a problem that could be addressed through legislation. Thus, the feedback on Colorado's law, in conjunction with the data reports from the FRB, suggested the proposal of the following policy solutions: a standard and comprehensive legal definition of domestic violence and a method to track domestic violence offenses through the legal system through a case designation similar to Colorado's domestic violence policy.

The third element in a problem stream to analyze is the focusing event (Kingdon, 2003; Zahariadis, 2007); such an event is central to the present analysis. On July 3, 2008, Jana Mackey was murdered by her ex-boyfriend in Lawrence, Kansas, the home of the University of Kansas. Ms. Mackey, an advocate for women's rights, had worked as a lobbyist for the National Organization for Women at the Kansas State Capitol and was studying law at the University of Kansas. Following this family tragedy, Ms. Mackey's mother and stepfather, Christie and Curt Brungardt, founded the organization called Jana's Campaign (Jana's Campaign, 2014b). Acting as policy entrepreneurs, Jana's Campaign strongly supported HB 2517 (Harvey, 2010). Along with the indicators and feedback, this focusing event created a chance for Jana's Campaign, acting as policy entrepreneurs, to shape values in the political stream.

The Political Stream in Kansas and the Federal Level

In the multiple streams framework, the political stream contains public and political values and attitudes about problems and potential solutions, as well as changes in political administration (Zahariadis, 2007). For a policy window to open, values in the political stream must shift or be shaped so that at the same time conditions in the problem stream are recognized as problems to be solved, solutions in the policy stream are found acceptable for use (Zahariadis, 2007). The passage and intent of previous Kansas domestic violence legislation reflects the change in the national public and political attitudes surrounding domestic violence that began to accelerate in the 1980s and 90s and which led to a demand for and acceptance of solutions at the federal and state level.

Shifting values in the nation and the state. In the 1980s, several public domestic violence court cases and subsequent trials shaped the national mood by increasing the visibility and the recognition of the lethality of domestic violence, and this began drawing attention to legislative solutions such as mandatory and enhanced arrest. Mandatory arrest language in domestic violence law refers to law enforcement policy requiring an officer to make an arrest when the officer finds probable cause to believe a domestic violence crime was committed. Enhanced arrest law strongly encourages an officer to make an arrest. The case in 1984 of Tracy Thurman, a severely abused woman in Connecticut who filed a suit against the City of Torrington and 29 police officers, may have shaped national attitudes toward enhanced arrests in the case of domestic violence (Gelles, 1996; Thurman v. City of Torrington, 1984). This is the first case where liability was attributed to a police department for failing to assist a victim of domestic violence.

Later in the 1990s, as national domestic violence prevention organizations such as Futures Without Violence (formerly Family Violence Prevention Fund) continued to put pressure on Congress to strengthen the support of victims of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence, national attention focused on domestic violence, with the federal government taking a decidedly direct position on the issue; this culminated in the signing of Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) into federal law in 1994, the first federal law to

address domestic violence in a comprehensive way. One of the main tenets of VAWA of 1994 was to require a coordinated community response to domestic violence, as well as sexual assault and stalking crimes. The same year as the passage of VAWA, two major trials brought domestic violence into the national spotlight. O. J. Simpson was on trial for the murders of his wife, Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman, and Lorena Bobbitt, who assaulted her husband after years of enduring domestic and sexual violence, was also tried in court.

Increased attention in Kansas. The public and political values and attitudes in Kansas followed a similar course as those in the national arena, with attention given to enhanced arrest laws as a solution to domestic violence. While the Kansas Governor's office sought to study the problem of domestic violence through a task force as early as 1981, it wasn't until 1991 that Kansas enacted an enhanced arrest law (Gottlieb & Johnson, 1983; KBI, 2012). This law required law enforcement agencies to adopt written policies regarding domestic violence and provide data on incidents to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI, 2012).

Until Kansas' enhanced arrest law, a victim in an abusive relationship had little legal recourse. Not until 2002 could victims of domestic violence who were unmarried seek a protection-from-abuse order (KBI, 2012). Additionally, a narrow legal definition of domestic violence as "spousal abuse" persisted until 2001, when Kansas enacted the "domestic battery" Statute (Gottlieb & Johnson, 1983; Kansas Legislature, 2001). This statute expanded the definition of intimate relationship to adult familial relationships and adults currently or formerly living together, as well as adults with a child in common (Kansas Legislature, 2001). Many gradual domestic violence policy changes took place in the early 2000s, because policy entrepreneurs brought progressively more attention to domestic violence throughout the decade, and solutions in the policy stream were found acceptable.

Indeed, two years after the domestic battery statute passed, then-Governor Kathleen Sebelius used the power of her office to target domestic violence. As mentioned above, in 2004, she signed Executive Order No. 04-11 to create the Kansas Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, using funds from a

VAWA grant (FRB Report, 2005). The FRB, consisting of fourteen citizens appointed by the Governor with "working knowledge of domestic violence" (Office of the Governor, 2004, p. 1) studied domestic violence homicides in Kansas, KBI data, and made recommendations for policies based on their analysis.

In addition, Paul Morrison, the Attorney General in 2007, was provided additional grant money from then-Governor Sebelius to create a Domestic Violence Unit "to train county prosecutors and law enforcement officials, assist them in prosecutions, and secure grant money for community domestic violence shelters" (Office of Governor, 2007, p. 1). The FRB developed a public health campaign and community programs, which were simultaneously the cause and effect of increased domestic violence awareness in Kansas. Although Ms. Sebelius left office in 2009 to become Secretary of Health and Human Services in the Obama Administration, her support of a more transparent and focused response to domestic violence likely increased the attention to and knowledge of domestic violence in the Kansas legislature.

Parallel in timing to then-Governor Sebelius' efforts, the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) released the 2006 report "Beyond Statistics: Lethal Domestic and Sexual Violence Against Women in Kansas" (KCSDV, 2006). This report aimed to raise public and political awareness about the lethal nature of domestic violence by documenting the 21 femicides and 18 attempted murders of women in Kansas between August 2004 and August 2006 with detailed information about each victim (using pseudonyms). As a follow up to this report, KCSDV produced a press release in February 2007 with an update on the number of women in Kansas murdered during sexual or domestic violence-related incidents; according to media reports, between August of 2006 and February 2007 there were nine murders (KCSDV, 2007). Together, the initial report and the follow-up press release from KCSDV sought to keep the issue of Kansas's domestic violence in the forefront of public and political attention.

Between 2008 and 2010, Kansas saw an increase in domestic violence incidents, with a marked increase in 2009 (FRB Report, 2008; KBI, 2012). This coincided with an increase in domestic violence homicides, including Jana Mackey's death

in 2008 (Jana's Campaign, 2014a). As a well-respected activist, Jana's murder demonstrated the ubiquitous nature of domestic violence. Ultimately, Jana's death brought renewed attention of the public and the press, or the political stream, to domestic violence and positioned the issue of domestic violence in the problem stream as an issue that required urgent action.

Proposed policy solutions. In 2008, the FRB began to develop a policy proposal for a domestic violence law that would allow tracking of a domestic violence offender "from the time of incident to disposition of the criminal case" (FRB report, 2008 p. 6). The FRB introduced House Bill 2910 in the 2008 session to the Judiciary Committee, however, for unpublished reasons, the bill did not receive a hearing (FRB Report, 2008; Kansas Legislature, 2008). Policy entrepreneurs, including Jana's family, the FRB, and the KCSDV, then brought another bill, House Bill 2335 (Kansas Legislature, 2009), forward to the legislature in 2009.

This bill was introduced to the House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice, and died in committee due to several concerns. These concerns included potential conflict between a case designation and due process rights, and the burden to the law enforcement agencies and the court system to implement the proposed case designation policy (Judicial Council, 2009). Although the bill failed to come to a vote, the policy entrepreneurs' efforts had led to serious discussion in the committee, a report on the concerns, and the recommendation to draft a new bill the legislature could accept and pass (FRB Report, 2010; Judicial Council, 2009; Kansas Legislature, 2010c).

Ultimately, the cumulative effects of this ongoing legislative process, the increase in domestic violence incidents (particularly related homicides), and the efforts of focused and activated policy entrepreneurs led to increased political and public attention to domestic violence and a higher tolerance within the legislature to accept new solutions. At this critical moment, a necessary condition for a policy window to open was fulfilled: the political stream was now primed to couple with the policy stream (Zahariadis, 2007).

The Policy Stream in Kansas

As we examined in the previous subsection, many of the policy changes in Substitute HB 2517 existed in the policy stream prior to 2010. This was evidenced by the recommendation of the FRB to pass new legislation in the 2008 report, modeling proposed policy changes upon Colorado's domestic violence case designation law which was in place for several years, and the two previous bills in Kansas that would have added a domestic violence case designation, as well as expanded the statutory definition of domestic violence (Colorado Legislature, 2012; FRB Report, 2008; Kansas Legislature, 2008, 2009). Thus, components of HB 2517 were in the policy stream and promoted by policy entrepreneurs as early as 2008. However, public and political opinion did not support adoption of these solutions.

Mirroring the difficulty in passing the earlier bills, the original draft of HB 2517 included components that were not accepted in the Substitute version; there was much discussion and committee work before the final Substitute draft was accepted and passed—even after such discussion on the earlier bills. For instance, Substitute HB 2517 created a case designation, however, it was not clear how the designation would be used or how it would hold law enforcement agencies, courts, the Kansas Sentencing Commission, and the Department of Justice accountable for its use. Tracking offenders through a case designation was the most innovative component of the bill and yet it was one of the first components to be challenged in the political stream over concerns of the legislature that it would be unfair to individuals charged with domestic violence and difficult or costly for the courts to implement (Judicial Council, 2009).

Intentions and outcomes of policy change in Kansas. While Substitute HB 2517 aimed to address domestic violence, the domestic violence designation law did not do all that it was intended to do. Initially, one intention of this legislation was the identification and tracking of domestic violence offenders across the state through a standardized court tracking system. This idea was supported but was deemed infeasible due to the cost associated with revising a new court tracking system, so the enrolled bill removed this language and inserted a

provision that allows each district court in Kansas to track these cases if they choose to do so. Therefore, consistent tracking of domestic violence offenders is no longer required as was intended.

Another intention of HB 2517 was expanding the definition of domestic violence. Since 2001, domestic violence was defined solely as domestic battery (i.e., physical violence against a family or household member, spouse, or other recognized relationship) under the domestic battery statute. The predecessor to HB 2517, HB 2335, included a repeal of the domestic battery statute and the adoption of a broad and comprehensive definition of domestic violence, however in the Kansas Judicial Council Criminal Law Advisory Committee (JCCLAC) report, it was recommended to strike this from future bills, and it was subsequently omitted in HB 2517 (Judicial Council, 2009). Substitute HB 2517 did broaden the statutory definition of domestic violence beyond battery to include threatened acts of violence or any crime committed as an element of domestic violence (Kansas Legislature, 2010b). This is a significant policy change. However, even under the new definition, domestic violence continues to be a criminal act that occurs within a qualifying relationship (i.e., household member, family member, spouse, former spouse, dating partner, or a relationship with a child in common).

A third intent of Substitute HB 2517 was to provide a way for the courts to require those designated as domestic violence offenders to complete an assessment and appropriate intervention. Under this law, if the court designates the case as a domestic violence case, then the offender should be ordered to complete a domestic violence offender assessment, developed by a committee of domestic violence experts in Kansas. While Substitute HB 2517 was signed into law by then-Governor Mark Parkinson in April 2010, the implementation of this provision was delayed until 2012 due to the small number of batterer intervention programs (BIPs) operating in Kansas. The Kansas Attorney General's Office worked to develop over 20 additional programs since the passage of the designation law (Kansas Attorney General, 2014). Many of these programs, however, are located in urban centers, and some of the 105 Kansas counties are without an accessible BIP. The lack of fully

accessible BIPs can justify some courts ordering offenders to alternate programs that are not certified and that do not address the person's battering behaviors and dangerous belief systems.

An open window does not mean policy changes move through as planned. Even as the window opened for policy change in Kansas, the policy solutions originally sought during the recognition of the problem were challenged. However, policy entrepreneurs worked to modify and exclude solutions that would cause the window to close. Ultimately, policy entrepreneurs in Kansas were able to succeed in changing policy when the window of opportunity opened for HB 2517 to pass, but as noted above, not all of the changes attempted were successful.

Discussion

Zahariadis (2007) and Durant and Diehl (1989) identified various styles of processing in the policy stream in order to make policy change, including the gradualist style demonstrated in Kansas. Throughout our analysis, it is clear that domestic violence policy change in Kansas has remained gradual and mirrors the political climate at both the state and national level. Change occurs slowly, building on prior changes as acceptance of new or amended ideas grows and when there is an intersection of this acceptance with sufficient political pressure or interest. This pattern affected the passage of Substitute HB 2517, and the passage or rejection of certain components of the bill.

The domestic violence designation law is a significant step in enhancing the criminal legal system's domestic violence response in Kansas. While not all of the original intentions of the law were fully realized, this law creates a foundation on which public policy makers can build and develop additional legislation and regulations aimed at enhancing the safety of victims and accountability of abusers. The following lays out three recommendations for future policy work to further enhance the response of the criminal legal system in Kansas.

Passage of predominant aggressor language. Predominant aggressor language sets forth criteria by which to determine the primary aggressor in a domestic violence incident, and thus who should be arrested. Including this language in domestic

violence legislation can be useful to prevent dual arrests, or the erroneous arrest of victims, and gives police clear guidelines to distinguish between defensive and offensive injuries in cases where domestic violence manifests as physical assault.

The Kansas Judicial Council Criminal Law Advisory Committee (JCCLAC) suggested the omission of the so-called predominant aggressor language from a previous bill, HB 2335, and it was not revisited in HB 2517 (Judicial Council, 2009). Predominant aggressor language, considered an important component by many policy entrepreneurs, was also rejected in the political stream as "limiting" and an unnecessary and onerous demand upon police officers; the JCCLAC recommended that an officer "arrest whomever the officer determines to be the predominant aggressor" (Judicial Council, 2009).

Policy-makers in Kansas would send a message in strong support of victims by adopting predominant aggressor language, which would require an assessment of the relationship beyond the specific incident being investigated. This change intends to increase the accuracy of arrest decisions by law enforcement, thereby decreasing the likelihood of dual arrest or erroneous arrest of the victim for force used in self-defense. The decision to omit predominant aggressor language from domestic violence laws limits the effectiveness of law enforcement interventions and puts more victims at risk for further abuse.

Strengthening the designation law. Passage of Substitute HB 2517, or the domestic violence designation law, as many in the legal and domestic violence advocacy communities call it, is a significant step in creating a strong public policy response to domestic violence in Kansas that centers on offender accountability. One criticism of the law is that it creates more elements that must be proven in a legal case (by prosecutors) but does little to enhance the criminal penalties for a designated crime. Public policy makers should consider strengthening this law by creating an enhancement component for multiple domestic violence offenses.

Enhancing the safety net for victims. The domestic violence designation law is a significant step in crafting a strong response to domestic violence in Kansas, but victims' needs expand far beyond the criminal legal system. It is essential that

other supports be in place to support victims as they leave a violent relationship and seek to heal and live free from violence. Many victims return to abusive relationships or are unable to leave due to economic, housing, education, and related needs. Without a safety net to rely on, victims are less likely to seek the safety they deserve. Policies that include the funding of a strong safety net are an essential step toward making it possible for victims to leave their abusers.

Conclusion

This analysis of the passage of Substitute HB 2517 offers the fields of domestic violence, criminal justice, and social work a detailed case example to understand how to use a policy window of opportunity to move legislation forward and how to influence the political stream to prompt a policy window. As social workers, we strive toward policy and social change that addresses the sexist and structural nature of the problem of domestic violence (Pyles & Postmus, 2004). Part of this change must take place in the legislative arena, moving domestic violence social policy forward. Together with domestic violence advocates, public policy makers must continue to be invested in the myriad of issues beyond physical violence that victims of domestic violence face, including but not limited to: economic vulnerability from the effects of domestic violence, and lack of housing protections and safety nets needed to support victims as they seek safe lives free from violence.

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Can People Experiencing Homelessness Acquire Financial Assets?

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Through an innovative Individual Development Account (IDA) program run by the Community Empowerment Fund (CEF), individuals at risk for or experiencing homelessness receive financial education, access matched savings accounts, and have saved a total of \$89,831.55. This is notable as low-income individuals often lack

access to the means to build assets, which can moderate financial distress. In this mixed-method study we examine the program's impact through administrative data, surveys, and qualitative interviews. Of the 17 interview participants, 15 opened an account, saving an average of \$1,356.24 toward housing, emergency savings, cars, education, and computers. Few U.S. IDA programs have served those experiencing homelessness, although the results demonstrate they can save, which is remarkable considering the U.S. saving rate has been steadily declining to close to zero. Our findings suggest that this model is effective in working with the most disadvantaged populations to successfully acquire financial assets.

Key words: asset development, homelessness, individual development accounts

While individuals may become homeless for a variety of reasons—domestic violence, mental and physical health challenges, lay-offs—they all contend with limited financial assets. The Community Empowerment Fund (CEF) in Orange County, NC (home of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), focuses on this typically overlooked subpopulation of those facing poverty in the U.S., people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, to provide financial literacy and asset development programs. These services are provided by university students in a unique mentoring relationship that includes the use of Independent Development Accounts (IDAs). IDA programs were developed to address the fact that wealth, the accumulated sum of assets (homes, cars, savings and checking accounts, stocks and mutual funds, retirement accounts) minus debts (mortgages, car loans, credit card debt), can moderate financial distress in times of economic strain (O'Neill & Xiao, 2011), and yet the U.S. saving rate had been steadily declining for several decades to close to zero (Lusardi, 2011). Moreover, middle- and upper-income individuals in the United States have easier access to mainstream financial services like mortgages and employment-linked retirement plans that make it easier to build wealth—"institutionalized" mechanisms of saving—which are highly subsidized by the government and provide the sort of security and stability attributed to the "American dream" (Mullainathan & Sharif, 2008). As expected, those without access to these subsidized savings

mechanisms have difficulty developing an economic cushion to use when faced with a financial setback.

This is a particular challenge in a state like North Carolina that ranks 45th in the U.S. across 53 measures of the ability of residents to achieve financial security (Corporation for Enterprise Development, 2013). The 2013 Assets & Opportunity Scorecard found that 49.9% of North Carolina households are liquid asset poor, meaning they have less than three months of savings to fall back on in the event of job loss, a health crisis, or other income-disrupting emergency. Additionally, 26.8% are asset poor, meaning any assets that they do have, i.e. a savings account or durable assets such as a home, business or car, are overwhelmed by debt. Moreover, in North Carolina the topic of financial literacy is covered only briefly in the high school curriculum in the Civics/Economics course sophomore year (B. Link, Civics Instructor, Chapel Hill Carrboro School District, Personal Communication, January 3, 2013). There are programs in place, however, that attempt to buffer some of these inequalities.

In this study, we examine the impact of the CEF savings program through an analysis of administrative data, survey responses, and qualitative interviews with 17 men and women who have participated in the program to varying degrees to answer the following questions: (1) Has CEF-participation resulted in improvements in savings, housing, and employment? (2) What programs have respondents participated in? (3) What were the primary savings goals? (4) What have participants learned from the programs? (5) What are the barriers to saving? and (6) What do participants value most about their participation in CEF's savings programs?

Literature Review

As we know, low-income individuals often lack checking or savings accounts, investments, insurance, and access to employment-based retirement accounts (Hilgert, Hogarth, & Beverly, 2003; Zhan, Anderson, & Scott, 2006) and are more likely to come from families without bank accounts and thus lack early financial information and exposure (Aizorbe, Kennickell, & Moore, 2003). This is problematic as financial functioning plays a central role in well-being (Johnson & Sherraden,

2007) and, clearly, poverty is one of the primary determinants of health disparities (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). As everyday stressors related to poverty grow, self-esteem decreases and depressive symptoms increase (Lutenbacher & Hall, 1998). Further, poverty can negatively influence young adults' ability to plan for the future (Nurmi, 1987; Trommsdorff, Lamm, & Schmidt, 1979), suppressing optimism about future life chances (Hamburg, 1996; Moore, 1994) and thus negatively impacting future orientation (Hunter & O'Connor, 2003).

Asset-Development Programs

For those who do not learn about financial matters at home, there are few other opportunities to learn about saving and building assets. For example, in North Carolina, the site of this study, this topic is covered only briefly in the Civics/Economics course during the sophomore year of high school. Some programs, however, have been developed to fill this gap.

One promising avenue to address poverty and wealth inequalities is the asset-development mechanism known as the Individual Development Account, or IDA, including those provided through the American Dream Demonstration (Adams, 2005), San Francisco's Kindergarten to College (K2C) children's savings accounts program (EARN, 2013), and others. IDAs help low-income individuals develop assets through financial education and matched savings programs with savings typically going towards home ownership, vocational training and educational expenses, and entrepreneurship (Greenberg & Patel, 2006). Current evidence suggests that, in addition to increasing assets, these programs also promote a greater sense of control, feelings of progress and hope, and greater future orientation among participants (Sherraden et al., 2005).

IDA programs are fairly new, but research findings are promising. In experimental studies of IDAs, homeownership and financial assets increased among participants (Han, Grinstein-Weiss, & Sherraden, 2009; Mills et al., 2008). For example, in a study of IDA use in a rural community, participants were able to save toward the accumulation of assets (Grinstein-Weiss, Charles, & Curley, 2007). Further, participants who were saving towards educational expenses benefited more from financial education than participants who were

saving toward other goals (Zhan & Schreiner, 2005).

Moreover, participation in a savings program resulted in improved financial knowledge, view of self, future orientation, and sense of security (Scanlon & Adams, 2008) and greater likelihood of being on course educationally for youth (Elliott & Nam, 2012). In a study of 21 such programs in North Carolina, effective case management and financial literacy training were keys to program success (Rohe, Gorham, & Quercia, 2005) and may be particularly beneficial for those experiencing homelessness.

Experience of Homelessness

Low-income individuals perform similarly to other Americans in terms of saving when given the same access to assets and financial institutions (Bertrand, Mullainathan, & Shafir, 2004; Mullainathan & Sharif, 2008). However, because they have less savings to weather a financial crisis, their savings behavior has a greater effect on their savings and asset building than those with higher incomes, especially when those institutions are not available (Bertrand et al., 2004; Mullainathan & Sharif, 2008). With lack of access to the more mainstream financial system, low-income individuals must rely instead on expensive and often predatory services, such as payday loans and rent-to-own products, to meet their needs. Low and unpredictable incomes can lead to poor credit, which often prohibits access to basic services like checking accounts, through Chexx Systems, a nationwide database that essentially "black-lists" account holders owing any amount to a registered bank in the United States—be it \$10 or \$300 (Barr & Blank, 2009).

Further, as expected, individuals experiencing homelessness face an even greater need to develop assets and savings to allow them to re-enter the housing market. Having limited assets creates a cycle of barriers to attaining housing and employment. With no stable place to call home and perhaps nowhere to attend to personal hygiene, homelessness can make it difficult to find a job. Unemployment can make it difficult to save for a car, which is often necessary given the non-traditional hours typical of the jobs available to those in poverty (Presser & Cox, 1997). Lack of transportation, in turn, makes it difficult to maintain employment. Furthermore, lack

of transportation limits where a person may reside to where public transportation is available.

Criminal records, unsteady housing histories, and inconsistent job histories can all lead to periods of homelessness. Despite these challenges, there are opportunities for building assets for those experiencing homelessness. If the individual receives income, either through employment or government benefits such as disability, he/she may be able to save a large portion because she/he has no bills. For example, those staying in a shelter or transitional housing often do not have to pay for rent, utilities, or food. This saving opportunity, when the individual actually has access to a bank account, can lead to a more sustained and stable transition from homelessness. The Community Empowerment Fund is one such model making this possible.

Community Empowerment Fund Model

The Community Empowerment Fund (CEF) is a University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill-student-developed, student-run relationship-based savings program focusing on individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in Orange County, NC. While originally designed as a microfinance initiative providing small loans for independent living, education/training, and entrepreneurship, CEF soon learned that members did not have the financial knowledge to enable them to manage even small loans. Through collaboration with Self-Help Credit Union, a member-owned, federally insured, state-chartered credit union in North Carolina, CEF now provides for-benefit-of, matched savings accounts instead of the microfinance loans (Self-Help Credit Union, 2013). These are called CEF Safe Savings Accounts.

These CEF Safe Savings Accounts include a number of innovative features promoting saving among the very poor (Biggers, 2013). First, the accounts have a flexible system of withdrawal compared to a typical matched savings account, with a 48-hour waiting period to discourage impulsive withdrawals and encourage saving toward the specified goal, and no withdrawal penalty. Secondly, the funds are held in "for-benefit-of" accounts. The advantage of such an account is that it is not in the name of the saver, who may be prevented from

using the mainstream banking system because they are listed in the Chexx system due to a bank debt. The account is instead in the name of the organization and is held as a sub-account. All the funds in a for-benefit-of account belong to the saver. Moreover, there are no fees or minimum balance requirements on a for-benefit-of account and the members can deposit through CEF staff instead of having to go to a bank. These features make the account very accessible and easy to transition to for many members who previously have not had a bank account or who are prevented by the Chexx system.

The accounts are matched at 10%, significantly below the typical IDA match rates of one-to-one to three-to-one, but much higher than typical interest rates on savings accounts from mainstream banks and credit unions (Sherraden, 2009). The match limit is \$2,000, making the maximum match \$200. The match accrues over the lifetime of the account. For example, a participant could set four consecutive \$500 goals and reach them and receive a \$50 match each time, for a total match of \$200. This lower match amount allows more clients to participate given current funding levels, and also sets an obtainable target amount for many hoping to save enough to move out of the shelter. Safe Savings Accounts are accompanied by broad 12-week financial literacy and self-sufficiency training and a support program called an Opportunity Class.

Another unique aspect of the CEF Safe Savings Account is that savers are able to set goals for whatever they see as most beneficial for their situation, be it a car, an apartment rental deposit, or a rainy day fund. Savers set their own individual amount and goal alongside their advocates and set up an individual savings plan, meaning that in most cases the goal is applicable to what the saver is most in need of, either to further her housing, education, or career or simply for stability and peace of mind. Further, self-set goals mean that the amount selected and the plan developed with the member's advocates, described below, are more likely to be attainable and realistic. In addition to the matched Safe Savings Accounts, CEF connects members to affordable checking and savings accounts at area credit unions and provides education in how to use them, allowing members to save more of their monthly income, set up direct deposit to cut down on "cash-in-hand" spending,

avoid costly check-cashing fees at alternative financial institutions, and accurately monitor personal budgets.

CEF also provides 2-to-1 support to members. Two student volunteers are paired as "member advocates" with one "member." This sort of 2-to-1 case management is unheard of in the social services field, where case managers can individually serve upwards of 100 clients (Godfrey & Yoshikawa, 2012). These large caseloads can reduce the effectiveness of case managers by limiting the amount of time they spend with clients (Jewell, 2007).

Another innovative feature of this model, however, is that CEF's advocates are largely undergraduate volunteers. Once trained and matched with a member, the advocate works closely alongside their member, helping to provide financial coaching and access to resources, as well as to build a supportive environment. Advocates may help with resumes and interviewing skills, job and housing searches, negotiating with service providers, and budgeting and money management. Advocates also work in the CEF office providing drop-in services and can work as few or as many hours as they would like.

One advocate was paired with a CEF member who had recently fled an abusive relationship, separating her from her home, bank accounts, and social support networks and landing her in the homeless shelter. The two worked closely on these issues and their efforts led to a partnership that will provide financial literacy coaching to those seeking services at the shelter. Another CEF advocate interviewed about her experiences with CEF (Biggers, 2013) reported:

Through CEF, I've learned a tremendous amount ... [about] what kinds of help different people need, the different types of people to work with, the demographic that programs like ours can actually help, as well as how other people ... view homelessness and social programs aimed at helping this demographic.

In addition to their main matched Safe Savings Account program, CEF has developed a renter's IDA program to help members prevent immediate financial crises that lead back to homelessness and to establish a stepping-stone toward

homeownership and wealth accumulation. In this program, members save to build an emergency fund and receive a 50% match on savings accumulated (up to \$1,000 in matching funds).

Given the challenges facing low-income individuals today, particularly those experiencing homelessness, this program stands to make a difference in participants' lives by increasing their financial assets and developing their personal resources to manage financial strain. While so far results of asset development programs have been promising, few have expanded to serve those experiencing homelessness who often have little knowledge about how to make wise consumption decisions, regularly leading to debt, poor credit, and bankruptcy (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007). Individuals experiencing poverty and homelessness may not be any less financially literate than the general population, they just have more need for this knowledge given their economic situations. Thus, research is needed to examine potentially successful interventions, such as CEF, that increase financial literacy and build assets.

Methods

This is a mixed method study of CEF program participants, both those who completed the program and those who did not or have yet to finish. Each participant filled out a short demographic survey and then participated in a 30-60 minute qualitative interview with one of the researchers. The qualitative interview included questions about which CEF programs they participated in, goals set and progress made towards them, barriers to saving, what they learned from the program, what they valued most about the program, and how the program changed their lifestyles.

To assess question flow and whether questions were understandable and not offensive, researchers sought feedback from CEF staff. The demographic survey covered age, race, gender, education, employment, and marital status. In addition to the survey and qualitative interviews, we also used administrative data collected from each CEF member when they joined the program and which is updated periodically. This data included whether or not an account was opened, the total amount saved, if they graduated from the Opportunity Class,

if they attained employment through CEF services, and if they obtained housing through CEF.

Recruitment

Participants were recruited for interviews in person at the CEF office or during other CEF-sponsored events or by phone by CEF staff who told them about the study and asked if they would be willing to participate. Researchers then scheduled interviews with the interested participants at a time and place that worked best for them. Recruitment and data collection took place concurrently. Once interview saturation was achieved, that is no new themes emerged, the interview recruitment and data collection was curtailed (Boeije, 2010; Creswell, 2007). We reached saturation point at 17 participants.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data from the survey and administrative records. We analyzed the interview transcripts according to the content analysis procedure suggested by Berg (2004) as this technique provides a process for inference-making by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of responses, which in this case are in-depth interview transcripts (Holsti, 1968). We developed potential themes and subthemes based on review of the literature, study objectives, and interview questions. We then conducted an initial thorough review of the transcripts to ascertain whether the themes and subthemes remained relevant and to see whether any new themes or subthemes emerged. We then created a list of the themes and subthemes, coded the data from each transcript into corresponding themes or subthemes, and extracted illustrative quotes from the transcripts.

Results

Demographics and Program Participation

To date, 56 individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness have graduated from the financial literacy classes, 37 savings goals have been attained, and \$89,831.55 has been saved in 125 accounts with CEF since the program's inception in 2010. Of the 17 CEF participants who were interviewed, eight were female. Participants averaged 49.1 years of age (SD = 10.03). They were fairly evenly split between African

American and White, with eight participants each and one who identified as biracial. Most (16) were single. Most had a high school degree or above, including seven who had completed some college and two who had Associate's degrees. Nine were employed, averaging almost 28 hours of work per week ($SD = 11.9$). Monthly income averaged \$768.61 ($SD = 520.73$). For those who weren't working, other sources of income included child support and disability benefits.

Of these 17 interviewed, 15 had opened a CEF savings account and saved an average of \$1,356.24 ($SD = 823.82$, range 0 – \$2,450.65). CEF was also instrumental in moving 11 respondents from homeless shelters into more permanent housing and helping 9 respondents attain employment. The majority, 16 of 17 respondents, had participated in CEF's Savings/Opportunity Class and 12 had graduated from the program at the time of their study interviews. Respondents participated in a variety of other CEF-related programs, including Talking Sidewalks (a creative writing project, $n = 2$), the pilot rental IDA program with the higher match (50% match towards housing costs; $n = 3$), Quick Chef (a nutrition and cooking class, $n = 4$), laptop IDA (saving toward the purchase of a laptop computer, $n = 8$), small business classes ($n = 3$), and Wheels for Hope (saving toward the purchase of a car, $n = 2$).

Savings Goals

Participants were saving toward a variety of goals, with the most prevalent being obtaining housing/moving out of the shelter ($n = 14$), building an emergency savings account ($n = 11$), buying a car ($n = 6$), education/training ($n = 4$), and buying a computer ($n = 3$). Other goals included starting a small business, purchasing appliances, covering medical needs, and saving for children's needs, including education and clothing. The majority had attained their housing goals and most continued to save with the matched saving program. Four had purchased cars and two had started training or educational programs. One male respondent who had been living in the homeless shelter for five weeks talked about his savings goals, saying:

My goal is to get my own place, maybe with a roommate.
My goal was to save \$2000 to move out of the shelter,

but now I've saved \$2500 and CEF has found others who are looking for roommates. Saving [now] is not too hard because I don't have to pay for my room, board, or laundry. I save 80-90% of each paycheck.

This respondent felt that he'd have saved enough money through CEF to move out of the shelter in about seven months. Another shelter resident who faced homelessness when his landlord raised his rent beyond what his disability check could cover stated "I'm saving to have the cushion of savings I never had before, something to fall back on, some cushion to take over when something happens." He noted that going through the CEF program had helped him to start planning ahead for a needed hip replacement to allow for recuperation time, while doing small mechanic jobs to supplement his disability income.

What Participants Learned

When asked about what they had learned through the Opportunity/Savings Classes, respondents reported a wide variety of topics which had been covered during the classes. The most commonly reported were budgeting skills, how to save, how to develop a résumé, and how to interview for a job.

Prior to becoming a CEF member, one participant, who entered CEF through a local Vocational Rehabilitation program, had struggled with transportation to enable him to work. He reported that he couldn't continue living in his isolated, rural home without a reliable car when his job was several miles away in town. He had resorted to staying with friends to avoid losing his job. His transportation challenges forced him to choose between leaving his job and couch-surfing (essentially homelessness). Saving through CEF allowed him to obtain a more reliable car so that he could be housed and he is now working full-time. This respondent reported what he learned this way:

CEF taught me how to save a little bit. I don't make a lot of money, but in my CEF account I can put money in and then don't mess with it unless there is an emergency. I had to take some out for car issues and now I am building it back up.

Budgeting was a really important skill for those interviewed, as the transition from the shelter to an apartment can be very challenging, requiring budgeting that wasn't required in the shelter. One participant noted that: "The major thing is budgeting—[when you are] getting a check every month. If you don't budget, the bills don't get paid ... putting it on paper and how to stretch money out." Another reported that: "[It was] good they worked with you, with your budget, to see how much you can save, if you can only save a small amount you know why."

Other interviewees appreciated the life skills they learned, including how to use coupons, set goals, and stretch money, which allowed them to live on low-wage jobs or unemployment or other benefits and to help them sustain living outside the homeless shelter. Several appreciated the camaraderie they experienced in the program with one man explaining that he valued learning "that there are other people like you; you are not just out there on your own." Still another reported "I tell people about CEF all the time. It is a good program." Opportunity/Savings Class graduates have even gone on to lead or help lead the classes. One woman reported: "I graduated from the [savings class] but I still come because I like the discussions and the people. I help out and help others learn ... I helped lead class today on budgeting."

Barriers and Motivators to Saving

The most common barriers to attaining savings goals were insufficient income and unexpected expenses. These were typically related to expenses from maintaining a car, health care costs, and having to pay child support and fines or debt. Participants also noted a lack of a saving culture when they were growing up and challenges surrounding sacrificing small wants for future rewards. Still, there were situations that motivated respondents to save. As one noted: "I cut back on drinking and drugs and partying—that was a lot of money. I made up my mind for a new life. I'm excited now. Sleeping on the floor [in the crowded shelter] is motivating." Another CEF member noted that living in the shelter motivates saving in other ways, too: "There is really nothing—[living in the

shelter] I don't have to pay room, food, laundry. It [saving] is really easy to do it with CEF ... 80-90% [of my paycheck] each time." In fact, the local shelters require their residents to save this percentage if they have an income of any kind, supporting CEF's work.

Most Valuable Parts of CEF—"They give me hope."

All the respondents were very positive about what the program had allowed them to accomplish, citing the accountability, the class topics covered (especially how to budget, complete a resume, and interview effectively), the relationships built with the staff, and the savings match as the most valuable parts of the savings program. The relationships built with CEF staff were the most oft-cited perk of program participation. As the CEF member who needed better transportation to maintain employment noted:

What inspires me are the people. They are quick to help you find ways to better yourself. They have been instrumental in helping me achieve things I couldn't have on my own, to budget my money, and go after things I wouldn't on my own. As long as you are willing to work, they will help you achieve.

Meeting others like themselves through CEF was also a positive experience. One woman who had recently moved from the shelter into an apartment with roommates she met through CEF reported that CEF was important to her because it "Lets other people see that you can get out of the shelter because I was so scared, I was petrified when I got there. But they help you see you can make it."

For these individuals who were experiencing homelessness or were at risk of homelessness, support for finding employment was highly valued. CEF provided access to computers for job searches and supportive staff to assist with members' burgeoning internet skills. One man who had been having trouble securing employment because of a criminal background reported that, although he was still looking for a job,

Job search help [has been the most valuable thing] ...
help with job listings, help me to make my résumé more

professional. ... I've got two interviews next week from putting my résumé on-line and got an email address to communicate with potential employers. I am always working on my resume with help from [my advocate]. I'm willing to take on something until something better comes along. I am forklift and OSHA certified, but my past criminal record is a barrier ... I have tools, but that gets in the way. I really want to find a job so I have some income to show that I can maintain an apartment.

He also reported that CEF helps members learn how to handle discussing their criminal records during interviews. Members are coached to prepare a response for what is on their record and how they have worked to overcome it, and they may even practice through a mock interview. Another avenue that CEF pursues for members is expunction. One shelter resident reported working with CEF on expunging a misdemeanor to allow him to keep his job as a certified nurse assistant (CNA). In effect, this process wipes out a qualifying conviction through court order (NC Justice Center, 2015). Qualifying convictions include: a first-time, nonviolent offense committed more than 15 years ago; a first-time offense committed under age 18/22; or a charge that was dismissed or disposed as "not guilty."

In terms of accountability, members valued the structure of the CEF accounts, which enabled them to save without easy access to their money. One savings account participant stated:

It is not easy when you are starting from the bottom—it would be easy if you had everything. My check goes into my [CEF] account and, working with these guys so the money doesn't come into my hands, and then I budget my paycheck.

Participants also valued being able to attain benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) through Social Security and Veterans Administration benefits with help from CEF, benefits that they had been unable to receive due to not been able to complete the necessary paperwork on their own.

Lifestyle Changes

Every interview participant reported that the CEF program had helped them to change their lifestyles. Becoming more mindful of spending and actively budgeting were the most commonly reported changes. Respondents also reported developing better soft skills (listening, being on time for work), living more healthy lives (quitting smoking, eating more healthfully), and being more optimistic. One respondent discussed the lifestyle changes she'd made since becoming a CEF member:

[CEF] has made me more mindful and pay closer attention to how I spend money. Before I would wonder where all my money went. Before I didn't know I could save making so little money. Saving little bits does add up.

CEF has also given participants an understanding of the importance of savings and how to actually go about it, as one woman reported: "The savings class has taught me things I should have learned in my 20s. People say it is common sense, but I never knew it." Still another, who had recently started receiving disability benefits, told us "I had never saved money. Never understood money crunching to save money. Before I would just go make more money until I couldn't work." When she was no longer able to work because of a health issue she had no alternative other than the homeless shelter, as she did not have savings to fall back on. CEF has also helped members to maintain focus on positive things. One woman started keeping a plot in a local community garden to save money, as well as being firm with her children about what they actually needed versus just wanted. Still another became more determined to move out of temporary housing:

I like the idea of putting all my money, well 80% of my paycheck, into my [CEF] account. I originally thought I would deposit \$34-40 two times a month, but then went up a lot. It will help me move quicker from [transitional treatment facility].

Discussion: Findings and Implications

This study described how the Community Empowerment Funds' asset-development program for individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness has enabled members to build financial assets. To date, few asset-development programs in the United States have focused on this population, although the results of this study demonstrate that these very low-income people can save and build assets. This population may even be particularly ripe for savings, as many live in homeless shelters where their expenses are very low. Building savings is also particularly important to these individuals who will need to grow a substantial level of savings to move from the shelter and successfully and sustainably transition to independent housing.

Renters typically need to save for an application fee and a deposit, as well as first month's rent, which can be a substantial amount. The participants in this study suggest that saving this amount of money is a real possibility given support and encouragement from staff at programs such as CEF. Of the majority of CEF interview respondents who had opened accounts, most had begun saving and saved a substantial amount. This is remarkable considering that since the mid-1980s, the U.S. saving rate has steadily declined and has been hovering close to zero for several years (Lusardi, 2011) across income levels. Many U.S. adults (38%) have no emergency fund and 25% of U.S. families have no savings at all (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

Key themes of the study included savings goals, learning about financial literacy and job search skills, barriers to saving, the value of CEF, and lifestyle changes. The most common savings goals for the 17 respondents were obtaining independent housing and building an emergency savings account. Being able to leave the homeless shelter was reported as a big motivator to save. This was particularly true for the male respondents, as the men's shelter was typically at capacity, requiring some residents to sleep on the floor. All of the respondents had participated in CEF's Opportunity/Savings Classes and the lessons they learned clustered around two primary areas: (1) financial literacy; and (2) job search skills.

Low-income individuals, such as those at risk for and experiencing homelessness, often do not have ready access to

mainstream financial services and, as such, are less able to save and obtain credit (Mullainathan & Sharif, 2008). Luckily, individuals who are often excluded are now being introduced to the traditional banking system and gaining financial literacy through participation in IDA programs like CEF and are therefore able to participate more fully in society. Developing job search skills were also particularly important for CEF participants. They reported valuing learning how to create effective résumés, where to search for jobs, and participating in mock interviews, a regular part of the Opportunity/Savings Classes. These skills will help participants obtain employment, enabling them to transition to independent housing and to continue saving.

Similar to results in another North Carolina-based IDA project (Page, 2011), barriers that limited participants' ability to save largely fell along two lines: (1) limited income; and (2) unexpected expenses. Despite these challenges, CEF participants were able to save. These challenges highlight the need to simply save towards an emergency fund, as unanticipated crises are often what lead to financial instability and even job loss and homelessness. This finding suggests that IDA programs should support savings to develop an emergency fund as an approved savings goal. This finding also demonstrates the need to work with IDA participants to set realistic savings goals. CEF's structure is well-suited to serving this population, as they have systems in place for savers to access their savings, penalty free, should an unexpected expense arise, while also imposing the 48-hour waiting period to encourage members to really consider whether or not they need to make a withdrawal (Biggers, 2013).

The most oft-cited benefit of the CEF Savings Program was the connection members formed with their advocates and other CEF staff. This is a particular strength of the CEF program as, with its connection to the university, it is able to access a large number of volunteers among the student body. With the paired-advocate approach, members are able to receive substantial personal attention and support from the program. This university partnership also allows funds to be dedicated to providing the Opportunity/Savings Classes and savings matches, rather than most of it going towards paid staff.

Finally, interviewees reported powerful lifestyle changes. They were able to readily put into practice the skills they learned through the Opportunity/Savings Classes through the savings accounts. This points to the importance of providing access to both banking services and financial literacy training to give participants the skills to manage their savings. This has been borne out in previous research suggesting that asset-development programs with both effective case management and financial literacy training were related to program success (Rohe et al., 2005).

Limitations

The study results should be interpreted in light of a few limitations. Only 17 of 85 individuals who participated in any of CEF's services were interviewed. We chose to interview individuals who had had fairly significant interactions with CEF, and not just those who may have come to the office once or attended one Opportunity/Saving Class. Often the more fleeting participants were no longer contactable. We opted to interview members who could provide more information about their experiences with CEF and curtailed data collection upon reaching saturation. As a result, we didn't capture those folks who didn't make it through the program, thus their experiences are not reflected in this study. Further, by recruiting individuals at different points in the 12-week class, we most likely captured some individuals who will not maintain their participation. Also, it should be noted that those interviewed for this study had fairly high educational attainment, which may explain some of the success in saving that we have seen.

Implications and Next Steps

The findings of this study suggest that the CEF model is effective in working with one of the most disadvantaged populations, those experiencing homelessness, to successfully save towards wealth accumulation. However, given the "high touch" nature of this model, it may be more difficult to replicate outside a university partnership that does not have access to a large volunteer pool. Yet, university-social service partnerships can be leveraged to build on the volunteer labor of the student population and expertise at the university to

create a program that is mutually beneficial for students and clients. Such programs could even be developed in rural communities which have access to community colleges. The Rural Community College Alliance (RCCA) may provide an avenue for program dissemination, as it works with partner colleges and their communities to improve education and economic prosperity (RCCA, n.d.).

In addition, as there are a number of components—savings matching, advocate pairing, Opportunity/Saving Class—further research is needed to determine which components of the CEF model are the most effective and to inform replication and scale-up activities. First, it will be valuable to follow participants to determine their longer-term savings capabilities and transitions from homeless shelters to independent housing and employment. Second, efforts to recruit other universities and student volunteers to implement this model would benefit from research suggesting how such programs benefit both students and their communities. Third, a study looking at each component separately, possibly with a randomized control trial, would help to determine which components are particularly effective. Thus, if all pieces cannot be replicated there would be evidence to show which pieces provide the most benefit. Finally, CEF has recently implemented a pilot renters' IDA program that provides a higher match for members who are saving for rent in particular. Examination of this program would provide evidence on savings and compliance impacts associated with a higher match rate.

IDA programs, particularly those that harness the significant resources of universities (student volunteers, advisors who are on faculty, for example), hold much promise in moving those facing homelessness into housing and employment through asset accumulation. Developing and disseminating this model will be a key next step for our partnership.

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank all the participants for the time they gave to talk about their experiences with the Community Empowerment Fund.

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A Heated Debate: Theoretical Perspectives of Sexual Exploitation and Sex Work

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The theoretical and often political frameworks of sexual exploitation and sex work among women are widely and enthusiastically debated among academic and legal scholars alike. The majority of theoretical literature in this area focuses on the macro perspective, while the micro-level perspective regarding causation remains sparse. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the philosophical, legal, and political perspectives pertaining to sexual exploitation of women and girls and addresses the subsequent controversies in the field.

Key words: *sexual exploitation, sex work, women, girls*

Theoretical explanations of sexual exploitation and sex work are rich and diverse at the societal level yet sparse and underdeveloped at the individual level. The contentious theoretical and moral debates among macro-level perspectives not only influence other macro systems (e.g., law) but even determine whether a woman may ever choose to exchange sex for financial compensation. Academic and legal scholars alike weave contrasting theoretical perspectives into language choices of their publications and lectures, i.e., the use of sex work as compared to sexual exploitation. Conversely, micro-level theories attempt to explain the process of victimization or entry into, as well as the exit out of, sexual exploitation and sex work but are not empirically well supported. Keeping this in mind, the purpose of this article is to review the philosophical, legal, and political perspectives pertaining to sexual exploitation of women and girls as well as to address the subsequent controversies in the field.

Macro Theories of Causation at Structural Level

The bulk of theoretical progress and academic writing is grounded in macro theories to explain the causation of sexual exploitation and sex work at the structural level. Some theories, such as feminism, may appear all encompassing by general name and yet hold stark divisions that greatly impact the understanding of sexual exploitation and the view of what some refer to as its victims. The debates among neo-abolitionist perspectives are continuously active and rarely come to consensus. Influenced by this debate, structural theories lend themselves to divisive legal perspectives, such as criminal treatment of those who purchase or sell sex, as well as those who exploit or facilitate others into performing sex acts for money. Structural theories also explain the financial aspects of sexual exploitation within a larger political context, further politicizing and polarizing working frameworks. Thus, a review of these perspectives is imperative to understanding the national context and debate of sexual exploitation and sex work.

Feminist Theories

Most of the theoretical frameworks regarding violence against women are derived from feminist theories. Feminist theory is a broad, transdisciplinary perspective that strives to understand roles, experiences, and values of individuals on the basis of gender (Miriam, 2005). Feminism is most commonly applied to intimate partner violence, framing an abusive relationship between intimate partners as a gender-based crime supporting the institutionalized oppression of women globally (Nichols, 2013; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). With regard to sexual exploitation, the feminist frame questions whether prostitution or any exchange of sex for something of financial value is or can be voluntary (Wilson & Butler, 2014). Feminist theory and its subsequent contrasting divisions also significantly impact service delivery, as direct service providers disagree in the interpretation of the statistical overrepresentation of women and girls seen in practice (Oakley et al., 2013; Wasco, 2003) and research (Clawson, Dutch, Solomon, & Grace, 2009; Farley, Cotton, Lynne, Zumbeck, & Spiwak, 2008; Sullivan, 2003).

With regard to sexual exploitation or sex work, scholars

and advocates are generally divided into two opposing theoretical camps. One group, usually referred to as neo-abolitionists, condemns all forms of voluntary and involuntary prostitution as a form of oppression against women. Neo-abolitionists, including radical and Marxist feminists, postulate that prostitution is never entirely consensual and cannot be regarded as such (Tiefenbrun, 2002). The other group, including many sex positivists, argues that a woman has a right to choose prostitution and other forms of sex work as a form of employment or even as a career.

Neo-abolitionist perspectives: Radical & Marxist feminism. Radical and Marxist feminism serve as the roots of current day, neo-abolitionist perspectives with regard to sexual exploitation of women and girls. Radical feminism is rooted in its understanding of social organization and structure as inherently patriarchal, as sexism exists to maintain male privilege and patriarchal social order (Loue, 2001). Radical feminists and patriarchal theorists frame issues of violence against women in a long line of institutional and structural sexism and paternalistic views. Dobash and Dobash (1979) first identified the tenets of this theory, which stipulates that violence against women is a systemic form of men's domination and social control of women. Thus, assaults occur primarily because of institutionalized male privilege, as men believe it is their right to enact violence against women.

The patriarchal organization of both government and society has provided a social context for the widespread sexist acceptance of hierarchy, thereby excluding women from the public sector, higher education, structural labor forces, and religious institutions (Loue, 2001; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). This also contributed to a male centered perspective, in which women had no place in holding highly respected jobs in the community and were consequently confined to the home. Argued from this model of oppression, the central tenet of sexual commerce rests in male domination and the structural inequalities between men and women. Sexual commerce provides a patriarchal right of access to women's bodies, thus perpetuating women's subordination to men (Farley, 2005). Radical feminists dispute the use of pornography, as they claim it causes harm and violence against women. For example,

Gloria Steinem and presidents of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and Planned Parenthood sent a letter to President Clinton protesting the administration's refusal to define all types of prostitution as "sexual exploitation" (Stolz, 2005). Because radical feminists generally view all commercial sex acts as patriarchal and oppressive, advocates should be inclined to ban all forms of sex work and sex industry from existence (Weitzer, 2007).

Like radical feminism, Marxist feminism is another neo-abolitionist stance that generally views all forms of sexual commerce as a form of violence against women. Although Marxism had very little to do with women, Marxist feminists have argued that sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism, that which is most one's own and yet is taken away (MacKinnon, 1989). Marxist feminism posits women's oppression on the economic dependence on men in a male-centric society (Bryson, 1992) and argues that capitalism continues to be the overarching oppressor of women. As long as capitalism exists, women will live in a patriarchal state and economically depend on men in a society structured around social class.

In this model, economic exploitation includes many forms, primarily prostitution and pornography, and therefore must be viewed as oppressions of sex and class. Women's sexuality and sexual energy is appropriated by the men who buy or control the sexual services exchange (i.e., pimps) just as any worker's energy is appropriated to the capitalists for their profits, leading to alienation of one's bodily capacities and very bodily being (Miriam, 2005). Marxist feminism specifically critiques the use of pornography and other forms of voluntary and involuntary sexual exchanges for money. Catherine MacKinnon, a Marxist feminist legal scholar, argues that all forms of pornography, prostitution, and sex trafficking are abuses of sex and a form of power taken away from women (MacKinnon, 1982).

Both radical and Marxist feminism have been criticized for their focus on sexually exploited or trafficked victims and the lack of women's rights to choose careers in sex work (Kesler, 2002; Wolken, 2004). In addition, arguments have ironically been regarded as paternalistic, in that the abolishment of prostitution is viewed as for the good of prostitutes (Meyers, 2013).

Critics argue that categorizing everyone as victims of sex trafficking (or not) creates an unhelpful dichotomy within the law and social services of looking for victims that are always under some form of force, fraud, or coercion and therefore under the control of another (FitzGerald & Munro, 2012; Snyder-Hall, 2010). Critics also argue that these forms of feminism do not support the autonomy of women currently exchanging or who have exchanged sex for money when they choose to leave the field or provide any subsequent form of advocacy work (Meyers, 2013). Finally, some critics have argued that capitalism is a current reality, especially in countries like the U.S., and Marxist feminism loses the ability to view gender, sexuality, and class together within current day society (Beloso, 2012). In response to many of these criticisms, a new feminist framework arguing for women's right to choose sex work has emerged, adding to an entrenched debate of feminism, choice, and freedom.

Pro-sex work perspective: Sex positivism. The pro-sex work perspective, or sex positivism, split from previously derived feminist schools of thought to advocate for women's right to an autonomous choice of sex work. Advocates of this perspective hold that sexuality, including paid forms, is consensual in many cases and that a woman should be free to make her own decision regarding the type of work in which she chooses to partake (Ferguson et al., 1984). Similarly, sex positivists argue that the notion of intimacy and what actions or sexual acts are considered intimate should be decided by the woman. For example, former sex worker, activist, and writer, Maggie McNeil, argues that there are many professions that may be described as intimate (i.e., nurses, gynecologists, child care professionals) and that all women, including sex workers and prostitutes, should be able to choose what is considered intimate and what is not (Russell & Garcia, 2014). Thus, any mandate or perspective dictating to women that their choice of work is wrong remains dangerous and patriarchal (Kesler, 2002). Sex positivists shift the model of person-centered services from a typically neo-abolitionist model that rescues and protects victims from prostitution and sexual exploitation to providing services for women who work in the sex industry (Shah, 2004).

Critiques of sex positivism are numerous. First, the neo-abolitionist view in itself directly disputes the main principal of sex positivism, as these two frameworks grapple with finding common ground on issues of pornography and prostitution or sex work (Metcalf & Woodhams, 2012). Others have argued that sex positivism and the issue of consent cannot be addressed without also considering the high rates of sexual assault and abuse histories, in addition to a lack of economic options (Hughes, 2005; Potterat, Rothenberg, Muth, Darrow, & Phillips-Plummer, 2001). In addition to opposing feminist frameworks, some religious organizations state that sexual integrity is jeopardized on a national level with this framework, as moral culture is damaged when sex becomes commercialized (Weitzer, 2007). Debates from both the feminist left and the religious right add yet another layer of complication to understanding these philosophical perspectives that pervasively influence law and social service sectors.

Intersectionality. Regardless of opposing opinions, intersectionality may be intertwined with previously described feminist perspectives to explain a woman's varied experiences based on her race, class, sexual orientation or another identity she holds in addition to her sex (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Intersectionality declares that the impact of sexism is qualitatively different depending on women's class or race identities (Crenshaw, 1991). The impact of intersectionality was first utilized to explain the following within the context of domestic violence: (1) the socially structured indivisibility of certain victims (mainly that all women's experiences are not the same); (2) who the "appropriate" victims are and the denial of victimization; and (3) the real-world consequences of intersection and domestic violence (Bograd, 1999). Since then, intersectionality has impacted the way in which scholars view relationships between interrelated social divisions in society and among people's lives (Anthias, 2013). Feminists using an intersectional framework maintain that gender (or gender and class in the case of Marxist feminism) cannot be used alone to understand a woman's oppression and the impact of sexual exploitation on her (Beloso, 2012). Subsequently, feminist legal scholars (Wolken, 2004) and researchers (Chong, 2014) have described the devaluation of women of color specifically as

victimization by sexual exploitation, because they are even more likely to be considered as embodying perversions of desire and to be treated systemically as a lower class of individuals than their White counterparts.

Main criticisms of intersectionality include a lack of defined intersectional methodology and empirical validity (Nash, 2008). In addition, some critics also argue that intersectionality has only primarily been used to address Black women's experience and is not politically and empirically inclusive of other identity intersections (Anthias, 2013), such as sexual orientation or even other races. Intersectionality is more commonly viewed as a framework to understand the impact of multiple identities on the oppression of women but is criticized for actually contributing to or creating additional hierarchies for women.

Political economy perspective. First used to address intimate partner violence, the political economy perspective has evolved to recognize important tenets of intersectionality and is applied to all forms of sexual violence, including sexual exploitation and trafficking. The political economy perspective describes the relationship between the state and economy, arguing that violence against women occurs because of the economic welfare and political processes driving the state (Adelman, 2008). For example, political welfare reform and the economic state exacerbate some women's experiences, as poor women became more dependent on cash and in-kind assistance from sexual partners, intimate relationships, children's fathers, etc. (Edin & Lein, 1997). Marxist feminism and the political economy perspective share the understanding that political economy and lower social economic status may drive sexual commerce; however, political economy perspective is rooted more in capitalistic differences in wealth alone, rather than differences in wealth as a result of systemic oppression against women. Thus, the political economy allows for unequal opportunity and pay for women and drives women to be more dependent and find opportunities to survive (often times from men), thus shifting the discourse from individualized deviancy toward structural inequality.

In view of sexual exploitation, women who are poor and have few options for survival may fall victims to traffickers

or may prostitute themselves when they seemingly have no other choice (Anthias, 2013). Without the possession of cultural or social capital, women ranging from exotic dancers to trafficked women struggle against economic, social, and sexual oppressions (Konstantopoulos et al., 2013). Women would not be compelled to sell sexual or erotic services if the political environment at the policy level afforded equal opportunities to gain social capital, thus increasing poor women's vulnerability to being preyed upon or trafficked. Proponents of the political economy perspective point to studies with disproportionate percentages of housing instability and poverty among youth who trade sex to survive, as well as the lack of economic options for girls and women who engage in prostitution (Farley et al., 2008; Miller et al., 2011; Valera, Sawyer, & Schiraldi, 2001; Van Leeuwen et al., 2004; Watson, 2011; Wilson & Butler, 2014).

Like critics of Marxism or radical feminism, criticisms of the political economy include the removal of a woman's choice to prostitute or trade sex (Weitzer, 2012). With this perspective, personal agency is removed entirely and replaced with structural and economic barriers to "appropriate" options of employment or money (Wolken, 2004). A woman's ability to choose is called into question.

Legal perspectives. Divided feminist and political theories of exploitation have practical consequences, namely the laws and legal frameworks by which individuals purchase, provide, and facilitate sex. Contrasting theoretical frameworks drive the debate with regard to the prohibition, decriminalization, or legalization of prostitution and commercial sex. Although one approach has been applied to the confines of United States law, the debate remains heated and ongoing.

Prohibitionist perspective. With the exception of parts of Nevada, the U.S. currently maintains a prohibitionist stance on prostitution, as anyone who participates in the promotion or participation of sexual activities for profit in the U.S. may be charged with prostitution and commercial vice (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). No distinction is made between those who buy, sell, or facilitate the selling of sex acts. Exceptions include cases that involve: (1) minors, in which any commercial sex act is illegal; and (2) adults, only when elements of force, fraud, or coercion are present.

Considering the complexity of perspectives on the concept of choice in prostitution, it is unsurprising that many would disagree with U.S. law. Some who support prohibition point to studies with high rates of homelessness, mental health trauma, and sexual/physical assault over the course of prostitution and indicate that most in prostitution do not freely consent; therefore legalization and decriminalization would not decrease its harm to women and girls (Farley et al., 2008). Others, including many of those in the sex positivist movement, argue that countries like the U.S. set a high standard or burden of proof for trafficking victims and criminalize other women who sell sex who also may be in need of services (Wolken, 2004). Pro-sex feminists, such as Carole Vance, argue that these standards are detrimental to women, as women are viewed and treated as criminals unless there is proof of force or coercion (Vance, 2011). It is important to understand the current national legal perspective in order to understand the proposed and much debated alternatives.

Decriminalization & legalization. Utilized to varying degrees across the world and in parts of Nevada, two alternative and controversial methods of legally addressing prostitution are continually proposed among legal and academic scholars. First, the decriminalization of prostitution is offered, which would remove criminal penalties for any prostitution-related activity (Hughes, 2005). There are a few different models in which this may apply. For example, in Sweden, the sellers of sex are decriminalized, however the buyers of sex, in addition to pimps and traffickers, are not. This contrasts greatly from the model in New Zealand in 2003, when all parties involved in the buying, selling, and facilitating of sex were decriminalized (Wyler & Siskin, 2010).

Equally (if not more) controversial, the second method to address prostitution in the law is the legalization of prostitution in its entirety. This model is currently utilized in New Zealand as well as the Netherlands, Australia, and other countries (Cho, Dreher, & Neumayer, 2013). As the name suggests, legalization of prostitution frees all those who participate in, sell, buy, or facilitate the selling of sex from criminal liability and responsibility. Thus, prostitution is redefined as a form of service work (Hughes, 2005). With this method, selling sex

may be regulated and taxed, contributing to national economies. Many who favor legalization argue that ability to apply labor standards will help women and provide them access to legalized health insurance or other benefits of the legalized working world (Sullivan, 2003). Two independent studies respectively reported that 44% and 57% of female prostitutes in their samples indicated that legalized prostitution would help them or keep them safer (Farley & Barkan, 2008; Valera et al., 2001); however, both of these studies concluded that this could be a result of the extensive rates of posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and other mental health issues.

Advocates of both legalization and decriminalization argue that these methods reduce the stigmatization of individuals who sell sex (Richards, 1979; Weitzer, 2012). Some former prostitutes and sex workers have also been influential in the promotion of legalization or decriminalization through writing and advocacy organizations (Russell & Garcia, 2014). One such example is the organization COYOTE, an acronym for "Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics." Founded by Margo St. James, a former sex worker convicted of prostitution, COYOTE is one of the major social organizations to challenge the prohibitionist stance on prostitution in favor of decriminalization (Jenness, 1990). The organization and other similar-minded advocates maintain that voluntary prostitution is a legitimate and chosen work and should be reflected in legal policy and practice as such. Other prominent advocates of decriminalizing and legalizing prostitution have argued that the morality of prohibitionist stances has no place in the law and may cause further harm to women (Richards, 1979; Wolken, 2004).

Criticisms of both decriminalization and legalization of prostitution or sex work are most often linked to one another. Critics claim that decriminalization is best understood as a transition or part of a legalization or abolition, but not as an endpoint itself (Hughes, 2005). Some claim that either decriminalization or legalization of prostitution would result in the normalization of commercial sex and thereby legitimize sexual demands of an employer in any field of his (or her) employees (Anderson, 2002). Although evidence has emerged globally indicating that legalized prostitution may increase human trafficking (Cho et al., 2013), this analysis has not been conducted on domestic trafficking in the U.S., where the dynamics

of prostitution and sexual exploitation differ from other parts of the world.

Scholar Melissa Farley (2004), as well as other advocates of both forms of prostitution, condemned New Zealand for their legislature decriminalizing and then legalizing prostitution. She summarized the arguments of many abolitionists, stating that: (1) harm to women is not decreased by legalization or decriminalization; (2) stigmatization and violence against women continue to affect women under legalized or decriminalized policies; and (3) the choice to prostitute oneself is made because of a lack of other economic options and exists as another form of oppression against women. These arguments repeatedly appear in the literature and in response to growing global changes to prostitution laws (Hughes, 2005; MacKinnon, 1982; Raphael & Shapiro, 2002, 2005).

The criticisms and support for legalization, decriminalization and prohibition of prostitution are ongoing and continually divisive in the field. The breadth with which these frameworks guide actions of policymakers, activists, and scholars is extensive, with no end in sight to the debates. Although the bulk of the theoretical work has been and continues to be executed at the macro level, other perspectives have emerged and contribute to the dialogue of sexual exploitation and sex work.

Micro Theories at the Individual Level

In sharp contrast to the wealth of scholarship with regard to macro level theoretical perspectives, as well as the contentious debates and divisions among them, there is a dearth of academic theories at the micro or individual and relationship level. An extensive search among books and articles regarding sexual exploitation, prostitution, survival sex, and sex trafficking resulted in the utilization of varying theoretical perspectives that may be grouped to describe either: (1) the victimization or the process into sexual exploitation or prostitution; or (2) the exit process of sexual exploitation or prostitution. Unlike macro theories in this area or micro theories of other fields, there is very little support, debate, or even progress in the literature. Instead, individual articles or scholars have hypothesized and applied one theoretical perspective without the replication of other studies or support from researchers. As

such, individual-level theoretical perspectives are reviewed here within the context of entry into and exit out of sexual exploitation and sex work.

Victimization and Entry Perspectives

While other studies address individual risk factors or common themes of recruitment and initiation experiences (Cobbina & Oselin, 2011; Kramer & Berg, 2003; Wilson & Butler, 2014), they are predominantly descriptive and not theoretical or process oriented. A comprehensive search provided very few studies which report the integration or even guided use of theory in understanding the pathway into sexual exploitation or sex work. Although the exceptions to this, four studies in all, are described here, it is important to note that no theory applied to entry into sexual exploitation or sex work was supported or described by more than one author or study.

First, Reid (2012) applied life course theory to victimization in sex trafficking, which suggests that the impact of any experience, including victimization in this case, is influenced by the person's life stage. Reid found that indicators of harmful informal social control processes during childhood and adolescence in particular were common, creating a desire for acceptance and love commonly exacerbating initial entrapment. The desire for a better life and love, in combination with curiosity about sex work and attraction to fast cash, resulted in a girl's entry into the sex industry.

In the second study, Gwadz and colleagues (Gwadz et al., 2009) were guided by the theory of social control, emphasizing the role of youths' bonds to conventional society as deterrents to delinquent or deviant behavior. Without these bonds, Gwadz and colleagues hypothesized a propensity for the initiation of homeless youth into trading sex. Their results showed that social control did play a role in homeless youths' initiation; however, other factors, such as benefits to street economy and barriers to formal economy, also contributed to the initiation.

Third, Whitbeck & Simons (1993) explored a social learning model of victimization in their study of homeless adolescents and adults. Adolescents in both the model and particular study were more likely to come from abusive family backgrounds and rely on deviant survival strategies such as

survival sex. As a result, they were more likely to face criminal justice consequences and experience increased victimization.

A fourth study used structural-choice theory of victimization (Tyler, Whitbeck, Hoyt, Cauce, & Whitbeck, 2004) to examine the context-specific effects of lifestyles and daily routines on the risk for victimization. Tyler and colleagues used this framework to interpret their study's observed association between survival sex and sexual victimization among homeless youth. The prevalent associations were a result of the choice afforded to them because of low income and lack of other survival options.

In addition to these individual studies, many descriptive studies of sexually exploited women and girls have showed high rates of substance abuse and addiction occurring before or as a result of sexual exploitation (Burnette et al., 2008; El-Bassel, Witte, Wada, Gilbert, & Wallace, 2001; Tyler, Gervais, & Davidson, 2013; Valera et al., 2001), yet theoretical underpinnings of addiction theory with particular regard to this population remain vastly underdeveloped. Differences in the addiction process and its influence on the pathway to sexual exploitation or sex work are documented descriptively but not explored theoretically; therefore, it is important to consider how they may relate to the process.

Addiction has been theoretically understood as a disease, a behavioral disorder, a cognitive disturbance, and/or an expression of, or way of coping with, internal and interpersonal conflict and trauma (West & Brown, 2013). However, the emerging theory of addiction has worked to combine several biological, neurological, and emotional aspects of these viewpoints. According to West and Brown (2013), addiction should be understood as a chronic condition involving a repeated powerful motivation to engage in a rewarding behavior, acquired as a result of engaging in that behavior, that has significant potential for unintended harm. The pathologies underlying addiction involve one of three types of abnormalities which either: (1) are independent of addiction, such as depression, anxiety, or impulsiveness; (2) stem from the addictive behavior, such as acquisition of a strongly entrenched habit or acquired drive; or (3) exist in a social or physical environment, such as presence of strong social or other pressures to engage

in activity. In other words, the theory of addiction may derive as a response to a mental health factor, an internal motivation, or a social environment.

While the theoretical component of addiction is not empirically tested in the sexual exploitation literature, use of substances and subsequent addiction is well documented, specifically among sexually exploited women (Clawson et al., 2009; Schauer, 2006). Many women and girls often begin using substances prior to their exploitation or become addicted to substances as a result of a pimp's influence or as a coping mechanism (Farley & Barkan, 2008; Miller et al., 2011). Only one study examined the differences in pathways to drug use and found that individuals who began trading sex in adulthood were more likely to use drugs before trading sex than juveniles, who were more likely to use drugs after trading sex (Martin, Hearst, & Widome, 2010). With the empirical support in the literature regarding substance use/abuse and sexual exploitation as a risk factor that precedes or follows initiation into exploitation, there is a distinct need to explore substance abuse theories and their impact on the pathway into sexual exploitation.

Exit Perspectives

Similar to the entry progression, the process by which women and girls exit sexual exploitation or sex work is equally complex and theoretically underdeveloped. Drawing from qualitative analysis and observations of a woman's exit from prostitution, a few studies propose models or stages to exiting prostitution and sexual exploitation (Baker, Dalla, & Williamson, 2010; Månsson & Hedin, 1999; Sanders, 2007; Williamson & Folaron, 2003). One theory of exiting prostitution is proposed as empirically testable (Cimino, 2012). Few theories exist that explain the exiting process and those that do exist are difficult to test quantitatively. This article applies the integrative model of behavioral prediction to examine intentions to exit prostitution through attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy beliefs that underlie a woman's intention to exit prostitution. Constructs unique to prostitution—agency and societal context—enhance the model. This theory may explain and predict an exit from street-level prostitution (Cimino, 2012),

yet no studies have done so to date.

The "Phases of the Lifestyle Model" (Williamson & Folaron, 2003) targets street-level prostitution only. This process involves phases of disillusionment with the lifestyle of prostitution after violence, drug addiction, arrests, and trauma and then exiting as a result of negative events and attitude changes. The second model, known as the "Breakaway Model" (Månsson & Hedin, 1999) includes an experiential tipping point of a negative experience, resulting in the contemplation of and attempt to exit. This model postulates that women are successful in staying away from prostitution with a change of social networks. Third, Sanders' "Typology of Transitions" (2007) identifies four transitions out of prostitution: (1) reactionary transition—women experience a life-changing event sparking their departure; (2) gradual transition—women begin to access formal support services slowly, starting their progress; (3) natural progression—women develop a natural or intrinsic desire to exit; and (4) yo-yoing—women drift in and out of prostitution, treatment centers, and the criminal justice system. Fourth, the "Integrative Model of Exiting" (Baker et al., 2010) draws on stages of change behavior, when the final exit occurs after numerous attempts are made, resulting in a change of identity, habits, and social networks.

Most recently, a predictive theory of intentions combined several theories to estimate the path to exiting (Cimino, 2012). This article applies the integrative model of behavioral prediction to examine intentions to exit prostitution through attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy beliefs that underlie a woman's intention to exit prostitution. This proposed but untested theory assumes that all behavior is under a person's choice in light of four elements: (1) the action (e.g., to exit); (2) the target (e.g., the woman); (3) the context (e.g., prostitution); and (4) the time period under which the behavior is to be observed (e.g., permanently). The surrounding attitudes, norms, the woman's self-efficacy and intentions, skill, and environment also contribute to her choice. This proposed theory targets voluntary exits only, and does not address any pimp or trafficker-related quandaries.

Relation between Micro and Macro Level Theories

All four studies addressing entry into trading or survival sex focus on victimization as a partial consequence of additional vulnerabilities, which seem to support the neo-abolitionist perspective at the macro level. Authors point to the studies' reduced options because of various adversities and traumas, ranging from family backgrounds and abuse to poverty and homelessness. Theories of addiction also play a role in impacting the course of sexual exploitation and any choices a woman or girl may have. These studies do not necessarily dispute that individuals trading sex had the choice to do so, but rather suggest that they may not have made the same choices without increased vulnerabilities from childhood or in their present situations.

Like entry perspectives, both exit models seem to side with the abolitionist perspective in that they describe many reasons why a woman would not be able to be able to fully make a decision on her own, free of any other factors. Sex positivists would suggest that these theoretical explanations for prostitution remove the possibility of full personal agency and that a woman could make her own choice to do sex work. Neo-abolitionists would argue that sex work is chosen only because of the complete lack of other options and therefore can never truly be described as a "choice." Even in these smaller studies, macro-level theoretical perspectives and the debate between the neo-abolitionists and the sex-positivists can certainly be found.

Conclusion

It is evident that the majority of the research and debate is centered in the macro and structural theories of causation and remains substantially underdeveloped in micro level theories at the individual and relationship level. The heated debates of various feminist perspectives have greatly influenced the divisions within the legal frameworks with which countries of the world are governed. Even with the extensive theoretical and legal writing at the macro level, the amount of empirically tested work remains limited. With the high levels of responses

from one legal or academic scholar to another, often in rebuttal or defense of his/her own particular framework (Farley, 2005; Raphael & Shapiro, 2005; Weitzer, 2012; Wolken, 2004), no clear consensus is likely to be reached any time soon. Micro level perspectives contribute to the understanding of entry and exit processes for women and girls in sexual exploitation or sex work, but contain very little outside empirical support. Regardless of the contrasting body of works between macro and micro level theories, theoretical advancements play an important role in understanding sexual exploitation and sex work among females as well as the policies, services, and interventions available to them in present day.

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Roles of Government and Community Support, Flood Experience, and Flood Education in Livelihood Resilience

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Flooding is a perennial problem in the state of Bihar, India with devastating impact on the livelihood of people. In spite of the government's measures of flood mitigation, households continue to live with suffering on account of severe damage to their material and non-material assets. In this background, the objectives of the study are: (1) to explore the differential role of the community and government support in livelihood resilience; (2) to assess the impact of flood experience and flood education in livelihood resilience; and (3) to explore the impact of level of education, reflected in average years of schooling of the male-headed households in livelihood resilience. The primary data were collected from 472 households by using a multi-stage random sampling technique over seven blocks in river basins of Ganga and Kosi in the district of Bhagalpur, Bihar. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling were used. The findings of the study show that prompt and spontaneous community action was more effective than government help. Flood experience also plays a crucial role in the revamping of livelihood. Flood education is not found to exist in the area; people learn the skills of survival during and after floods from their elders. Moreover, difference in

education among the male-headed households creates difference in the attitudes and awareness surrounding livelihood resilience.

Key words: Flood education, flood experience, livelihood resilience, community support, government support

The frequency of flooding in India is more than half of the total number of floods occurring in Asia in each decade (Parasuraman & Unnikrishnan, 2000). Bihar, situated in the Ganga river basin, is the foremost flood-prone state in the country. About 36 percent of its total population is affected by floods (Government of Bihar, Finance Department, 2011-2012). The population of the state is 64.25 million within a geographical area of 9.381 million hectares of which 6.88 million hectares of land is flood-prone and one million hectares were perpetually water-logged (Tenth five-year plan of the Government of India [2002-2007]). Thirty out of the thirty-eight districts of Bihar are seriously affected almost every second or third year by flood. Flood-related damage rose by 54 percent from ₹ 9.49 million in 1989-1990 to ₹ 5,147.8 million in 1998-1999, according to the Eleventh Finance Commission of Bihar (2000). In Bihar, 89 percent of the population lives in villages and depends on agriculture for their livelihood (Census of India, 2011). The industrial growth of the state is far below the national average, and thus, does not create adequate employment opportunities for the people. Most of the people in the state are unskilled, illiterate, and belong to the lower socio-economic strata of the society. Small and marginal farmers, landless labor, and petty traders dominate the rural economy of the state, which suffers from extreme poverty conditions. The labor participation of workers is mainly in the primary sector. Low levels of education have had strong negative implications for economic growth in Bihar (Chanda, 2011).

Slow growth, dependency on agriculture, regional disparity, and poverty are the main factors that prominently contribute to the vulnerability of households in the area. Flood occurrence further brings misery to the livelihood of households and aggravates their poverty and pauperism like "a person falling from a Palmyra palm tree, stung by a scorpion at the ground." Bhagalpur is one of the most severely flood-affected districts in Bihar, which had the worst experience of flooding in 2011, with

massive water coverage from two different sides. While water in the Ganga River was on rise from the southern side, the Kosi River was also flowing above the danger level from the northern side. The water had stayed in the area for more than three months causing large-scale devastation to life and property affecting more than 100,000 households. Hordes of villages were totally washed away and massive land erosion had taken place in several areas (Sarkar, 2011). In view of the flood severity, the entire sub-division of Naugachia (Bhagalpur) was put on red alert by the Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar.

The effects of damages to life and property caused by flooding were severe for several years, resulting in livelihood vulnerability of a large section of the rural populace. Sharma (1995), on the other hand, argues that despite the losses due to floods, a poor industrial sector and paucity of public infrastructure, "the state's backwardness is more related to the iniquitous and exploitative socioeconomic structure, lack of political leadership, and almost total collapse of administrative law and order machinery—to the point that it is said that in Bihar 'the state has withered away'" (p. 2587). Against this backdrop, the present study intends to examine the role(s) of community and government support, and households' flood experience, flood education, and level of education of male-headed households in livelihood resilience.

Literature Review

The role(s) of various agencies in livelihood resilience of the flood-affected households, and the factors that influence it, have been studied from different perspectives. Notable among them are the community and the government support which the affected households receive during or after floods, their experience of floods, flood education, and educational level of the male-headed households. The livelihood structure, which encompasses people's capabilities, assets, income and activities required to secure the necessities of life, is created after years of hard work by households. During floods, this structure is lost in no time, and its restoration takes longer than expected, depending on the pace and expediency of the relief assistance received from the external agencies (the government as well as

non-governmental organizations).

Flood effects have far-reaching implications on the livelihood of households, which is suddenly lost but which is felt for years (Comfort, Sungu, Johnson, & Dunn, 2001). Additionally, it severely affects natural capital (ruins agricultural land); physical capital (loss of housing, and tools); financial capital (loss of savings); human capital (loss of life, injury, and employment); and social capital of the households (damage to social networks) (Carney, 1998; Carney et al., 1999).

Resilience is derived from the Latin word 'reseller,' which means 'jump back' or 'bounce back' (Paton & Johnston, 2006). It refers to the adaptive capacity of individuals and the ability of a system that enables households to learn and self-organize, which form the core of the livelihood resilience, its structures and functions (Butler, Morland, & Leskin, 2007). Livelihood resilience refers to persistence of a system (Holling, 1973); survival and recovery (Rockefeller Foundation, 2009); self-organization (Ostrom, 2009); preparation and performance (Foster, 2006); stability and learning (Resilience Alliance, 2009; Carpenter, Walker, Anderies, & Abel, 2001); convergence (Nelson & Finan, 2009); adaptiveness of the affected households (Turner, 2010); and sustainability (Birkmann, & Wisner, 2006).

In livelihood resilience strategies, households shift to safe places (periodically move households to minimize exposure to risk, and reallocate family homes when risk of flooding is increased); pool resources (share assets, infrastructures, resources, wealth, labor, and knowledge); select species (suitable to local environment); ration (limit consumption in times of scarcity, use of home garden), and diversify livelihood resources (intensify and extend agriculture, tap natural resources, non-farm activities, and mixed cropping) for restoring livelihoods after floods (Gomez-Baggethun, Reyes-Garcia, Olsson, & Montes, 2012). However, it is the resilience of the households (Saavedra & Budd, 2009) that matters the most in livelihood management (Srivastava & Laurian, 2006), because of their key role in coping with and recovering from the shocks caused by floods (Bosher, Dainty, Carrillo, Glass, & Price, 2009), according to the sustainable livelihood framework (Glavovic, Scheyvens, & Overton, 2002).

Flood effects are not confined to individuals alone; rather they engulf the entire community, which necessitates synergized efforts for flood mitigation, as any group response to disaster effectively lessens its impact on livelihood resilience of the affected households. The community bond among its members strengthens the community's role for its knowledge of members' requirements and availability of local resources. The stronger the 'bonding ties' within the community, the quicker community resources are mobilized and information and knowledge is disseminated across groups with regard to rescue and restructuring of livelihood. The 'degree of centrality' (Cassidy & Barnes, 2012), i.e., direct connection between and among members of a community, facilitates social learning and enhances resilience. The indirect connection between different groups, on the other hand, acts as a bridge in groups' 'betweenness', promotes innovation, and fosters livelihood resilience (Bodin, Crona, & Ernstson, 2006).

The community with common ethnic lineage and similarity in living conditions develops a strong socio-economic network, which facilitates its members to collectively act in critical flood situations. The actual support provided by the community to individuals further embeds them into a web of social relationships reflected in forms of love, care, and other visible and invisible support much needed and looked for at the critical hours of flooding (Hobfoll, 1988). The received supports are emotional (expression of interest, assurance, affection, and closeness); informational (information with regard to understanding the situation and knowledge about doing something); and tangible (money, transport, shelter, tools and equipment, meals, groceries and taking care of children, pet or other belongings) (Kaniasty & Norris, 1992).

The community improves the adaptive capacity of households in their livelihood resilience after floods, according to the 'Bottom-up' approach, (Smit & Wandel, 2006). The social network and social capital (Adger, Huq, Brown, Conway, & Hulme, 2003) are the two pillars that maintain a community's oneness, togetherness, and cohesiveness and keep its members strongly tied with each other. In a social network, actors (persons or organizations) are viewed as 'nodes,' and the relationship between actors as 'ties' (Davies et al., 2013) which

construct the networked structure of the society (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

The role of social networks in sharing information and knowledge about natural resources is highlighted in several studies (Crona & Bodin, 2006). According to the theory of social network and social capital, while social networks bring households under one umbrella, social capital strengthens the relationship between individuals and neighbours (Dynes, 2005). The crucial and invaluable roles of social unity and support of neighbors, family, and kinship networks (Bosher et al., 2009) to households in their resilience efforts is well-established and acknowledged (Tse & Liew, 2004). Its nurturance, therefore, is of immense value and significance to households in their efforts to reconstruct livelihood (Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, & Pfefferbaum, 2008).

The role of social capital in the reconstruction of livelihood, on the other hand, goes beyond any measure or description (Cassidy & Barnes, 2012). Therefore, the community in a stand-by position (something or someone that is always ready to be used if they are needed) offers by far the most effective support that households receive at the time of flood occurrence.

While the community support is like the 'first-aid treatment' of a patient in the primary health center of a village, the government's assistance is the treatment by a specialist doctor in a speciality hospital. The role of government support—with its rescue machinery, trained personnel, law-enforcing establishment, and above all, strategic resources at its command—is very crucial in livelihood resilience of households. Without government support, livelihood of a large number of households may be seriously jeopardized (Anderson, Karar, & Farolfi, 2008). Any delay in intervention by the government may result in catastrophe. It may not only destroy the households' carefully preserved assets accumulated over the years of hard work, but it may also annihilate the entire population. The supports of the community and the government include emergency help, construction of a village grain bank, an awareness campaign, childcare, sharing shelter, and recreation of livelihood bases.

The government of Bihar initiated Kosi Reconstruction Rehabilitation Program covering a district based on a pilot

project implemented by ODR (Owner-driven Reconstruction) Collaborative, a network of organizations supporting the Government, and an owner-driven reconstruction policy was formulated to support each family with ₹ 55,000 to construct their own house. In agreement with the World Bank in January 2011, this program has been up-scaled to cover 100,000 families for reconstruction of hazard-safe houses. The cost per house will be ₹ 55,000, with an additional cost of ₹ 2,300 for a toilet and ₹ 5,000 for solar-powered lighting. In cases where beneficiaries do not own land, the Government of Bihar will provide additional assistance of ₹ 5000 for the people to buy the land. Towards this project, the World Bank has contributed ₹14517899000.00 (World Bank, 2014). The Government of Bihar has also collaborated with ODR Collaborative and UNDP to continue the social and technical facilitation and capacity building for this owner driven reconstruction program. Technical guidelines have been brought out to enable owners to build houses with various local materials, including bamboo. The rehabilitation work has been incredibly slow. Out of a total of 100,000 houses to be constructed by the government in the Kosi region, only 12,500 were erected by February 2014.

Thus, the role of the community and the government in reorganizing livelihood (Osbaahr, Twyman, Adger, & Thomas, 2010) and in enhancing the capability of households for livelihood resilience has become very crucial (Colten, Kates, & Laska, 2008). In spite of its important role, however, researchers have not adequately looked into livelihood resilience. Against this background, the hypothesis is formulated.

H1: The government and the community support would differentially influence households in livelihood resilience.

The households' experience of floods gained over the years is another crucial factor that provides them strategic advantage (Waller, 2001). Households with experience develop ways and means to minimize damage and devise livelihood strategies in view of their experience of and learning from flood occurrences. They learn to make optimal use of available resources according to their capability. Furthermore, the experience of

living with uncertainty and their knowledge of the social and physical environment not only helps households in learning to accept the inevitable, but also enables them to work out ways to minimize the adverse effects of flooding. Over the course of time, this socializes households, and generates enough strength in them to bravely withstand the unstable situation of livelihood being washed away (Tuohy & Stephens, 2012), according to the social constructionist theory (Loseke, 1999). Thus, knowledge and experience of disaster are of immense value to the affected households in their efforts to explore mitigation of flood effects (the theory of bounded rationality), and comes in handy to adapt suitable livelihood measures in accordance with availability of resources situational requirements (Tapsell, 2001).

Households with long experience of flooding become much more knowledgeable in comparison to those with no experience (Brilly & Polic, 2005). This further alerts and motivates them to remain ready with emergency preparedness to meet flood eventuality (Mileti, 1999). The social constructionists explain how, through their personal experience and interaction, households respond to disaster (Stallings, 1995). The elderly flood survivors with their experiences of flooding are better equipped to overcome flood problems in comparison to relatively inexperienced persons (Wilson, 2012). The social risk management (SRM) approach also emphasizes the advantages of risk experience and sensitivity in management of livelihood resources (Heltberg, Jorgensen, & Seigel, 2008). Households' degree of direct experience of floods (in terms of threat to life and property, sight of nearby villages being washed away, or narrowly escaping being washed away, death of relatives, or having witnessed or heard from someone about households being injured or dead, seeing fully or partially damaged houses, experiencing financial loss, and experiences of relocation and livelihood creation, etc.) all hold up to flood experience (Bland, O'Leary, Farinaro, Jossa, & Trevisan, 1996). Thus, experience and learning of floods, (Nelson & Finan, 2009) aside from the community and the government support, always provides courage and strength to households in overcoming flood crisis (Eriksen, Brown, & Kelly, 2005).

H2: Flood experience would positively affect households in livelihood resilience.

Education broadens households' understanding of the social and physical world around them, in general, while flood education creates awareness with regard to various issues related to flooding and its impact on livelihood resilience, in particular. Education increases households' capabilities and knowledge for marshalling political and economic advantages and aids in their rescue and livelihood resilience efforts (Srinivas, 1996). The knowledge and awareness of potential hazards keeps households ready with contingency plans to meet challenges arising from floods (Bauman, 1983). Flood-mitigating instructions (Asghari, 2004), awareness creation, and issuance of flood warnings all play crucial roles (Elliott et al., 2003) in mitigating flood impacts. Webber and Dufty (2008) identified 'preparedness conversion' (learning related to the preparations and commencing of flood); 'mitigation behaviors' (learning and putting into practice the appropriate actions to be taken before, during and after a flood); 'adaptive capability' (learning how to change and maintain adaptive systems (warning systems); 'community competencies' (to minimize flood impacts); and 'post-flood learning' (how to improve the preparedness level, mitigation behaviours and adaptive capability after the flood) as important outcomes of functional education.

The Life Skills Training program was initiated by the Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC), Government of Bihar (GoB), in collaboration with UNICEF for adolescent and young girls to be trained in essential life skills. Unfortunately, this has not been fruitful because the infrastructure of almost all existing schools were completely wiped out or damaged by the floods that swept large areas of the Indian state of Bihar (Unicef India, n.d.). A set of guidelines for disaster education (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2009) may be more useful to households as well as the government in their efforts to minimize flood impact. However, in most of the studies, flood education and its functions in building livelihood resilience are not adequately addressed.

H3: Flood education would positively affect households in livelihood resilience.

In addition to flood education, level of education reflected in average years of schooling of the male-headed households plays a significant role in the household's effort to achieve livelihood resilience. Households with elementary education are less likely to succeed in coping with floods and in exploring possible opportunities for income generation. On the other hand, improved education enhances a community's adaptive capabilities in making optimal use of the locally available resources in the changed scenario. It is further helpful in diversifying the income basis and in reducing dependency of the households on government support (Alderson, 2001). However, the relationship between level of education in terms of schooling of the male-headed households with regard to migration (Ananta, 2001), age (Cassidy & Barnes, 2012), and sex (female-headed household) (Ananta, 2001), though found in the literature, is not sufficiently taken into consideration in livelihood resilience.

H4: Differences in level of education would have differential impact on the male-headed households' in livelihood resilience.

These hypotheses are based on the gap which is found in the previous research studies, in which they were unexplored, and are based on exploratory guesswork.

Research Objectives

This research had three objectives: (1) To find out the role of the community and government support in livelihood resilience; (2) To assess the impact of flood experience and flood education in livelihood resilience; and (3) To explore the impact of level of education reflected in terms of schooling of the male-headed households in livelihood resilience.

Sample Areas

The study was conducted in the district of Bhagalpur,

Bihar. It has an area of 2570 sq. km., and the Ganga and Kosi rivers traverse through the district. The district has 16 blocks, 13 of which were most affected by flood.

At first, the severely affected blocks were identified based on information obtained from the Bihar Disaster Management department and after discussion with Block Development officers (BDOs). Then the villages were selected based on their size. The primary data were collected between September and December, 2011 from seven blocks of the district (i.e., Bihpur, Ismailpur, Gopalpur, Rangra Chowk, Kharik, Narayanpur and Naugachia). The head of each household was interviewed for 2-3 hours to ascertain their opinions. Before the data collection, a pilot study was conducted on a sample of 50 randomly drawn respondents from the seven blocks of the district. The responses were analyzed to test reliability and validity of the items. The final measurement scales and the design of the interview schedule were then confirmed. The data were collected from 504 households, 72 households from each of the seven blocks of the district, based on multipurpose random sampling. After eliminating the incomplete schedules, 472 were retained for further statistical analysis.

Measures

The scale was translated from English to Hindi. The survey was based on an interview schedule, therefore the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews to collect data. The following section details the measurement scales.

Community Support. A 5-item scale adapted from Patnaik and Narayanan (2010) was used to measure the community support. This has been measured on a scale of 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *always*. The community support is addressed through the following questions: "Do you share shelter with others?" "Do you lend agricultural tools and money to others?" "Do you share and provide help within households and support other households within the community after a flood?" "Do you share knowledge and information, warning of floods with others?" and "Do you get help from neighbors and relatives?"

Government Support. A 9-item scale has been used to measure government support (Patnaik & Narayanan, 2010). This has been measured on a scale of 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *always*.

The government support was addressed through following questions: "Do you get emergency help like fund or food from government after a flood?" "Do you get help from government in flood warning and mitigation from flood?" "Do you get help from government in income generation?" "Do you get help from government to rebuild public service?" "Do you get help from government for construction of a village grain bank?" "Do you get help from government for construction of dyke?" "Do you get help from disaster awareness campaign?" and "Do you get help from rescue team of government?"

Flood Experience (FLEX). Flood experience has been measured by using a 14-item scale derived from Tyler and Hoyt (2000) and Norris and Murrell (1998). This has been measured on a scale of 1 = *not exposed to flood* to 5 = *very severely exposed to flood*. The flood experience was dealt with through the following questions: 'Have you experienced exposure to flood other than this one?', 'Do you perceived threat to life?', 'Is there any loss of household property or crop loss?', 'Do you narrowly escaped from being washed away?', 'Do you see the nearby village being washed away?', 'Is there death of relatives in flood, witnessing being injured or dead?', 'Do you heard of someone in the town or village who was injured or died in flood?', 'Do your house damaged fully or partially?', 'Have you had to temporarily evacuate or move out of your home because of problems with water or flooding?', 'Did you get water in your home from the flooding?', 'Was there water on your property?', 'Were you temporarily or permanently out of work due to the flood?', 'Did you lose water service due to the flood?', 'Did you or other household members lost income due to the flood?'

Flood Education (FLED). A 6-item scale adapted from Dufty (2008) and Mishra and Suar (2005) and a report from Bihar Disaster Management Department was used to measure flood education. This has been measured on a scale of 1 = *not at all difficult* to 5 = *extremely difficult*. The following questions were used to address flood education: 'Do you have knowledge about what your state flood warning system is?', 'Do you know what measures to take after getting a flood warning?', 'Do you know what precautions to follow to avoid the risk?', 'Do you know the importance of trees in flood prevention?', 'Do you have knowledge about danger signals?', and 'Have you seen

the flood hazard zone map of the district or state?'

Livelihood Resilience (LVRS). A 15-item scale was developed from the following: the Household Questionnaire: Survey of Living Conditions in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (World Bank, 1997); Hahn, Riederer, and Foster (2009); District Household Survey (DHS) (2006); Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) (2006); Ellis (1998); Little, Smith, Cellarius, Coppock, and Barrett (2001); and Scoones (1998). This scale was used to measure livelihood resilience. This has been measured on a scale of 1 = *Not at all* to 5 = *Much more than usual*. Local households' strategy to recover was also obtained from participatory research using in-depth interviews with key informants.

Results

The demographic characteristics of the sample contain information regarding gender, age, years of residence, household type, and employment status. The respondents were comprised of mostly males (99%), with only four females in the sample of 472 respondents. The results indicate that the majority of the respondents (29%) were between the ages of 36 and 45 years. The respondents' length of residence in the area indicates that the majority of the respondents (49%) were residing in the area for more than 30 years. In terms of respondents' employment, 78 percent of the respondents work in agriculture and its related activities and 35 percent were landless labor.

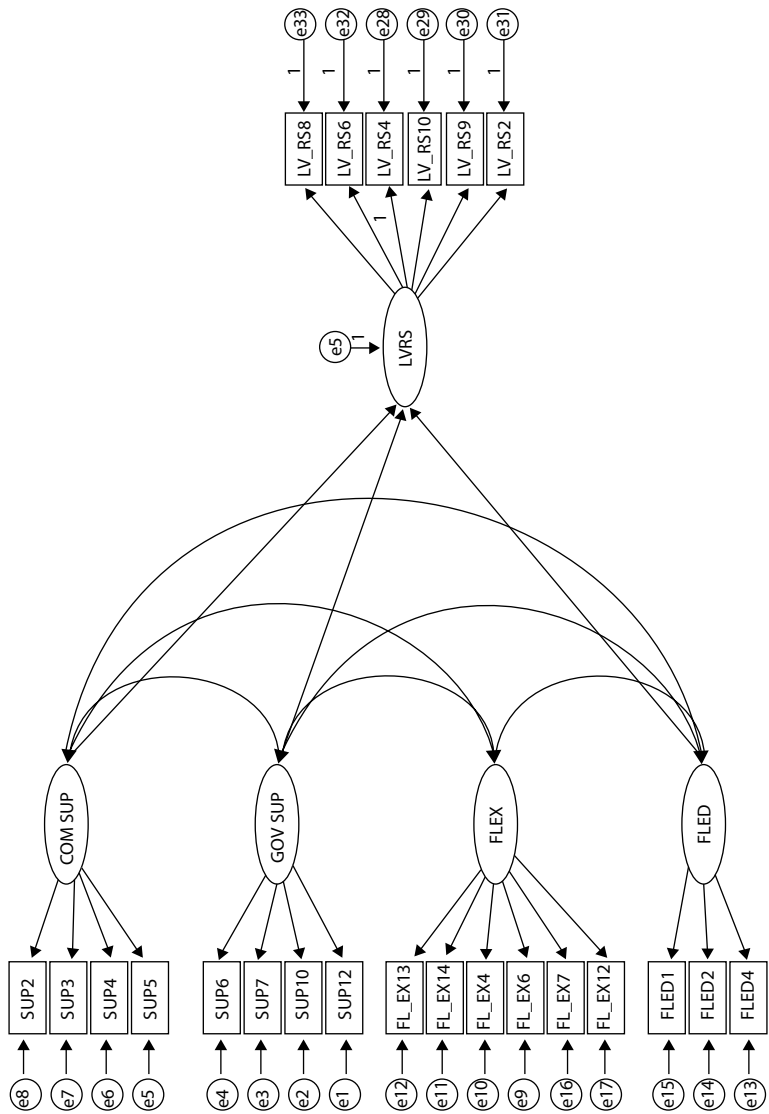
Preliminary Data Analysis

The preliminary data analysis, reliability estimation, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling were used to analyze and interpret the data. The descriptive statistics of the five constructs, i.e., community support, government support, flood experience, flood education, and livelihood resilience were also determined. The data were tested for skewness and kurtosis in terms of normality.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is an interdependent technique whose primary purpose is to define the underlying structure among

Figure 1. Revised Model



variables in the analysis (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Livelihood resilience was a self-made scale, which was based on the discussion from the households of the study area. Therefore, in order to determine how and up to what extent the indicators were linked to the construct (livelihood resilience) in different contexts, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) method was applied to the sample ($N = 472$). The sample was subjected to principal component analysis (PCA). Prior to performing PCA, suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of correlation coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of all the constructs exceeded the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970) and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). To achieve simpler and theoretically more meaningful factor solution, orthogonal approach with varimax factor rotation method was used, which attempted to minimize the number of variables that had high loading on each factor. The rotated solution revealed the presence of simple structure (Thurstone, 1947) with factors showing strong loadings. Thus, the loading of indicators on livelihood resilience was improved.

SEM Analysis

The data were analyzed descriptively using structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the theoretical framework of variables. The SEM was applied because it shows the sequential relationship between series of independent and dependent variables and control measurement errors like random and systematic error. SEM is a model analysis technique encompassing methods such as covariance structure analysis, latent variable analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, path analysis, and linear structural relation analysis (Hair et al., 1998).

The two components of SEM are measurement model and structural model. Before testing the hypothesis by using path analysis in structural model, the link between factors and their measured variable was analyzed (Byrne, 2001). The measurement model specifies the posited relationship of the observed indicators to the latent construct. The measurement model

was evaluated by using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). In the model, the exogenous latent variable was the community and the government support, flood education, and flood experience and endogenous variable was livelihood resilience. Therefore, before testing the overall measurement model, each construct in the model was evaluated separately for respecification of the model. The model respecification procedure was used to identify the source of misfit and generate a model that achieved a better fit to the data. The respecification of the measurement model was modified by examining the standardized residuals (value-greater than 4.0 were dropped), modification indices (value-approximately 4 or greater indicates that the model fit could be improved), and the standardized loading estimates value $> .05$ are acceptable (Hair et al., 2006). Each of the measures was examined together with the model fit indices to ascertain if respecification was needed. The model fit was examined using multiple indices such as chi-square test (χ^2 , value-the lower, the better), and the chi-square test by degree of freedom (χ^2/df , value < 3), goodness of fit index (GFI, value $> .90$), confirmatory fit index (CFI, value $> .95$ or $.90$), tucker-lewis index (TLI, value $> .95$ or $.90$), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA, value $> .06$ or $.08$). After modification of the fit indices, the final CFA model was improved. The revised measurement model fits the data well. Further, when each construct had shown an acceptable fit to the model, then all constructs were evaluated together.

In the overall measurement model, all the four latent constructs and its reflective indicators were allowed to correlate with each other. This model represents a form of CFA (Brown, 2006) designed to evaluate the extent to which the configuration of latent variables, as defined by their observed indicators, reproduce data reasonably well. The initial model of the current study ($\chi^2 = 2096.40$, $\chi^2/\text{df} = 4.095$, $p = .000$, RMSEA = $.08$; GFI = $.78$; TLI = $.78$; CFI = $.80$) did not yield an adequate model fit to the empirical data. Then the model was examined to check whether respecification was required (Hair et al., 1998). The measurement model was re-specified and re-evaluated after each modification.

Based on the above assumptions, the indicators were examined to find out potential model modification. Finally, item numbers LV_RS5, LV_RS15, and FL_EX8 were identified with

high standardized, residual covariance and were deleted from further analysis. After modifications, the fit indices of the corrected model improved and was deemed acceptable ($\chi^2 = 12227.3$, $\chi^2/\text{df} = 3.39$, $p = .00$, GFI = .94; TLI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07). Therefore, a more parsimonious model was prepared after eliminating the non-significant path systematically. The revised model was confirmed as well as accepted for further hypotheses testing.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses testing was carried out to test the model. The significance of the hypothesis path was determined. The nature and magnitude of the relationship between variables were according to the theoretical expectations. The fit indices indicate that the fit of the hypothesized SEM was acceptable. Results show that all fit indices indicate that the hypothesized model fits the data very well according to the criteria suggested by Carmines and McIver (1981), Hair and colleagues (1998), and Hu and Bentler (1995). Hence, the fit indices were $\chi^2 = 1723.83$, $\text{df} = 810$, $\chi^2/\text{df} = 2.56$, $p = .00$, SRMR = .05, TLI = .91, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .07; $p < .05$.

H1: The community and the government support would differentially influence households in livelihood resilience.

The two indicators of support, i.e., community and government support, were analyzed to find out which one was more influential in the livelihood resilience. The analysis shows the differential consequences of the community and government support in livelihood resilience: (a) the community support significantly accounted for variations in livelihood resilience ($\beta^1 = 1.528$, $p < .05$, c.r. = 2.60), whereas (b) the government support shows negative but significant influence on livelihood resilience ($\beta^2 = -.131$, $p < .01$, c.r. = -2.04). This means that both the community and the government support made significant contributions to livelihood resilience, but as government support showed a negative path (against expected direction), therefore H1 was supported. Thus, community support has a more significant role in livelihood resilience than the government support.

H2: Flood experience would positively help affected households in livelihood resilience.

Flood experience (FL_EX) (H1: $\beta^1 = .54$, c.r. = 6.8, $p < .000$), was significantly associated with livelihood resilience (LV_RS), and, thus, H2 was supported.

H3: Flood education would positively help affected households in livelihood resilience.

The relationship of flood education with livelihood resilience was not significant (FL_ED) (H3: $\beta^3 = .13$, c.r. = .89, $p < .037$). Thus, the H3 was refuted.

The relations between the hypothesized paths were generally significant and supported. Hence, hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported, while hypothesis 3 was refuted (Table 6). The study deals with the impact of support (community and government), flood experience, and education for livelihood resilience. The results show that all the exogenous variables except flood education were significantly related to livelihood resilience and support it. Therefore, the results of the hypothesized structural model reveal that the initial model did not fit the data well, and so it was not accepted ($\chi^2 = 1723.83$, $\chi^2/\text{df} = 2.56$, $p = .00$, GFI = .94, TLI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07; $p < .05$). The results indicate that the flood education did not show any influence on livelihood resilience. Therefore, to develop a parsimonious model the insignificant path was removed from the initial model ($\chi^2 = 1680.34$, $\chi^2/\text{df} = 2.26$, $p = .00$, GFI = .92; TLI = .91, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .06).

Education of the male-headed households and livelihood resilience

To find out differences in the level of education in terms of schooling of the male-headed households' in livelihood resilience, one-way of ANOVA method was used. It compares the variance between the groups with variability within the group. In order to conduct the analysis, level of education reflected in schooling of the male-headed households was divided into five groups according to the level of schooling (Group 1: no schooling, Group 2: lower primary, Group 3: high school, Group 4: higher secondary, Group 5: beyond higher secondary). Table 7

shows that the majority of the male-headed households have education up to high school.

A post-hoc comparison using Turkey HSD test indicates the difference in mean scores of Group 1 (M = 44.09, SD = 8.4); Group 2 (M = 48.5, SD = 7.9); Group 3 (M = 50.7, SD = 8.0); Group 4 (M = 52.8, SD = 8.4); and Group 5 (M = 50.4, SD = 7.3).

H4: Differences in level of education would have differential impact on the affected households' livelihood resilience.

The ANOVA result shows that there was a significant difference in the livelihood resilience at the $p < .05$ level for different category of schooling level of male-headed households ($F = 4,467 = 11.6, P = .00$). The result reveals that the male-headed households with high school education have the most influential role in livelihood resilience in comparison to others. The effect size calculated using eta squared was 0.05, which means that the impact of education on livelihood resilience was medium. The male-headed households with high school education were comparatively more disposed in adapting strategies for livelihood resilience. Therefore, with the increase in the level of education, the livelihood resilience can be strengthening. Thus, hypothesis 4 was supported.

Table 1: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Testable Hypotheses		Standardized Regression Estimate	Unstandardized Regression Estimate	S.E.	Critical Ratio	Results
H ₁	LVRS <— COMSUP	(β1) .288	1.528*	1.55	2.60	Supported
	LVRS <— GOVSUP	-0.72	-.131*	1.045	-2.04	
H ₂	LVRS <— FLEX	(β2) .48	.54*	.08	6.85	Supported
H ₃	LVRS <— FLED	(β3) .08	.13*	.15	8.91	Refuted

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Discussion

The role of both the community and the government support in livelihood resilience of flood-affected households is found to be significant, as the results reveal. However, the

role of the community support in comparison to the government is more significant, due to its stand-by position and swift action in critical hours of flooding. On the other hand, the government which controls all the rescue, relief, and rehabilitation resources, always arrives late, for its excessive 'politico-administrative' concern and reliance on its technocrats and bureaucrats. The community's instant action at the same time provides much needed and immediate relief to the households who run helter-skelter and find themselves placed in extremely helpless and distressed conditions. The community collectively makes efforts to check the spread of floodwater and land erosion by laying sandbags (Figure 2), building levees (Figure 3), and laying boulders to divert floodwater (Figure 4)., as well as working together to divert floodwaters (Figure 5).

Table 2. One-way ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	3035.300	4	758.825	11.676	.000
Within Groups	30349.480	467	64.988		
Total	33384.780	471			

Figure 2. Laying Sandbags to Check Spread of Floodwater



The results contradict the findings of the studies by Terpstra and Gutteling (2008), and Botzen, Aerts, and van den Bergh (2009) which found that the government is solely accountable for households' rescue, safety, and rehabilitation. The community support at the critical time of flooding is found to be

crucial in several respects. Its immediate involvement proves much more valuable, for it provides significant breathing room to households at the critical hours of flooding, compared to the support households receive from the government much later. Additionally, the government relief is often found to be far less than what households need in actuality.

Figure 3. Building Levees to Prevent Floodwater



Households in such a condition are left with no option other than to fall back on their traditional measures and utilize their indigenous knowledge in creating temporary shelter at safer places, i.e., bund (Narkatia dam in Kharik block), railway tracks (Narayanpur and Isamilpur blocks), and state highways. Households also create temporary shelters from plastics (Figure 6).

Figure 4. Laying of Boulders to Check Water and Land Erosion



They are further asked to sign on the dotted lines in the record book, and always given less than what is mentioned in the record book, be it food grains, oil, medicines, sugar, other materials, or even cash. In addition, the surveyors' team

(comprising government officials, NGOs, local politicians, and local important persons) constituted by the government and entrusted with the responsibility of enlisting the names of the affected households and assessing their requirements, often include the names of their friends, relatives, and locally active persons (politically or otherwise). Names of officials' and politicians' recommendees are given exaggerated assessments of their requirements. As a result, the relief assistance does not reach the genuinely needy households. It is often siphoned-off by the vested interest groups. The result is consistent with the studies (Pahl-Wostl, Mostert, & Tabara, 2008; Fatti & Patel, 2013) which had similar findings.

Figure 5. Households Working Together to Divert Floodwater



Figure 6. Flood Victims Creating Temporary Shelters



When households are in deep trouble and relief does not reach them, they resort to peaceful mass demonstration in protest, including blockade of the national highway 80, which passes through the area. Then the government steps into action when the danger has already passed. Surprisingly, government moves into the areas only after crisis has deepened

and damages have been caused. This results in an increase in waste and misappropriation of relief assistance, avoidable loss of life and property, and bitter experience of life and the government among people. Absence of regular maintenance of structural measures adopted to control flooding is a serious problem households face in the areas investigated. Even the embankments made on the Ganga River as early as 1952 are not found to be effective, for want of regular maintenance. Wherever they have been made, they are found to be in dilapidated condition, without exception. The main reason for the failure and ineffectiveness of the government measures lies in its excessive 'politico-administrative concern' and reliance on its bureaucracy and technocracy, as well as not involving the households who possess very crucial and tactical experience and indigenous knowledge with regard to meeting flood challenges.

The popular measures affected households adapt to livelihood resilience are transfer of money, and sale of livestock and other belongings and other valuables, including ornaments, as well as migration and diversification of livelihood activities, as the findings of the study reveal. Money transfer enables households to overcome financial loss. The money received from the sale of livestock is used to maintain daily expenditures and to rebuild livelihood bases. Mutual borrowing among neighbors, friends, and relatives is commonly practiced, both in kind as well as in cash. Rosenzweig and Wolpin (1993) report similar findings in their study. At critical times, households also take loans from private moneylenders on interest.

The pooling of resources, working as wage labor, money received, and knowledge of households protect them. The findings of the study are consistent with studies (Berke, Cooper, Salvesen, Spurlock, & Rausch, 2011; Burke & Lobell, 2010) which found that all options of farm management practices, including rescheduling of cropping pattern, and sowing schedule, expanding the area of cultivation, and increasing irrigation for livelihood resilience, are explored in the flooding condition. The study is also consistent with the study (Armah et al., 2010) which found that households move to other areas in search of livelihoods. The adverse circumstances created by flooding push rural people to migrate with the help of their community network, friends and relatives.

The strength of the community is firmly rooted in its social network and social capital, which help and offer unqualified support to each other, disseminate information quickly and keep the community together. This is reflected in the collective efforts of the community with regard to its livelihood resilience in the flooding situation. The mutual trust, support, and common interest between and within the community further facilitate households to collectively find ways and means to overcome flooding and assist each other in the critical hours of flooding. The community helps their fellow village men in several ways. It helps the affected households in transportation of life and property both. The results are similar to the results of the study by Patterson, Weil and Patel (2010) which highlighted the importance of the community role during and after Hurricane Katrina in helping and supporting each other for their survival and recovery. Mutual exchange of essentials of life freely takes place in the community of the affected households. Even cooked food is offered to children, seniors, and needy members of the households. A unique camaraderie is observed in flooding among households keeping aside their disputes and differences. The whole community is found to act like a complete cohesive unit. A 'Flood Defense Group' is found to be constituted with mandatory involvement of all the affected households to closely watch the pace and gravity of land erosion. The findings of the study are in line with the studies by Haines, Hurlbert, and Beggs (1996) with regard to the significant roles of social networks and social capital in coping with flooding.

Experience and knowledge of flooding advantage households in their efforts to reorganize their livelihoods. The study is consistent with the findings of Burke and Lobell (2010) and Gomez-Baggethun (2012), that experience increases the adaptive ability of households in flood mitigation measures, like on-farm adoption of management practices which include re-scheduling cropping timings, adapting suitable crops, expanding the area of production, increasing irrigation coverage, and tapping of natural resources to cope with flood. Households diversify their livelihood by exploring income opportunities in non-farm sectors, like working as daily wage laborers, pulling

rickshaws, seasonal migration, and sale of vegetables or fruits, to restore livelihoods. Level of education of the male-headed households provides them an edge over other households, as it is found that households with high school level education are more flexible in adapting resilience measures than households with elementary education, which is important in livelihood resilience. However, the capacity of households determines the pace of their adaptation of resilience measures in view of existing as well as emerging ground realities. Furthermore, flood education may bring in attitudinal change in households as well as creating awareness and flexibility in livelihood resilience.

Conclusions

Flooding not only dismantles the livelihood structure of households, but also brings in several other problems, which make living conditions extremely challenging. The findings of the study highlight the crucial role of support households receive from the community and the government during floods in their livelihood resilience. While the role of the community is significant for its spontaneous action, the role of the government support is equally crucial, for its control over rescue and rehabilitation resources. However, the role of community support is found to be more significant, for its instantaneous involvement at the critical hours of flooding, whereas the government support, though very important, invaluable arrives late. Additionally, it is often far short of households' requirements and does not reach needy households. The significance of community support is further reiterated, for its 'always ready to act' position. At the critical moment of flooding, the community instantly comes forward with its limited resources to act before the arrival of other rescue agencies, including the government. The role of community support is further vital for its knowledge of local resources and requirements of the affected households. Knowledge and experience of households accumulated over the years from their frequent exposure to floods enables them to devise ways and means to achieve livelihood resilience. Dissemination of information with regard to potential options of livelihood can help households in

overcoming flood impacts. If the community is equipped with all the basic rescue and relief materials and is given essential training in rescue operations by the government, this will go a long way in saving the affected households from immediate collapse.

Flood experience of households and their knowledge work as strategic inputs in their livelihood resilience. Flood experience acquired from their frequent exposure is the most effective and powerful weapon which households use advantageously to fight against flood vagaries. They use it as a strategic resource input in their livelihood resilience. Dealing with flooding is a process of continuous learning, which creates confidence in households and enables them to adapt measures to meet any flood eventuality. As a result, they do not perceive floods as a threat because of their experience and knowledge and their confidence in finding ways to overcome them.

Although flood education is not found to exist formally, younger persons informally learn from the experience of senior persons about the preventive measures which are likely to be effective in coping with floods. Wide discussion takes place among the households and in the community with regard to proactive measures to control and mitigate flooding. The study also identifies the significance of level of education in terms of schooling of the male-headed households in livelihood resilience. The high level of education leads to positive linkage between households and livelihood diversification.

Limitations

The study emphasizes the difference between government and community support in livelihood resilience, but it did not focus on the role of non-government organizations and voluntary agencies. Furthermore, the study did not apply comparative and cross-cultural approaches to explore differences in livelihood resilience methods adapted by households in other active flood zones. The study also did not emphasize difference in households based on social characteristics like caste and ethnicity, which can influence livelihood resilience.

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Separation, Visitation and Reunification: Michigan Child Welfare Reform and Its Implications for Siblings

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Removal of children from abusive or neglectful families is an unfortunate but necessary aspect of child protective services, and the separation of siblings can be especially traumatic. This paper examines the Dwayne B. v. Snyder Modified Settlement Agreement (MSA), the result of a class action lawsuit regarding the management of the child welfare foster care system by the Michigan Department of Human Services. The MSA contains several mandates regarding the handling of siblings, though various measures of compliance remain unmet. Through field observations and interviews within the Michigan foster care system, we identify several factors prohibiting effective sibling care.

Key words: foster care, child protective services, siblings, class action, settlement agreement, MSA

Each year over 200,000 children enter foster care in the United States, most often upon the intervention of child protective services [CPS] who become involved in children's lives when allegations of abuse and neglect are confirmed (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012). While such intervention may be necessary, state interference in child-victims' lives is often traumatic as well. Allowing (non-offending) siblings regular and quality contact with one another, and where possible placing them in the same foster home, may mitigate the effects of CPS involvement. Unfortunately a host of factors impact sibling interaction and out-of-home placement.

This article examines sibling contact and placement within the child protective arena, focusing on the foster care system in Michigan which has come under scrutiny as a result of a 2009 class-action lawsuit against the State's Department of Human Services [DHS]. Our findings are based on observations of the child welfare system, interviews with child protective workers, and review of the *Dwayne B. v. Snyder Modified Settlement Agreement* (2011) (hereafter referred to as the "Modified Settlement Agreement" or "MSA") to which the State must submit periodic (and publicly accessible) progress reports. We examine professional assessments of sibling contact and placement within the foster care system, highlighting various factors, considerations and institutional barriers that limit them. We specifically emphasize aspects of foster care sibling contact and placement that contrast best practices in the area of child welfare, and appear discordant to the MSA's stipulations, such as they exist.

This inquiry arose from the first author's experience as a child welfare worker in the State of Michigan for three and a half years. As part of a hiring surge prompted by the MSA in 2011, she worked in a larger metropolitan area as well as a more rural, sparsely populated area and served as a CPS case-worker as well as a foster care worker. As such, she has had consistent first-hand experiences with the compliance efforts of the state with regard to the MSA. Further external observations of Michigan's compliance with the MSA are offered by the second author, whose university-based teaching and community work have revolved around child maltreatment since the inception of the MSA. These activities have provided her regular access to child welfare workers throughout all aspects of the system, from employees of DHS to those working alongside it (guardians ad litem, court-appointed special advocates [CASAs], family court prosecutors and their victim-witness coordinators, law enforcement, medical professionals, treatment providers, and school administrators).

Our observations are supported by eight in-depth interviews conducted by the first author in the summer of 2013, two years after the MSA's implementation, and four interviews conducted by the second author in 2014. Interviewees included individuals in southern Michigan who work directly with children in the foster care system (within or outside of

DHS). (Requisite DHS and university human subjects review board approval was obtained.) They included foster care workers, case aids (who supervise sibling visits), foster care supervisors, counselors, and trauma assessment professionals; some had held more than one of these positions. Their experience ranged from 1 to 30 years, and all had at least a Bachelor's degree. Each had been involved in decisions on where to place siblings and had overseen sibling separations and visitation since the establishment of the MSA.

Siblings and Foster Care

There is little consensus on how often siblings are separated in foster care. Estimates range from 14% (Linares, Li, Shrout, Pettit, & Brody, 2007) to as high as 80% (Hegar & Rosenthal, 2011), however most research suggests that siblings are separated from one another in 30-60% of cases (Leathers, 2005; Shlonsky, Webster, & Needell, 2008; Staff & Fein, 1992; Tarren-Sweeny & Hazell, 2005). Though most child protective service agencies require children to be placed with their siblings, various factors inhibit this in practice. Younger children are generally placed with their siblings more often than older children, and children who are close in age are more likely to be placed together than children with a large age gap (Boer & Speiring, 1991; Drapeau, Simard, Beaudry, & Charbonneau, 2000; Linares et al., 2007; Shlonsky, Bellamy, Elkins, & Ashare, 2005; Staff & Fein, 1992). Children who have more siblings are also more likely to be separated from at least one of them because it is difficult to find placements for large sibling groups (Drapeau et al., 2000; Hegar, 2005; Herrick & Piccus, 2005; Leathers, 2005; Shlonsky et al., 2005). Special needs or behavioral problems may also lead to separation for safety or programming purposes (Boer & Speiring, 1991; Hegar, 2005; Leathers, 2005; Shlonsky et al., 2005). The same is true in cases where abuse has occurred between siblings (Leathers, 2005; Whelan, 2003). Finally, step or half siblings may be separated from one another due to the common practice of prioritizing familial placements over non-familial placements. Children who are removed from a parent they biologically share may be split when they are placed with a parent or other relative they do not have in common (Church, 2013).

Scant research also exists on the importance of sibling relationships during foster care, however it is generally believed that separated siblings desire and benefit from contact with one another. Children who have quality access to their siblings seem to feel closer to their foster parents (Hegar & Rosenthal, 2011; Leathers, 2005), experience greater stability in their placements (Leathers, 2005; Staff & Fein, 1992), and feel more emotionally supported by their siblings (Boer & Speiring, 1991; Drapeau et al., 2000; Whelan, 2003). Unfortunately, high case-loads impede sibling visitation, since the responsibility of coordinating, transporting and supervising such visits often falls upon foster care caseworkers. Additionally, foster care parents are sometimes uncooperative in such arrangements if they believe them to be disruptive to the children under their care or otherwise cause undue burden to their already stretched time and monetary resources. Currently Michigan requires children in foster care to have at least one visit with their siblings per month (Michigan Department of Human Services, 2013). While this may not seem adequate, such a requirement is relatively new—a product of the 2011 MSA.

MSA in Michigan: Litigation and Reform

On August 8, 2006 the child advocacy group, Children's Rights, filed a class-action suit against the State of Michigan alleging that the state-run foster care system was denying children basic rights and putting them in danger by providing inadequate case management services. Specifically, the complaint outlined the problematic treatment of the named plaintiff, Dwayne B., who lingered in foster care for over a year. Upon a brief and failed reunification with his mother, the child suffered constant placement instability, a lack of mental, physical and educational services, as well as abuse within several foster care homes. He was also prescribed several psychotropic medications without adequate oversight and had no permanency plan. His caseworker rarely had contact with him, and many of his various foster parents were not given adequate monetary support. The complaint described similar concerns for five other plaintiffs: Carmen, Lisa, Julia, Simon, and Courtney. The complaint also cited a 2005 report where a foster child in Battle Creek (southwestern Michigan) became

pregnant twice by her biological father during unsupervised visits, as well as a case where a foster parent in Wayne County (Detroit) beat a four-year-old foster child to death in 2003 (*Dwayne B. v. Granholm*, 2006).

Many of the allegations in the initial complaint spoke specifically to DHS's mismanagement of sibling relationships. Dwayne was separated from his siblings and not offered visits with them despite his close relationship with a brother. Similarly, Julia, Courtney and Simon (sibling set) had no visitations for two years while in foster care. In Lisa's case, DHS mishandled sibling visitations in a much different manner. Lisa had been placed with two of her brothers, despite her history of having sexual intercourse with another brother. During her placement she had sexual intercourse with yet another (younger) brother with whom she was placed. DHS responded to this by separating the two, but allowed Lisa to continue to have unsupervised visits with this brother, and she reportedly had sexual relations with him on at least one other visit.

Most of the information listed in the complaint appears to be obtained from media accounts, plaintiff interviews, a 2002 performance review conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, reports from the Office of Children Ombudsman and the Foster Care Review Board, and the state's budget. After the complaint was filed, Children's Research Center (2008) conducted a study of 530 randomly sampled foster care cases with the purpose of confirming or denying the allegations against DHS. The results supported concerns expressed in the initial complaint, including inadequate oversight and execution of the adoption process, untimely termination of parental rights, and several placement changes. Specifically regarding siblings, the study found that only 38% of children were placed with their siblings throughout their entire stay in foster care. Only 64% percent of cases with siblings in separate placements had the proper documentation on file for the separation. Moreover, no sibling visits took place on approximately 31% of cases.

After much litigation, the plaintiffs signed an initial Settlement Agreement with then-governor Jennifer Granholm in July 2008, outlining reforms that were to be made to address the concerns filed in the suit (Public Catalyst Group, 2008). In

December 2010, the plaintiffs notified the court of the lackluster progress DHS was making based on the findings of a third monitoring report. The court allowed Rick Snyder, who was governor at that time, to make changes to the Settlement Agreement that his administration felt would facilitate compliance, and the new settlement (MSA) was finalized in 2011 (Public Catalyst Group, 2012). Under the MSA, the State of Michigan agreed to extensive reforms, several of which had implications for siblings in foster care. DHS was expected to present a plan to increase recruitment and licensing of foster homes that were amenable to large sibling groups by June 30, 2012. Additionally, children who were not placed with their siblings were expected to have monthly visits with them. DHS was expected to be in full compliance with this commitment by October 1, 2011. Further, 90% of foster care workers statewide were to have caseloads not exceeding 15 children, so as to facilitate such contacts, by September 30, 2012.

The MSA also set minimum initial training requirements as well as annual training requirements for caseworkers. Training topics included discussion of DHS's policies regarding siblings. Finally, the MSA required that a new data collection system, entitled "Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System" [SACWIS], be fully implemented by October 2013 so as to more readily track cases (*Dwayne B. v. Snyder*, 2011). As will be discussed, several of these components of the MSA remain unfulfilled.

Issues of Reform

Civil litigation and subsequent court supervision of state-run child welfare systems is common; so too are modifications to initial settlement agreements (Alvarez, 2011; Schoor, 2000). Indeed, the majority of states have encountered such litigation over the past twenty years, most often resulting in settlement agreements (and modified settlement agreements) that include stipulations for improvement and oversight within specified time frames (Kosanovich, Joseph, & Hasbargen, 2005). Children's Rights is but one of several entities that have long been involved in such reform efforts across the United States. The premise of such efforts seems to be to force

much-needed change upon state-run systems, but to do so in an ongoing, somewhat collaborative way. Common elements of these agreements are: (1) reducing caseloads (usually through increased hiring of front-line staff); (2) training and workplace support for these staff; (3) increasing non-institutional placement options for children; and (4) updating antiquated data management systems (Alvarez, 2011), all of which were part Michigan's MSA.

However, several problems have been noted with such broad-scale reform efforts, including worker dissatisfaction with and difficulty acclimating to changes (Schwartz, 2011). There are additional concerns that smaller offices and private agencies tend to have more difficulty implementing reforms, and when they are already stretched for resources, this negatively impacts the families with whom they work (Daugherty-Bailey, 2009). This may be exacerbated by the heightened administrative oversight required within such reform efforts (regardless of how merited they may be), since the agencies under question, which are already bound by statutory regulation, are then additionally bound by litigation. Thus, they are scrutinized by both the legislature and the courts (Alvarez, 2011; Sandler & Schoenbrod, 2004). Such scenarios risk pitting existing state administrators against the court-appointed representatives charged with overseeing change. If the two entities do not see eye-to-eye on what needs to be done in order to comply with court orders, an adversarial environment is likely to arise that wastes precious time and resources that could otherwise be dedicated to the care of children (Alvarez, 2011; Farrow, 2008). Indeed, litigious-based reforms to child welfare systems could be more damaging than helpful to the children they are meant to serve (Mizrahi, Lopez-Humphreys, & Torres, 2009).

Even with cooperative parties, court-involved reform is an expensive and timely process with no guarantee of eventual success (Kosanovich et al., 2005). The underlying issues of an ineffective child protective system are often more complicated than indicated in a settlement agreement. Such documents are typically direct and specific, with measurable benchmarks for compliance—they often read as checklists with simple "yes" and "no" responses for various compliance reports. Such

structures ignore larger, more complicated and controversial concerns about the nature and quality of child protective work. Consequently, front-line staff and supervisors are encouraged to focus on the requisite paperwork and data collection schemes rather than think more broadly about the quality of their day-to-day work with families. In the case of non-compliance, a plaintiff's only real recourse is to return to court (Alvarez, 2011). However, court-based reform has been the primary means through which to force widespread reorganization and resource dedication to otherwise fledgling child welfare systems. Without it, many state systems and the children they serve would be in much greater dire straits. Well-publicized litigation can draw public sentiment to the plight of needy children and force political action toward redirecting funds to foster care and the like.

Placement

Of foremost concern in Michigan are out-of-home arrangements for children brought into the child protective system. Requirements that impact siblings in foster care, such as the licensure of foster homes that will accept siblings groups, were not met by the stipulated deadline (June 30, 2012). Recent reports indicate that DHS "did not produce data on the development of homes for siblings" and "advised the monitoring team that there is a lack of foster homes for sibling groups" (Public Catalyst Group, 2014, p. 45). In a recent press release, Children's Rights (2014) notes that "DHS has some major challenges to overcome if it is to fulfill its commitments to kids in foster care." While compliance with the MSA should have largely occurred by the date of this writing, DHS continues to receive additional time to meet its obligations. As Children's Rights counsel Sara Bartosz, notes, "We've met with DHS management about our concerns, and are confident that agency leaders are focusing on the challenges. We are looking forward to the day when Michigan's foster care system becomes the safe haven that kids deserve." (need para #)

DHS was also expected to present a plan outlining how it intended to recruit more foster homes for sibling groups in the state's 14 largest counties and set goals and deadlines as markers of progress on this stipulation. However, they failed

to produce such a report. Dan, a foster care case manager, commends his local licensing department and highlights the need for this ongoing requirement:

They find a lot of good families that are willing to take kids, even if their needs are different, and work with them no matter what and give effort not to split them up and cause further trauma for them.

Statewide, it appears that more effort needs to be put towards meeting this goal. When children are placed with relative caregivers, rather than in a licensed foster home or a residential placement, they are more likely to be placed with their siblings (Shlonsky et al., 2008). In the event that children do have to be separated, child welfare professionals note that the effects of sibling splits are not as traumatic for children who were placed with family members as opposed to strangers (non-relative foster homes). Additionally, children who are placed with relatives experience greater physical and emotional stability (Inglehart, 2004). As Meghan, a foster care case manager, explains:

I think that the kids feel safer generally with relatives. When you're moving a child and you're placing them in a home where they're comfortable, it makes it a little bit easier. And in a lot of cases with relative caregivers, I've found that children were already living there and have spent a lot of their life there so it's not as hard. Whereas with the licensed home, they're uprooted from everything they know and sometimes they're separated from their siblings. They don't know where they're at and they get confused and don't feel safe.

However, the MSA restricted DHS's ability to place children in relative homes because of past cases where relative placements were found unsuitable or unsafe. Prior to the MSA, 90% of relative placements were unlicensed and these relatives did not receive the same financial support or access to services as licensed caregivers. They were also not monitored or expected to meet the same safety standards as licensed placements. While DHS still routinely grants placement of children to relatives prior to licensure, usually on an emergency basis

(upon removal from the home of origin), this arrangement has the potential to put financial strain on relatives and allow them little time to prepare. DHS continues to face criticism by Children's Rights on this front because "the number of kids in unlicensed relative foster homes remains far too high." The group insists that "kids deserve the same supports—like foster care maintenance payments—as those in non-relative foster homes" (Public Catalyst Group, 2014).

Theoretically it would be preferable to place every foster child in a home that meets all licensing requirements. However, the guidelines listed in the MSA make it difficult to place children with relatives. Licensing by the State of Michigan Bureau of Child and Adult Licensure (BCAL) is now required prior to provision of financial support. Relatives may go as long as six months without receiving any sort of financial support for children placed in their care (if not immediately referred to a licensing agency and upon the process taking the full allotted time of 180 days as outlined in the MSA) (Public Catalyst Group, 2014). To put this in perspective, the basic daily rate of monetary support for children in foster care is \$17.24, but can be as high as \$50.00 based on the needs of the child. Additionally, licensed foster care providers can receive up to \$500 (depending on the age and needs of the child) for clothing when the child is first placed in their home, as well as between \$214 and \$244 annually thereafter (Michigan Department of Human Services, 2014). While modest, such financial support is often critical for the families providing care to children. Furthermore, if DHS refrains from placing children in relative homes until they are licensed, those children could spend up to six months in a non-relative placement, at which point they may already be bonded to their current caregivers (Dyer, 2004; Whiteman, McHale, & Soli, 2011).

Similarly, the MSA requires that fictive kin placements—"homes where the caregivers have a pre-existing relationship with the child entering placement, although they are not technically a relative" (Public Catalyst Group, 2014, p. 33)—also must be fully licensed prior to placement. This requirement, combined with the preference for placing children with biological parents or family members, often leads to the separation of siblings. Kelli, a DHS caseworker who works specifically with teenagers aging out of the foster care system, describes a

situation in which caregivers were willing to care for a sibling group of four, although they were biological grandparents to two of the children and only fictive kin to the other two:

I got a case that had four siblings. The grandparents had basically cared for the four kids more than anybody in the family, but when it came to the kids being removed and legally placed there through the courts, there were several fathers involved that were not supportive, even though the children were old enough to say that they desired to live there. DHS placed the children with their legal fathers because it was the most family-like setting per policy, but for the children it should have been with the grandparents. The worker did try to make those arrangements, and two of the kids were able to stay with the grandparents, but they all should have.

Under the MSA, DHS is required to gather information on several aspects of sibling placement and visitation and present it to the monitoring team. Data describing the number of siblings separated in foster care, number of separated siblings having monthly visits, and efforts to recruit placements that could accommodate large groups of siblings were to be included in these reports. DHS agreed to show compliance in these areas by October of 2011. However, as of March 2014, it had not provided any data regarding siblings (Public Catalyst Group, 2014). DHS claimed that it could not provide the information because their data management system was unable to tabulate the requisite figures. The agency claimed that such data would be available once the new (required) management system was fully functional (Public Catalyst Group, 2014). However, the MSA clearly stated that "[u]ntil the full implementation of the statewide automated child welfare information system (SACWIS), DHS shall generate from automated systems and other data collection methods accurate and timely data reports and information regarding the requirements and outcome measures set forth in this Agreement" (Author?, 2011, p. 49). By their own admission, DHS was negligent in maintaining data on siblings. As of the most recent monitoring report, issued in April of 2015, DHS was able to provide data on these measures of sibling well-being, although they were non-compliant with the mandates for each measure (Public Catalyst Group, 2015).

Data and Case Management

As noted, part of the effort to more readily track foster care cases required that SACWIS be fully implemented by October 2013. The same system has been employed in other states and is a popular data management tool (Alvarez, 2011). However, SACWIS went live in April 2014, with several technological and bureaucratic issues plaguing it throughout the next few months. Holly, a DHS supervisor, lamented that the system seemed to have been launched prematurely before all the "glitches were ironed out" just to "save face since DHS was already six months late with it."

Mass training was conducted with DHS employees, however it occurred in advance of the MSA deadline, several months prior to its actual launch. With the program being completely new and the training for it ill-timed, much more energy had to be devoted to tasks that would have been relatively easy to complete previously. For example, caseworkers and supervisors complained that basic features, such as the ability to print and generate reports, were difficult or impossible. Additionally, some case information was lost through the conversion. While a help line was set up to address these issues, the few who staffed it were inundated with complaints. Holly, cited earlier, recalled calling the helpline in order to try to assist the front-line staff under her management, only to speak to a woman who was in tears over the frustration at the volume of calls. She was reportedly only one of three available to take calls. To address the shortage of helpline assistance, certain workers at local DHS offices were recruited as Local Office Experts, being expected to help coworkers with SACWIS issues without additional compensation and while maintaining their other duties.

A primary objective of the system was to provide greater oversight of cases—essentially putting more eyes on the progress and processing of individual cases. Seemingly this would also aid in the overall quality of sibling case management, where multiple placements and services may be involved. However, this has come with additional bureaucracy, as managers must now approve several more requests and reports submitted by front-line staff within SACWIS. Such checks slow the progress

of necessary events such as arranging services and submitting court reports. Several caseworkers lamented how the amount of paperwork associated with their jobs inhibits their ability to complete what they view as the core of their jobs—working directly with children and families. Sally, a foster care caseworker within a private agency, admitted that "even though our caseloads have supposedly lessened, we don't get to spend any more time with our kids because we're just busy filling out reports." She noted that her weekly hours have increased since the MSA to roughly 50-60 hours, including evenings and weekends in order to complete the requisite (MSA-required) visits with children in addition to paperwork. She, like others, feel that the MSA has lead them to "cut corners in the quality of our work" in order to manage their time.

A co-worker of Sally's and another foster care caseworker, Kendra, confirmed such observations, adding "So much of my time is spent with paperwork. I'm supposed to be working with my kids. That's what the MSA was supposed to be about, but I have to complete all these reports. The kids seem to come second." Lauren, a counselor who works with children and parents involved with the foster care system, explained that paperwork and other job-related tasks often impede a caseworker's ability to carry out more meaningful work duties: "The visits are really important, but that's also difficult to do, especially with caseworkers having to supervise all of these visits now. It's hard. They do their best." Clerical staff previously assisted DHS caseworkers with paperwork and data management, but they are no longer permitted such access in SACWIS. Consequently, caseworkers feel that they must complete paperwork as a form of self-preservation, spending 50-60% of their time on these tasks. Such efforts have been documented elsewhere (Taylor, 2013), expressed through off-handed office jargon such as "document, document, document" (p. 19) and "CYA-Cover Your Ass" (p. 26).

Additionally, SACWIS is used to track caseload management compliance. Sally and Kendra admitted that their caseloads within private foster care agencies are "doctored" when compliance checks are pending (such checks are either pre-scheduled or announced in advance):

So that everyone looks like they're towing the correct line of cases, when really we have more than 15. If someone has an opening in their caseload, management will just quickly assign a case to them to level things out but then transfer it back to whoever after the check is complete.

Such practices may lower the morale of workers, increasing an already high turn-over of front-line staff (Taylor, 2013). As Kendra noted, "I am the most senior caseworker in my office and I've only been there two years." This is detrimental to children in foster care, as an inverse relationship exists between rate of caseworker turnover and quality of services for children (Glisson, Dukes, & Green, 2006). Kelly, a DHS foster care worker, also reported higher than maximum caseloads; she had 18 at the time of her interview and admitted that "foster care was pretty difficult at times." She was excited about a new position she recently assumed, believing that "it was a nice refreshing start, to remember that I am able to make a difference."

Visitation

Sibling contact often facilitates emotional support in ways that mitigate the trauma of both maltreatment and state intervention (Boer & Spiering, 1991; Drapeau et al., 2000; Whelan, 2003). However, many of our interviewees expressed concern about the frequency at which sibling visits were required to occur—the minimum per the MSA is once monthly. This rule does not apply if a child's siblings are not also in foster care, if they are placed with relatives more than 50 miles away, or if they are placed in other states. There is also no requirement for how long the visits need to be, but they generally last about an hour when arranged and supervised by caseworkers. While it is commonly understood that longer and more frequent visits would be helpful, such is often not possible given current caseloads and administrative tasks. Kelly, a DHS foster care caseworker, noted:

At least once a month they'd have a visit. I've had my

foster kids literally telling me that they want to see them more but with high caseloads, all that makes it more difficult and it doesn't become a priority. The court and DHS focus so much on the kids seeing the parents versus all the kids seeing each other without them [the parents] there.

Thus, additional visitations are dependent upon DHS-approved relatives or foster parents being willing to arrange and supervise them.

Interviewees acknowledged the importance of social connections and suggested other forms of contact from which siblings may benefit that do not require much additional effort on the part of caseworkers. Caitlyn, a foster care worker who disclosed that she had also spent time in foster care as a child, suggested that simple efforts like helping children "maintain phone contact, maybe writing letters, or just talking to the children about their siblings ...t elling them as much as you can about how their siblings are doing" could be effective.

Older youth may also utilize social media or text conversations to maintain contact with siblings, although their access to devices providing these services may be limited due to the financial constraints of their foster parents (DHS does not financially support such technological access) and time restraints of their caseworkers (who might otherwise lend their own devices to their clients). None of these alternative are included, or even acknowledged, in the MSA.

Patti, a therapist who provides mental health services to children in foster care, noted that incorporating siblings into counseling and other services together could be beneficial in facilitating greater ongoing contact:

Once they've been separated, there's not a whole lot of sibling counseling that goes on, and that is an area that could be improved upon, because a lot of these kids have experienced the same trauma or victimized each other. There could be a lot of healing, but that's overlooked.

Moreover, whatever measures were taken to ensure sibling contact during foster care are not necessarily continued once

it ends. In the event that parental rights are terminated and permanency is established for the children in separate homes (usually in the form of adoption), there is no policy requiring ongoing contact. Although the MSA set requirements for other forms of permanency, it did not address the issue of contact for siblings who have been permanently separated.

Discussion and Conclusion

Child protection systems play a critical role in the safety of our society's most vulnerable population. Given such an obligation, CPS most certainly should be held to a high standard of quality and care, and be scrutinized when its efforts are inadequate. However, it is also important to acknowledge that working with families under these contexts is a very taxing and complicated endeavor for all involved. As a reactionary system, child protection faces an uphill struggle, as patterns of harmful parenting and childcare are not easily or quickly remedied. In a time of increasing fiscal conservatism regarding human and social services, the challenge of effectively intervening with families in crisis is even greater. The best of way of instigating reform is a matter of debate (Borgesen & Shapiro, 1997). A common approach is through class-action litigation by advocacy groups. While in some ways problematic, such mechanisms seem to be effective generally, at least compared to other means of reform (Alvarez, 2011).

This article analyzed recent class-action litigation in Michigan, where the child protective foster care system has been under court order since 2009, with modifications made in 2011. The MSA stipulated several requirements relating to foster care, and for our purposes here, the handling of siblings within foster care. Though it appears various measures of compliance remain to be met, DHS did hire a multitude of new caseworkers in an attempt to decrease caseloads. Worth noting is the fact that many of the new hires were recent college graduates with little experience in the field; it is probably no coincidence, then, that their rate of turnover has exceeded the already high rate within this field. Active recruitment and mass hiring practices do not appear to have resumed, even as front-line workers move on to other jobs.

Licensing of additional foster care homes, particularly rela-

tive foster care homes where sibling sets have greatest odds of being placed together, was addressed by the MSA, as were financial support for these placements. Minimum guidelines for visitation between siblings were also implemented, and a new data management system was required as a means of better documenting the progress of foster care cases.

We found that child welfare workers are concerned with the limited policy in the MSA regarding sibling visitation and placement, viewing it as inhibitive of maintaining sibling relationships. The MSA made it more difficult to place children in fictive kin placements unless such placements are licensed, and has withheld monetary support from relative placements until they attain full licensure. At the same time, the MSA required more steps and paperwork to be added to the licensing process. This runs counter to research that indicates children who are placed with relatives or fictive kin are less likely to be separated from their siblings. In terms of best practices in the area of child welfare, this seems a significant oversight. Children's well-being, particularly during a time of crisis and upset, is facilitated by greater social connections and the maintenance of established bonds (Hegar & Rosenthal, 2011; Leathers, 2005).

On the other hand, the MSA was largely silent in regard to siblings during the permanency process. Reunification, as the long established priority in foster care, is important to siblings in that it provides the opportunity to be rejoined with at least some family members. This may be especially true in circumstances where parental reunification is not possible and siblings may be permanently placed and/or adopted with one another. Children who are adopted by separate homes have no legal relationship with their siblings, nor are their adoptive parents required to facilitate such contact.

This is all especially important in light of other large-scale policy changes, such as the Adoption and Safe Kids Act of 2002, which has had the effect of encouraging termination of parental rights in cases where reunification is not accomplished within a requisite time frame (Mizrahi et al., 2009). Although DHS policy has historically encouraged reunification over other forms of permanency, the MSA reflects federal law. No child is to have a permanency goal of reunification for more than 15 months, unless supervisory approval is obtained and

even then, only when it appears that the child will be returned home within a "reasonable time period" (Dwayne B. v. Snyder, 2011, p. 21). Families with several children may have a more difficult time meeting the reunification requirements within 15 months, particularly if any of the children have distinct needs.

In addition to the concerns about the appropriateness of suggested reforms associated with the MSA, DHS has been unable to demonstrate compliance with many of the measures it put in place which are specifically related to sibling relationships in foster care. Much of this seems to be a product of faulty data management systems.

While the previous data collection system was unable to recognize sibling relationships, the MSA mandated that DHS generate compliance reports by other means. It failed to do so, thus there is a lack of available information regarding how often siblings are separated and to what extent sibling visitations occur. Unfortunately, the implementation of SACWIS has not helped. Along with the system came a barrage of additional paperwork, forcing workers to focus more on data input than working directly with and on behalf of foster children.

It also bears mentioning that several discrepancies were found between aspects of case management that the MSA emphasized versus what front-line workers found most meaningful. One of these is in regard to preventative services. Foster care is a retroactive system, dealing with children who have suffered maltreatment in addition to the strain of state intervention. More proactive and preventative services could help mitigate both. There are no requirements under the MSA that outline (or even mention) preventative services. Rather, the Snyder Administration recommended a 19% cut in preventative services, including Families First, Family Reunification Services, and the Child Protection and Permanency Program for the 2015 fiscal year (Michigan League for Public Policy, 2014).

The lawsuit filed by Children's Rights is similar to other similar reform efforts in that it is subject to a host of problems. Our findings support previous research that recommend caution when relying on class-action litigation as a means of reform (Alvarez, 2011; Daugherty-Bailey, 2009; Farrow, 2008; Kosavnovich et al., 2005; Sandler & Schoenbrod, 2004; Schoor, 2000; Schwartz, 2011). Moreover, the case against Michigan's

DHS seems to have followed a cookie-cutter approach where a similar set of mandates are placed within an eventual (and assumed) settlement agreement (see Alvarez, 2011).

Our findings suggest that this 'one size fits all' approach may not be as effective as one that acknowledges available local, state and national resources, focuses both on training and retraining/support of front-line staff, builds an administrative infrastructure that is supportive of reform and will be able to sustain it, and involves families and communities directly impacted (Borgersen & Shapiro, 1997). A more nuanced, contextual approach would focus on not only existing statutory dictates, but also systemic culture/norms so as to help, rather than hinder, the existing process. It may also be that incremental change works best, allowing time to increase sustainability and buy-in rather than change being met with suspicion and distrust. Indeed, human service workers and their administrators are likely aware of the need for change and are probably amenable to being part of it, given the respect and resources to do so (Alvarez, 2011).

Despite DHS' failure to follow through with several components of the MSA, it has recently filed a motion to lift the order and end court oversight. While no formal hearing has yet occurred, Children's Rights has indicated its opposition (2015). Moreover, as DHS struggles to implement changes mandated by the MSA, the Snyder Administration has made several drastic changes to the department. In January of 2015, he announced the merger of DHS with the Department of Community Health, creating a Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS], now the largest governmental department in the state (Gray, 2015). Simultaneous to this merger, DHS announced the layoff of approximately 100 employees, a disheartening move given the MSA requirement to add nearly 500 jobs upon implementation and the subsequent high turn-over of these staff (Feldscher, 2015). Opposing such change, DHS employees arranged a lunch-hour protest in February, suggesting that they would continue to demonstrate until their concerns are heard (Hinkley, 2015). As part of the consciousness-raising effort, four DHS employees spoke to the Michigan House of Representatives in March, expressing their concerns regarding the MSA and, more specifically, the problems associated with SACWIS (UAW Local 6000, 2015). Again,

including the 'rank and file' and their constituents in the process of reform is critical. These various efforts from entities above DHS are likely hindering efforts at instituting effective change, rather than facilitating it.

While in this article we addressed siblings in foster care, it is important to note there are other elements to the child protective system that are included in the MSA. Future research may analyze this document in its entirety, or compare and contrast the MSA with active class-action lawsuits in other states. It may also be helpful, given what we have highlighted with regard to the challenges posed by court-mandated reform, for future research to compare or examine other means of large-scale change to child protective systems. Specific focus on evidence-based best practices would be critical in any such work.

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Book Reviews

Nancy J. Altman & Eric R. Kingson, *Social Security Works! Why Social Security Isn't Going Broke & How Expanding It Will Help Us All*. New Press (2015), 320 pages, \$16.95 (paperback).

On August 14, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Social Security Act. In the intervening 80 years, Social Security has become the most successful and effective New Deal program. In this most welcome book, Altman and Kingson tell its remarkable story and lay out how its various programs work. It is one of a nation transformed for the better, giving most people more economic security and dignity. The authors are uniquely qualified. Altman, a lawyer and scholar, has taught at Harvard's Kennedy and Law Schools. Kingson, a social work professor at Syracuse University, is a leading gerontologist. Several years ago they founded the non-profit, Social Security Works and they co-chair the Social Security Coalition, comprised of 320 organizations.

Before Social Security, unbeknownst to most of today's young people, many elderly who could no longer work were forced to rely on children barely able to put food on their own tables. Those with inadequate income and no family willing or able to take them in lived in fear of ending up in the poor houses found throughout the nation. The Social Security Act changed this by establishing what today is called Social Security, the book's main focus. (The Act also established unemployment insurance, federally-aided public assistance programs for the elderly, blind, and dependent children, public health and social service programs.)

Social Security, attacked by conservatives even before the law's enactment, nevertheless passed overwhelmingly by Congress, helped by the pressure of social movements, especially the Townsendites, who campaigned for a then huge sum: a \$200 monthly pension for all retired people 60 years and over. Altman has written about them previously in *The Battle*

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For Social Security (2005), but not in this book. *Social Security Works* gives some historical context, but subsequent editions would benefit from an expanded historical section.

Social Security has grown enormously since its inception. Even before the first checks were issued in 1940, a major change (due partly from continued pressure from Townsendites) took place in 1939. Social Security was transformed from a narrow plan, covering only the breadwinner of a family, to a family program, covering wives and children of deceased workers. It has since expanded to cover disabled workers and their families, many adult and disabled children of retired or deceased workers, and others; payments are now adjusted for increases in the cost of living, among the many changes fully documented in this book. The authors rightly stress that Social Security is insurance, not an investment or saving account. It insures you that if you grow old, or become disabled or die, you and/or your family will have an income. But it is Social Insurance—all risks are pooled. You can never outlive your monthly checks, so some will collect more than others, but all will have security.

Understandably, Social Security was (and still is) extremely popular. Thus, though critics continued their attacks, it became the third rail of U.S. politics. According to the authors, a change in strategy occurred after the bipartisan Greenspan Commission, appointed by President Reagan, presented its recommendations to deal with an earlier alarmist projected shortfall in Social Security revenues related to a bad economy and a technical error. The Commission recommended, among other things, payroll tax increases and raising the retirement age to 67 from 65. The authors, both of whom served on the Commission (Altman as an assistant to Chairman Alan Greenspan), are highly critical of this change, because a rise in the retirement age is vividly shown to be a benefit cut that imperils many seniors. Unfortunately, Altman and Kingson give us no clues as to what they were thinking at the time, whether their present views have been shaped by that experience, or what they think might have happened if the Democrats had not agreed to the recommendations.

The authors feel the Commission did not fundamentally alter Social Security because proposals to means-test,

privatize or otherwise fundamentally change the system were ruled off the table and were not part of the 1983 Congressional Amendments. Accordingly, Social Security's wealthy opponents felt a sense of defeat. Unable to win with ideological attacks on a popular program, they shifted to a strategy of instilling fear, undermining confidence in the system, and setting groups against each other (for example, young vs. old). The Cato Institute, funded by one of the billionaire Koch brothers, provided a blueprint for what has happened ever since.

The book does an excellent job of documenting the role that big money plays in attacks on Social Security and how they affect the media with misinformation and half truths presented as facts. In an extremely useful section, they systematically dissect mistruths, such as: social security is in crisis—it's going broke, its Trust Funds are not real, it's unsustainable and a demographic tsunami is threatening our children and grandchildren; we need to raise the retirement age; Social Security is unfair to the young, to blacks, and to women; you can do better investing on your own. You've heard them all!

The real crisis, say the authors, is one that includes disappearing pensions, declining retirement income, growing inequality, overburdened family caregivers who often lose financial security, and the like. Social Security does work and it works for all generations (I would add wide-spread official and hidden unemployment, which negatively impacts workers and the Trust Funds.), but to make it work better it should expand. They advocate raising benefits for all and providing a minimum benefit of at least 125 percent of the poverty level, offering paid family (including parental) leave and restoring student benefits until age 22 for children of deceased or disabled workers, which were eliminated in 1981. These would be paid for by eliminating the wage cap on the payroll tax, by a millionaires tax, a stock transfer tax and by investing some of Social Security's reserves in private equities (which I consider a risky, bad idea). For that to happen, they say, people need to arm themselves with the facts, organize politically and hold their representatives responsible. These are wise ideas.

*Helen Lachs Ginsburg, Prof. Emerita,
Economics, Brooklyn College*

Steve Fraser, *The Age of Acquiescence: The Life and Death of American Resistance to Organized Wealth and Power*. Little, Brown and Company (2015), 470 pages, \$28.00 (hardcover).

In this ambitious volume, historian Steve Fraser ponders a conundrum: why capitalism "red in tooth and claw" met fierce resistance during the "long nineteenth century" that included the First Gilded Age, and why our current, Second Gilded Age, is one of acquiescence. According to Fraser, "the long nineteenth century" dates from the 1870s through the 1930s and the New Deal. The First Gilded Age witnessed stunning technological progress and economic growth, along with tremendous economic inequality, and confrontations between the haves and have-nots verging on class war, even a feared second civil war. In the second part of the book, Fraser paints a scathing portrait of the current Gilded Age, similar to the first in the amassing of wealth and growth of economic inequality, but different because today's robber barons, instead of building the nation's industries, "cannibalized" the industrial edifice. Other authors have pointed to this difference, but Fraser makes another: differences in language. The first era was characterized by the strident, vituperative vocabulary of class conflict, whereas language in our Second Gilded Age has been "sanitized." Since rhetoric is an important weapon of resistance, today's tepid speech, partly a result of McCarthyism, is both a sign of and contributor to acquiescence.

According to Fraser, a major reason for acquiescence in the Second Gilded Age is, ironically, a legacy of the New Deal. Co-editor of an excellent volume, *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* (1989), Fraser credits the New Deal with "confront[ing] entrenched power and open[ing] up the political arena to the voiceless" (p. 304). Nonetheless, the New Deal installed "consumer capitalism," which undermines and corrodes the solidarity on which resistance and social movements are built. Other factors contributing to acquiescence are identified, significantly, the decline of the labor movement, the result of anti-Communist attacks and business opposition, on the one hand, and internal weaknesses in the movement itself on the other. What Fraser might have noted is that

moderate support of the labor movement by the Roosevelt administration gave impetus to organizational drives and militant action that resulted in tripling of union membership in the 1930s. That support has clearly been missing for many years, not least in the failure of the Obama administration to support the Employee Free Choice Act and in the anti-labor free trade agreements beginning with the Clinton Administration and including, most recently, the Trans Pacific Partnership.

"The long 19th century," according to Fraser, includes the 1920s, a period that bears considerable resemblance to the present era, not only in regards to the speculative excesses that contributed to the 1929 crash, but also its extreme and increasing economic inequality and scant resistance to these conditions. Fraser vividly relates the widespread, radical uprising of labor following World War I that might have made the twenties a far less acquiescent interval, had it not been violently quashed wherever it arose—not least by Woodrow Wilson's Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. I maintain that there are three gilded ages: Mark Twain's in the late 19th century, the "roaring twenties," and the period following the "Great U-turn" of the mid-1970s. Two out of three of these gilded ages are ages of acquiescence.

True, there was formidable resistance to entrenched economic power during the first Gilded Age, but the results were relatively meager on the federal level—leaving millions without relief and destitute in the wake of the 1929 Crash, not to mention the failure to have legalized collective bargaining.

Another difference related to resistance, in both the actual 19th century and the Great Depression, is the level of immiseration. Economic deprivation was certainly greater in both the actual 19th century and the 1930s than in the present era, for all its inequality. While need is not a sufficient condition for rebellion, it is a contributor. Three severe depressions in consecutive decades of the late 19th century, none evoking sufficient public relief, may well have contributed to the intensity of resistance. And, of course, resistance also peaked during the greatest of our depressions. Free of economic catastrophe for more than 60 years, the crash of 2008 erupted in a nation with some safeguards against destitution. Another New Deal legacy, the welfare state, however deficient, is a

factor in limited resistance. During the Great Recession and its aftermath, Unemployment Insurance increased five-fold and food stamps kept over 40 million people from hunger. A limping welfare state has added to acquiescence, just as Marx would have predicted.

As Fraser recognizes, there are some hopeful signs—like the organization of fast food workers aided by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Moreover, solidarity has indeed been evident in the movements on behalf of the LGBT community, even though economic inequality has not been the main thrust. And who knows where "Black Lives Matter" may lead? In any case, it's hard to predict what and when silent grievance may turn into organized resistance—despite the factors of acquiescence that Fraser has ably identified.

*Gertrude Schaffner Goldberg, Prof. Emerita,
Social Work and Social Policy, Adelphi University*

Robert D. Putnam, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*. Simon and Schuster (2015), 386 pages, \$28.00 (hardcover), and Andrew J. Cherlin, *Labor's Love Lost: The Rise and Fall of the Working-Class Family in America*. Russell Sage (2014), 272 pages, \$35.00 (paperback).

Robert Putnam and Andrew Cherlin, among the foremost social scientists in the United States, have produced new books that offer us much insight into the present American condition. The former's *Our Kids* examines in great detail the ways in which the promise of equal opportunity has been severely compromised over the past fifty years by multiple changes in American life. The latter's cleverly titled *Labor's Love Lost* traces the rise and decline of the working class family over the course of U.S. history. The two books focus on the profound consequences of increasing economic inequality on family life and children. Although both exhibit admirable scholarly rigor, they are written with different goals and audiences in mind. Putnam aims for a broad, nonacademic readership and clearly hopes to affect current political debates and public policy. Cherlin, by contrast, has produced a more narrowly

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In the 1990s, Putnam's article and subsequent book, both entitled *Bowling Alone*, highlighted the importance and changing character of social capital (social networks, social trust) in contemporary America, garnering enormous attention in the academic, political, policy, and foundation worlds. *Our Kids* tries to accomplish nothing less than to depict the failure of the American dream. His collaborator, Jennifer Silva, conducted in-depth interviews with a diverse assortment of families in communities across the U.S. The findings reveal profound and discouraging contrasts in the quality of children's lives and opportunities depending on their parents' income and education. They found profound class differences within Black, Hispanic, and White families. The rich ethnographic data exploring family life, parenting, schooling, and community are supplemented by a close review of relevant literature on how these factors affect children's futures. A eye-opening array of charts, tables, and graphs makes a single and devastating point: inequalities in, for example, time spent reading to children, family meals, etc. are much wider now, by parents' education, than fifty years ago. We know now that these parental efforts are crucial in influencing children's educational and social outcomes. Another startling contrast is how college-educated parents increasingly focus on instilling values of self-reliance in their children, whereas those with high school degrees or less stress obedience. The more affluent children will be, of course, better prepared for more lucrative, autonomous white-collar and professional jobs.

Putnam's findings echo the path-breaking work of Annette Lareau in *Unequal Childhoods* on the growing significance of class differences in family life and parenting styles. Moreover, chapters on schools and communities present similar "scissors" graphs depicting an ever-greater chasm of opportunity. For example, participation in extracurricular activities is important for successful college applications, but schools in poorer and middle-class neighborhoods have routinely reduced those programs in the face of limited budgets and high-stakes tests. In terms of social capital, the data indicate that, compared to lower-income families, affluent families maintain broader

"weak ties" in the community with local leaders, teachers, employers, and others. Their children, then, benefit not only from contacts useful for educational and occupational advancement but also from the deployment of "air bags," including financial resources, that can help them recover from bad choices or even run-ins with the law. These are opportunities that the children of economically struggling parents simply do not have, and the take-home message here is that these gaps are widening in today's America.

Cherlin, a sociologist, is perhaps the preeminent scholar of the American family. *Labor's Love Lost*, a meticulous account of the changing vicissitudes of working class family life, is based on his analysis of census records between 1880, when marriage data began to be recorded, and 2010. He finds, as we would expect, that the heyday of the married male-breadwinner working class family was from 1950-1973. Forty three percent and 51 percent of White and Black husbands with children at home, at their highest points, were employed in blue-collar occupations. Of course, this time was the peak of the American century, characterized by a robust manufacturing sector, strong unions, rising wages, and (in retrospect) relatively narrow levels of inequality. It has been downhill from there, and this is where his analysis becomes especially interesting.

For those without college education, three of the most notable developments since the mid-1970s have been falling wages and employment opportunities, declining rates of marriage, and rising percentages of births to unmarried parents. To what may we attribute these trends? Should we be worried about the effects on family life and children?

In his 2012 book *Coming Apart*, Charles Murray painted a bleak portrait of family life among White Americans. He blamed the disintegration of marriage in the White working class exclusively on cultural trends that, beginning with the expansion of the welfare state in the 1960s, undermined "traditional" values. Cherlin begs to differ, and *Labor's Love Lost* can be read as a considered response to *Coming Apart*. He offers convincing evidence, based on 130 years of census data, that marriage rates have indeed varied according to the ability of men to make a decent living. Affluent men have been consistently more likely to marry than their blue-collar brethren, but

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Should we be concerned for the children? Putnam offers numerous stories of struggling children of working class and poor parents facing severe financial constraints, high stress at home, irregular or rigid work schedules, the lack of a reliable co-parent, residence in lower-income neighborhoods with poor schools, and many other challenges. The contrast between these children's lives and those of affluent families is heartbreaking. Cherlin does not provide such vivid detail, but his conclusions are entirely consistent with Putnam's. Children from marginally employed, disrupted, and single parent families face far greater obstacles to achieve economic security and fulfilling lives than do their better-off peers.

Deeply concerned about the worsening inequality in children's opportunity they have described in their books, Putnam's and Cherlin's concluding chapters are both called "What is to be done?" They offer thoughtful proposals to expand early childhood education, enhance parenting skills, develop stronger community-school links, strengthen community colleges, and so on. They are skeptical, based on the available evidence, of favorite conservative ideas such as charter schools and programs to promote marriage and relationship skills. Neither believes that we can return to the attitudes of the 1950s with respect to marriage and childbearing. Both ponder ways to persuade or assist young adults to delay pregnancy, with programs tied to labor market programs or based at community colleges.

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New Jersey Supreme Court barred the use of exclusionary zoning and ordered municipalities to provide housing options for low- and moderate-income families, while Mount Laurel II (1983) reinforced this ruling by specifying a method to calculate each municipality's "fair share" of affordable housing obligations.

In addition to documenting the outcomes of a landmark exclusionary housing case, whose ongoing controversy is best exemplified by Governor Christie's hostility towards its stipulations, the book makes a critical contribution to the "neighborhood effects" literature. Indeed, the research question of Climbing Mount Laurel is whether neighborhood circumstances can significantly predict the life outcomes of their residents. A central assumption is that residential mobility is linked to social mobility, as housing markets are responsible for distributing a range of benefits including education, public services, employment, safety and the opportunity to accumulate wealth. However, whether this relationship is causal is the subject of debate. The absence of consensus is linked to the difficulty of quantifying neighborhood effects: both the Gautreaux project and the Moving to Opportunity experiment yielded mixed results and suffered from methodological weaknesses including self-selection bias. Climbing Mount Laurel overcomes some of these limitations.

The book is divided into nine chapters that clearly detail the history of the case, the study's methodology, the physical design of the housing complex, and the outcomes of the project. In order to evaluate the impact of the project on the surrounding community, the authors designed a multiple control-group time-series experiment to analyze regional trends in crime, property values and taxes—the three fears expressed by opponents of the projects. The experiences of project residents were compared to those of non-residents who applied to the Ethel Lawrence Homes but had not yet been admitted. Differences between the two groups were further balanced using propensity score matching. Surveys of neighbors, project residents and non-residents were complemented by qualitative in-depth interviews.

Massey and his colleagues find that the opening of the Ethel Lawrence Homes did not cause an increase in crime

rates, a decrease in property values or an increase in property tax rates. Moreover, the reaction of neighbors to the project was subdued, leading the authors to believe that much of the controversy was created by a small number of "racially antagonistic individuals" (p. 185). Project residents experienced a decline in negative life events, improved mental health and increased earnings. Children attended better quality schools with lower levels of violence and had access to quiet spaces to study. While some residents complained about strict managerial practices, geographic isolation, and the feeling of being out of place in a predominantly White environment, the authors believe that the advantages of moving into the Ethel Lawrence Homes outweigh any negative experiences.

For Massey and his colleagues, the Mount Laurel project confirms the hypothesis that neighborhood environments can significantly alter the life trajectories of residents. They do acknowledge, however, that a large part of the project's success was related to the fact that residents were self-selected and filtered according to their ability of being "good tenants" (p. 195). In this respect, housing mobility programs cannot be used as policy solution for households facing complex problems such as substance abuse.

Climbing Mount Laurel is a welcome addition to the literature on housing mobility programs and neighborhood effects. Its methodological rigor and ability to avoid the pitfalls of spatial determinism are some of its key strengths, and the book should be of interest to scholars and practitioners of affordable housing, planning law, and program evaluation. Whether the book's findings are transferable to involuntary residential mobility programs such as HOPE VI remains a somewhat unanswered question. Yet, what is clear is that affordable housing litigation continues to play an important role in the struggle for racial and economic integration, particularly following the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 decision to recognize disparate impact claims under the Fair Housing Act.

*Aretousa Bloom, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning
& Public Policy, Rutgers University*

Michael A. Messner, Max A. Greenberg, & Tal Peretz, *Some Men: Feminist Allies and the Movement to End Violence Against Women*. Oxford University Press (2015), 256 pages, \$24.95 (paperback).

Identifying as an ally in an oppressed group's crusade is a complicated undertaking. Allies—activists who join in a struggle, usually from a position of privilege—face suspicion from all sides: scrutiny of their underlying motives, concern that they cannot truly understand the struggle of the oppressed, and the lingering idea that this is not really their battle to wage. In this book, the authors explore the inherent tensions of male allies in the feminist struggle to end domestic violence (DV). Fifty-two men were interviewed for this book, representing a broad cross-section of those who have devoted their personal and professional lives to ending domestic violence over the past four decades. For the most part, these men work "upstream,"—that is, they work with boys and men to prevent domestic abuse from occurring (as opposed to "downstream" work with victims of abuse). Through life history interviews, the authors have created a fascinating portrait of men who have aligned themselves with the feminist movement and have simultaneously provided a rich history of the anti-domestic violence movement.

The authors delineate three distinct male feminist cohorts in the forty-year struggle to end violence against women. The earliest, the pioneers of what they call the "Movement Cohort," came to the anti-DV struggle as political activists in the 1970s and 1980s. These allies defined themselves as supporting players in the early days of the anti-DV crusade. One activist described his pro-feminist men's group as "the men's auxiliary" of a larger women's organization; others spoke about how, when they joined early Take Back the Night protests, they were careful to be at the end of the march, well behind the women. Most of the men in this early stage were college educated and White and saw men's violence toward women as an outgrowth of state-sanctioned patriarchy and White supremacy.

The authors identify a different pathway for the second stage, the "Bridge Cohort" of the 1980s and early 90s. As second wave feminism splintered over issues related to race and

pornography, nascent not-for-profit organizations began to secure modest government and private funding for shelters and anti-violence curricula. Most men of this cohort embraced anti-violence work through college courses in women's studies or by working in community organizations that focused on combatting neighborhood violence. Far less committed to the feminist message, this cohort focused on giving boys and men the skills to intervene effectively when they witnessed abuse.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, a new "Professional Cohort" of men became involved. Relying on public health models for intervention and treatment, the movement was rebranded in more generic, apolitical terms. Agencies vying for public dollars spoke of "gender-based violence," importantly recognizing that violence against men and boys is also a serious issue, but simultaneously losing the feminist perspective that identifies patriarchal systems of control as the central tenet in the inequities that lead to intimate partner violence. The authors point out that the men who have joined the Professional Cohort are the most diverse of those involved in this crusade: some come from the helping professions, others have grown up in communities where violence is common, and many are victims of abuse in their own lives. This cohort sees violence as intersectional, related to race and class as well as gender.

This distinction among cohorts is a helpful way to frame the anti-DV movement over time and provides a structure to understand the stories of the men involved in anti-violence work. Whatever their pathways to the struggle to end violence against women, most of the men interviewed share a common sense of disenchantment with narrowly defined masculine gender roles in their own lives and a collective need to redefine what it means to be male. One of the most clarifying aspects of the book is how the authors tie our traditional understanding of the feminist discourse on violence against women to show its strong connection to men-on-men violence, the hyper-masculinity that we witness on football fields, hockey rinks, and in the military. Because of their broad appeal, former athletes and other conventionally masculine men are often the most successful anti-violence advocates. This observation paves the way for a more nuanced exploration of unequal power and unearned privilege among the men who do this important work.

Some Men is an informative and accessible read, although it can sometimes feel a bit repetitive. Beyond its appeal to those interested in men who have joined the movement to end violence against women, the book is also a fascinating look into two tensions: that of navigating the role of ally in another's struggle, and those placed on political movements as they become part of the mainstream. It ends on the hopeful note that, as current trends focus on the intersectionality of violence, poverty, race and class, we may well find a return to the political activism for social justice, gender equality, and lives free from violence that was at the heart of the feminist struggle four decades ago.

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James K. Galbraith, *The End of Normal: The Great Crisis and the Future of Growth*. Simon and Schuster (2014), 304 pages, \$26.00 (hardcover), \$16.00 (paperback).

Professor Galbraith's book is subtitled "the great crisis and the future of growth." This work is a well-written examination of the lingering economic crisis of the 21st century—for that alone it is worth your attention. It is also an incisive critique of mainstream economics and calls for the renaissance of institutional economics. In the 1960s, political economy—not necessarily Marxian or particularly radical—was pushed into management schools, departments of sociology or politics. Interdisciplinary policy analysis was viewed as not sufficiently "theoretical" to warrant serious attention from economics, the quantitative, mathematical queen of the social sciences. Galbraith now writes:

A new economics must rest on a biophysical and institutional framework, recognizing that fixed capital and embedded technology are essential for efficient production operations, but that resource costs can render any fixed system fragile, and that corruption can destroy any human institution. (p. 237)

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author's father, you should not be surprised. In addition, the theme of system fragility is something we have heard from sociological analysis of technological disasters, and it is intriguing to see similarities in analysis of the collapse of financial systems. What the author is emphasizing is that the presumptions of mainstream economics—that crises are temporary and that "normal" conditions will prevail, permitting high rates of growth in national output/income and full employment—are illusory.

The barriers to "normal" are considerable. First, Galbraith argues, "... (E)nergy markets remain both high cost and uncertain." At this writing, as crude oil prices tumble, we might stress uncertainty—it is a mystery why OPEC is permitting this price fall. Second, Galbraith makes a strong case that "... the world economy is no longer under the effective financial and military control of the United States and its allies." Third, "... we have entered an era of radical labor-saving technological change." And finally, "... the private financial sector has ceased to serve as a motor of growth." In fact, Galbraith notes the profound corruption—fraud—that has come to define the financial sector, something that I have never seen mentioned in mainstream economic modeling.

Galbraith does lay out an alternative—planned slow growth—but a quick perusal of the policies required for this strategy reveals the lack of a political base for such economic and social rationality.

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JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL WELFARE

2016 Publication Information & Subscription Rates

Volume:	XLIII
Volume Year:	2016
Publication Period:	1-16 to 12-16
Publication Frequency:	Quarterly
Publication Dates:	March, June, September, December

Subscription Rates:

	Retail Cost	Subscription Agent
Online version only	Individual	
	\$44.00	\$44.00
	Institution	
	\$88.00	\$78.00
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	\$52.00	\$52.00
	Individual Outside U.S.	
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(Revised December, 2015)

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Gender and Disability Stereotypes

Please use gender neutral phrasing. Use plural pronouns and truly generic nouns ("labor force" instead of "manpower"). When dealing with disabilities, avoid making people synonymous with the disability they have ("employees with visual impairments" rather than, "the blind"). Don't magnify the disabling condition ("wheelchair user" rather than "confined to a wheelchair"). For further suggestions see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association or Guide to Non-Sexist Language and Visuals, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

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JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE
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