The Mystique of Expertise in Social Services: An Alaska Example

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A prime social service target group in urban Alaska is the Alaska Native (Aleuts, Eskimos, and Indians). Natives' recent urban migration represents a severely stressful transition, not only from rural to urban, but from one culture to another, and from one set of class and racial definitions to another as Natives learn that poverty and minority racial status are far more stigmatized in the cities than in the villages from which they come. These transition stresses are accompanied by serious problems of poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and attendant social and emotional disorders.

Because of the severity of the Natives' urban transition, I conducted a study of the responses of Anchorage social agencies to this client group.[1] This paper deals with one facet of that study—social service technology for solving problems of urban Natives.[2] I asked, what knowledge is available to social workers about urban Natives and how do they acquire and use this knowledge? I found that social workers' knowledge about urban Natives is even more limited than that for other client populations, and that social workers adapt to this limited knowledge base by promoting a mystique of expertise that has far reaching consequences for agency practices and client outcomes.

In this paper I shall examine the roots and manifestations of the mystique of expertise, its consequences for agency evaluation practices, and its consequences for clients.

The data for this paper, collected during 1973, stem from interviews with social agency administrators, social workers, and clients. Because even a small place like Anchorage (borough population was 143,000 in the summer of 1973[3] has myriad social agencies, I had to limit the number of agencies to make the study manageable. I arbitrarily eliminated agencies providing services for physical health, corrections, education, and children and youth (except for Aid to Families with Dependent Children and child protection). I focused on agencies providing services for mental health, income maintenance, manpower and training, housing, and social services (in its narrow concept of services traditionally provided by social workers). I identified

twenty-five agencies in these categories whose clienteles included at least 15 percent Natives. This comprises the agency sample plus two others that serve a large number but small proportion of Natives.

I interviewed thirty-three administrators and forty-six social workers from these twenty-seven agencies. I use the term "social worker" to designate those who have face-to-face contact with clients in the implementation of social services. The social worker sample includes twenty-one persons who bear the title "social worker," twenty-three persons who call themselves counselors, and two welfare eligibility workers.

Whites predominate in the staffing of the agencies. Only three of the twenty-seven agencies are Native-run; one is black-run; the rest are run by whites. Except for those in Native-run social agencies, all but two of the social workers in the sample are non-Native.

I and two research assistants also interviewed fifty clients from the sample agencies.[4] Most of the clients interviewed had experience with several sample agencies. We used focused interviews, asking a standard set of questions but varying the order of the questions and the emphases of the interviews in line with special interests, experiences, and expertise of informants. Interviews lasted from one to three hours.

Roots and Manifestations of the Mystique of Expertise

It is widely known that social agencies lack a knowledge base for rehabilitating the poor; that knowledge base is even more deficient for urban Natives. Social work and psychiatric training provide little relevant background, and virtually no Native-serving social agency in Anchorage furnishes staff training in cross-cultural understanding,[5] reflecting in part the lack of content for such training. Social and psychological theories about American Indians are not well enough developed to provide a foundation for expertise in the treatment and rehabilitation of Natives.

Considering that most social workers enter their field precisely because of an interest in helping people, I wondered why, in the absence of a firm body of knowledge, they did not turn to their Native clients for an understanding of Native people; all the social workers in the sample have considerable contact with Native clients. Yet, I found this practice to be nearly non-existent; social workers simply do not view clients as a reliable source for information about Native culture.

The reason for this, I believe, is that reliance on clients for information about themselves would expose the social workers' lack of expertise. This does not mean that social workers are dissembling when they assert an interest in helping clients, but that other values also influence their actions. As Friedson noted in an insightful analysis of professional values:

> The occupation being the source of focus of this commitment, the individual is naturally concerned with the prestige of the occupation and its position in the class structure and in the market place. Thus empirical studies of undergraduate aspirants to the major professions find them to be not only interested in helping people ... but also interested in the high income and prestige they expect from their professional careers. Such findings seem to belie dedication and are treated by many analysts of professions with either silence or embarrassment.[6]

I found that it was not only a question of the operation of both sets of values but of the priority social workers assign them. While the majority of social workers in my sample complained bitterly about the many constraints frustrating their helping goals, when I asked why they remained on their jobs, they generally always referred to satisfactions gained from relatively high salaries and occupational position. Clearly, those who remain in the system give higher priority to career interests than to helping clients when these two goals conflict. Because advancing their careers requires promoting the prestige and reputation of their profession, social workers tend to promote the mystique of expertise rather than to help clients when such help threatens to expose the mystique.

Since social workers' occupational position and status, indeed, the very marketability of their skills, rests on claims to professional expertise, they face a dilemma. How, in the absence of technical expertise, do they prove their claim to it. They must assert their expertise not only to maintain their occupational position and status but also to achieve an inner sense of coherence and integration, which requires resolving this dilemma.

One of the chief means social workers use for resolving this dilemma is the substitution of ideology for technical expertise, expressed in the tendency to interpret Natives' problems and behavior from their own white middle class cultural perspective. The cultural bias in social work has been widely recognized. For example, Brager and Barr wrote: "The technology of social work like that of other educative professions is culturally bound and inflexible. The profession, inevitably owned and operated by middle class persons, has failed to take into account not only the differing needs but the differing style of low income persons."[7]

Social workers showed no reluctance to discuss their
interpretations of Native culture and behavior, but most
talked about it in pejorative terms as deviations from their
own culture, the superiority of which few questioned.   Even
some of the counter-culture staff members did not question
the superiority of dominant society values regarding work,
time, and money.   Only one social worker, a black, emphasized
the strengths in Native culture, placing special emphasis on
Natives' valuation of family closeness, cooperation, sharing,
and mutual aid.   Most of the rest saw Natives only through
their own cultural lenses as the following quotes illustrate:

> Natives have no long range goals.   They don't understand
> anything about planning for the future.

> Natives don't understand the world of work.   They don't
> understand our orientation to time, they have no clock
> orientation;   they don't even have much experience, most
> have never done anything but fish.

> Natives have been improperly socialized.   They haven't
> even been socialized to drink properly.

> Natives have no psychological awareness;   they don't know
> how to verbalize or express their emotions.

The use of these culturally biased generalizations serves
not only to convince social workers that they are knowledgeable
about Natives and Native culture, but also that Natives are not
a reliable source of information about themselves.   Part and
parcel of the social workers' cultural bias is the belief that
Natives are social and psychological cripples.   This belief
effectively discredits Natives, in the eyes of social workers,
as sources for information about their culture.   In the few
instances I knew of in which Natives volunteered feedback
about their social agency experiences, social workers ignored
it.   Simeone, an Aleut resident of an alcoholic rehabilitation
center and a very articulate assertive person, did inform staff
members about practices he found culturally alienative, such
as the expectation to directly expose actions and feelings
about which he was ashamed.   I later asked one of the counselors
in the facility about his and other counselors responses to
Simeone's confidence.   He answered: "It doesn't matter what
they (Native clients) say because our central task is to teach
them how to verbalize and express emotions;   nothing can deter
us from that."   The point here is not whether Simeone's
ideas about effective treatment were right or wrong, but that
the staff ignored them.

Social workers employ other distancing devices to insulate

themselves from client feedback. They require clients to meet
them on their turf where Agency and social workers' rules,
definitions, and interpretations of problems prevail. Under
these circumstances there is little opportunity for social
workers to learn about Natives' history, attitudes, urban
adjustment problems, how they behave in a natural setting
such as their homes (most home visits are for the purpose
of investigation), and how Natives feel about agencies'
services and social workers' behavior. This type of
social worker control over interaction with clients has
become so habitual that it operates nearly automatically,
and social workers have come to think of it as natural
rather than as a system for insulation. The pervasiveness
of the insulation was revealed by a social worker after she
was jolted out of this pattern of interaction. When
accompanying a Native client to a meeting, she was surprised
to discover the many subtle, demeaning ways Natives are socially
excluded in an interracial social situation. For the past ten
years that she had worked with Native clients, she had been
largely unaware of this painful day-to-day reality in the
lives of Natives.

In addition to insulating themselves from client sources
of information, social workers also tend to affirm their status
as expert by socializing clients to a role of humble supplicant.
Social workers achieve this by treating clients in ways that
degrade them. In his study of total institutions, Goffman
presented compelling evidence about the pervasive process of
mortification to which patients in mental hospitals are
exposed, involving stripping patients of their rights,
possessions, affirmation, satisfactions, and defenses.[8]
While less extreme in most of the agency settings I studied,
I observed a similar process of mortification. Social workers
delve into the most intimate details of clients' lives; for
example, questions about their sex lives and last menstrual
period. They tend to impugn clients' veracity by detective-like
probing, an approach encouraged by administrators concerned
about cautious distribution of resources. To weed out
ineligibles, social workers question and demand proof of
clients' allegations, and in some instances, spy on clients
by seeking information about them from neighbors and other
agencies. Clients are humiliated by these practices as the
following quotes show:

> They asked me over and over again and time after time
> why I left my husband and I told them because he was
> living with another woman. They didn't believe me.
> That was the hardest part for me. It blew my mind.
> I couldn't believe what was happening. They tore

up my application right in frontof my eyes and threw it
in the trash. They didn't believe a word I said ...
(These experiences) made me suspicious about people.
I decided I had to test everyone because you have to be
leery about who to trust.

They make you feel like a beggar. Keep asking questions
like why aren't you working, why aren't you this, why
aren't you that. Don't they know if we didn't need
help we wouldn't be there. We Eskimos aren't beggars.
Oh maybe when we're drunk we beg, but only from each other.
Why do they want to make us feel so low down.

Social workers think all Eskimos are dumb or drunks.
They treat you that way even before they know you, always
telling you what to do as if we can't figure it out for
ourselves. And if you don't do what they tell you,
then they threaten you, told me if I didn't go for treat-
ment they would send me to jail, so I went to treatment where
they told me if I didn't cooperate more they would send me
to jail.

If clients want agency services, they learn to submit to these
mortification processes and act the role of humble supplicant.
Most social workers' image of the ideal client is one who does
not complain and who shows appreciation. Such clients pose
no threat to the worker's self-image as expert.

Mystique of Expertise and Evaluation Hiatus

Clearly, since social workers lack expertise, they and
their agencies cannot risk systematic evaluation of their efforts.
Local agencies and their parent organizations depend as much as
social workers on the claim to professional expertise; their
legitimation and financial support hinge on it; a systematic
investigation of the effects of social services on clients
threatens to expose the mystique of expertise. Consequently, an
absence of expectations or requirements for systematic evaluation
of social work success pervades the social service system at
all levels. (Manpower and training agencies are exceptions,
although their evaluations are generally limited to records of
number of enrollees, placements, completions, and drop outs,
and include virtually no follow-up.)

This is not to suggest that agencies evaluate no aspects
of their work but that they eschew evaluating the effects of
their services on clients. The kinds of activities agencies
do evaluate--budget, number of recipients, number of staff,
and use of staff time--serve as symbols for success which

deny the reality of widespread failure.   In some instances
the kinds of activities evaluated pose direct obstacles to
helping clients, defeating the very goals evaluation is
designed to effect.   In an analysis of statistical record
keeping in a state employment agency, Blau points out the
powerful influence these evaluation criteria have on
workers' behavior and some of the dysfunctions of these
criteria.[9]

The dysfunctions from current evaluation practices are
quite apparent in public welfare where error rates are a
central criterion for evaluating workers' performance.   The
emphasis on error rate stems from federal government surveillance
(quality control) involving periodic investigations of errors.
The discovery of errors in case openings that exceed the allowable
3.5 percent rate can result in the loss to the state of as much
as $40,000 in federal matching funds for each error.[10]   This
evaluation criterion applies not only to eligibility workers
who make the decision on applications but also to social service
workers.   While constrained by law from conducting direct
investigations of recipients, for example, seeking information
about a client from a bank or neighbor, an implicit injunction
to "catch chiselers" operates among both social workers and
eligibility workers.   This emphasis on error rate generates
social worker attitudes of suspicion toward recipients and
leads them to act aggressively in their attempts to trap clients.
By applying this evaluation criterion to social workers'
performance, agencies create pressures for social workers
to behave in alienative ways that clearly undermine their
helping goals.

Whether or not agencies provide financial assistance,
staff members are generally evaluated on use of their time.
In state agencies, staff members must keep records of number
of phone calls, memos, letters, conferences, and client
contacts.   They are also evaluated in terms of grooming,
staff relations, and quality of work.   The "quality of work"
criterion usually functions ritualistically.   Supervisors
were generally unable to articulate the criteria they apply
to evaluate quality of work and became uncomfortable and at
times angry when pressed on this point.   A typical reply
was: "Well, it depends on the worker, on his strengths
and weaknesses.   You have to get a feel of the person.
I can't tell you what criteria I use."   I encountered
not a single instance in which supervisors systematically
evaluated quality of work in terms of workers' success
with clients.   Thus, while busily engaged in the act

of evaluating, agencies avoid the central test of their worth--
success with clients.

I do not mean to minimize the obstacles to evaluating
social service effectiveness. Agency objectives are often
intangible or stated in such global terms that they belie
measurement. It is difficult to select indicators of
success. Is an alcoholic who increases his sobriety
cycle from three days to two weeks a success? Is the
placement of a child abused by his parents in an inadequate
foster home a favorable outcome? Is the placement of a
seasonally employed Native on a demeaning year-round job a
successful outcome? But the existence of technical obstacles
only explains why evaluation of social service success is
difficult, not why agencies do not try to overcome these
obstacles and devise as adequate systems of evaluation as
possible.

The most compelling explanation of agencies' resistance
to evaluating the success of their efforts with clients is
fear of exposure of multiple failures. Although few adminis-
trators or social workers overtly acknowledged this fear, I
found abundant evidence of it on a covert level. I en-
countered considerable defensiveness when I asked adminis-
trators and staff about their evaluation system. I found this
question to be more sensitive than any others. Several infor-
mants abruptly changed the subject when I asked about their
evaluation systems. One responded by jumping from his chair
and making tea after which he invited another staff member
to join us, and the issue was lost. Several others replied
in an accusatory voice as if I were suspect for asking the
question: "I don't believe in using figures or statistics
where human beings are concerned." Still others charged
me outright with having asked a loaded question. There
was other evidence: staff gave more contradictory information
on this issue than any other; the assertions of some
administrators and staff members about evaluations and
agency effectiveness were vigorously contradicted by others
as well as by clients.

This evaluation hiatus in social services, that is,
the avoidance of assessing success with clients, protects
social workers and administrators from equating directly
with their deficiencies in technology and knowledge. It
also protects them from exposures that could jeopardize their
professional standing and organizational funds. In these ways,
the evaluation hiatus masks this agency pathology.

Consequences of Mystique of Expertise for Clients

The mystique of expertise finds expression in the substitution of culturally biased conceptions for genuine understanding, the discrediting of Natives as sources of information or feedback, socializing Natives to a stigmatized status, and avoiding evaluations that could serve as a basis for correcting these agency pathologies.   These practices often have devastating effects on clients.   About one-third of the clients in the sample exhibited social and psychological pathologies that could be attributed in part to manifestations of the mystique of expertise.

Cultural biases often give rise to agency policies and practices that consistently undermine Natives' sense of worth and integrity.   Consider the Alaska State Housing Authority regulation prohibiting visitations to tenants that extend beyond two weeks.   John, an older Eskimo resident of a low cost housing unit in Anchorage, was baffled at trying to figure out how to handle an anticipated visit by his mother.   How could he tell her to leave after two weeks when traditional Native hospitality entails open-ended welcome.   This same regulation forced him to refuse a request for a home from his daughter's high school friend from the same village.   This girl had become very depressed in her white boarding home. John was very eager to give her a home but housing regulations forbid it.   Shortly after the girl learned this, she dropped out of school and returned to the village.   This regulation runs counter to the very basis of Eskimo norms regarding hospitality and to the system of mutual obligations.   Rather than building on such strengths in Eskimo culture, public housing policies disregard and even degrade them, depriving an Eskimo like John of even the opportunity to actively transmit these positively valued traditions to his children, and, of course, depriving John of a basis on which his esteem and sense of pride depends.

White-run alcoholic rehabilitation facilities provide other illustrations of culturally biased practices.   Many workers in these agencies show little awareness of cultural difference in the meaning attributed to drinking.   In many Native villages, drinking has become a dominant symbol of group solidarity. This is quite apparent in the Aleutians, the culture area with which I am most familiar.   After the Russians introduced alcohol in the mid-eighteenth century and in the same period prohibited ceremonials, Aleuts appear to have substituted the drinking bender for aboriginal ceremonials.   Aleuts drank to celebrate the end of fishing or hunting season, a holiday,

a name day, or simply when a batch of home brew matured.   In the
past, drinking was seldom accompanied by violence or other community
disruptions; non-drinking adults watched over the children of
drinkers.   But when traditional social structures and institutions
disintegrated as a consequence of white contact, drinking became
progressively less controlled.   Today Aleuts, as well as other
Natives, express ambivalent attitudes toward drinking.   On the one
hand, it constitutes a primary symbol of group solidarity; on the
other, it threatens to incapacitate individuals from performing
social roles.   But the point here is not whether the drinking
represents a clear-cut positive cultural value to Natives, but
that social workers generally fail to understand the meaning of
drinking to Natives.

One difference in meaning is that while Natives usually do
not see drinking as comprising their total identity, social workers
tend to define them as if it were.   When Natives are not drinking,
they work or engage in other activities, and they view each other
in terms of these activities.   In a village I studied where
drinking was widespread, villagers identified only one of their
number as alcoholic.   However, when Natives are found drunk on
Fourth Avenue, the Native drinking center in Anchorage, police
frequently refer them to alcoholic rehabilitation centers where
they are defined as alcoholics and treated as if that were their
totality.

Once in the treatment facility, in addition to being
labelled alcoholic, Natives may also be labelled emotionally
defective because they organize and manage their emotions
differently from white professionals.   Natives tend to place
a high value on avoiding overt expressions of negative affect,
usually managing such emotions in indirect and covert ways.
Aleut cultural norms, for example, strongly disapprove of
complaining, worrying, or dwelling in troubles.   "Get up
and do something" is the common Aleut injunction to a complainer
or worrier.   Getting drunk may be considered a more honorable
way to handle troubles than fretting or complaining.   But
most treatment facilities, following the principles of insight
therapy, emphasize direct expression and exploration of emotions,
especially anger, an orientation that is culturally alien to
many Natives.   Those who fail this expectation are sanctioned,
usually in subtle ways, and treated as if they are emotionally
defective.   Simeone, whom I mentioned earlier in relation to
giving the agency feedback about culturally alienative practices,
said: "The women have it easier than we do.   All they have to
do is shed a few tears to get the counselors off their backs.
But we have to lose our tempers or stand up publicly in front
of strangers at AA meetings and demean ourselves by chest beating.

That runs against our cultural grain.   We have only a shred of
pride left and that wipes it out."   To be labelled alcoholic
and emotionally defective for behavior that is culturally
acceptable is a mortifying experience and also dysfunctional
for adjustment to the cultural peer group.

I do not mean to deny the importance of drinking problems
among Natives or to criticize agencies for addressing these
problems.   Nor do I mean to imply that the cultural issue is
the only relevant one in the treatment of Native drinking problems.
Some of the dysfunctional features of alcoholism are universal.
But I do mean to suggest that treatment that fails to take into
account Natives' cultural patterns and attitudes toward drinking
is doomed from the outset, and furthermore, it creates additional
problems for Native drinkers by stigmatizing them and defining
them in culturally alien ways.

Examples of culturally biased definitions and practices
appear to be flagrant in child welfare services.   Some of the
most disturbed members of my sample began their careers as agency
clients many years ago when they became victims of the uninformed,
culturally biased social work practice of removing Native children
from their homes and villages.   Indeed, the abduction of Indian
children by social agencies has reached scandalous proportions
nationwide.   In a recent survey the Association on American
Indian Affairs reported that in states with large Indian
populations, 25 to 35 percent of all Indian children are
removed from their families and placed in foster homes, adoptive
homes, or institutions--and over recent years the problem has
been getting worse.[11]   I encountered this practice in an Aleut
village I studied where public welfare social workers, confusing
poverty and cultural difference with social deprivation and
psychological abuse, removed nineteen Native children in a
fifteen-month period.[12]   This represented nearly one-third
of the minor children in the Native community.   In addition
to the trauma of being separated from their families, these
children faced enforced migration to strange and distant places;
most of these children are placed in urban foster homes and
institutions.   This practice, which affected 14 percent of my
client sample, set in motion a chain of traumatic events.   Here
is Tatiana's story.

When she was five years old, a public welfare social worker
visiting her village removed Tatiana and her seven siblings from
the home while the parents were away drinking.   The social worker
was apparently unaware that drinking is acceptable in many Native
villages and that non-drinking adults frequently keep an eye on
the children of drinking parents.   In any event, when the parents

returned home that evening, they found the house empty and no one in the village knew the children's whereabouts.   In response to the parent's desperate plea on the shortwave radio for information about the children, the public welfare agency contacted them, explaining that they removed them only temporarily and would return them in several weeks.   Only one child was ever returned to the parents.   Another was given for adoption.   Four were dispersed in separate urban foster homes and institutions.   Only two remained together, Tatiana and her sister, placed in an urban children's institution.

About seventy boys and girls, predominantly Native, lived in Tatiana's institution.   As it was isolated from the town, the inmates seldom had the chance to socialize with town children. The Christian group that ran the home was quite restrictive, prohibiting televisions, comics, and many other activities in which ordinary children engage.   Tatiana and the other children in the home shared a burning desire to find out how other "normal" children lived.   When the children reached their early teens, they began to rebel against their restrictive environment, frequently running away from the home to join town children.   There were so many runaways, Tatiana said, that the home was closed.

Tatiana was then placed in a succession of white foster homes, but her needs were no better met in these settings and she continued to run away from the homes, joining peers in the town.   (State regulations for foster homes, based on middle class standards, render most Native homes ineligible for foster care licenses.)   When her social worker called her a tramp because of her runaways, Tatiana said she decided to try to convey to the woman what her life had been like.   "I thought she would help me if I could make her understand what it felt like to be taken from my parents when I was five, separated from my brothers and sisters, living apart from other kids my age in the town, and then placed in strange homes that made me feel uncomfortable and frightened."   But Tatiana's efforts only angered the social worker who rejoined, "No excuses for your wildness, you are incorrigible."   And promptly she filed incorrigibility charges against fourteen-year-old Tatiana.

Since there was no youth detention center in town, Tatiana was placed in the adult prison to await court hearing. Not only frightened and bewildered, but ashamed to her core because, although she did not understand how she came to be considered a criminal, she figured she must be rotten through and through, Tatiana slashed her wrists.   But this had no apparent affect on hastening the court hearing.   Tatiana spent five months in the adult prison awaiting her hearing, after which she was sentenced to seventeen additional months

in a juvenile correctional facility in another state.   Upon her
return to Alaska, although no charges were pending, Tatiana was
placed in an Anchorage youth correctional facility.

     Tatiana felt an uncontrollable rage.   She began to fight
her peers, sometimes with knives, and spent most of her seven
months there in solitary confinement.   Then a probation officer
took special interest in her case and advocated and won her
release.

     I met Tatiana shortly after her release.   Her chief concern
was that her rage would continue to erupt in uncontrolled ways.
She confided her recent attempt to stab her boyfriend.

     Tatiana said that of the seventy children with whom she grew
up in the institution, all but five are alcoholic or drug addicts,
some are prostitutes, and most have been in and out of jails.   Of
the entire group, Tatiana said she is the only one holding a steady
job.

     Tatiana's experiences, as well as those of other clients,
show how the agencies tend to operate in self-fulfilling ways.
By treating clients as worthless and subjecting them to morti-
fications, clients come to behave in ways that fulfill agencies'
preconceptions and biases.   In essence, agency pathologies
become transformed into individual pathologies as clients
internalize the agencies' view of them, or resisting it in
the way Tatiana tried, as clients face rages that threaten
violence.

Summary

     Social workers and administrators tend to mask the
inadequacy of their knowledge base by promoting a mystique
of expertise rather than directly pursuing knowledge.   They
are discouraged from acknowledging their limited knowledge
for several reasons.   It threatens social workers'
professional authority and standing, and thereby undermines
their ability to market their skills.   It also threatens
administrators' authority and professional standing which
hinges on the claim to professional expertise.   Further,
it threatens organizational survival if funding sources
become convinced that agencies lack the knowledge for
achieving their goals.

     In the absence of adequate technical knowledge about
the Native client group, social workers tend to substitute
ideology, that is, their own class and cultural perspectives.
They protect themselves from evidence that contradicts their

biased perspectives by discrediting Natives as sources of information about themselves and thereby insulating themselves from Native feedback. To further affirm their status as expert, they socialize clients to the role of humble supplicant.

The system for promoting the mystique of expertise is perpetuated by the failure to evaluate success with clients. Parent organizations and administrators pose virtually no requirements or expectations for evaluating workers' success with clients. The mystique, thus protected, is an entrenched agency pathology which becomes converted into client pathology as clients internalize the agencies' culturally biased, derogatory view of them.

FOOTNOTES

1. This study was funded by the Community Service and Continuing Education Program, Title 1, Higher Education Act of 1965.

2. This paper is adapted from one section of my report, The Urban Native Encounters the Social Service System (Fairbanks University of Alaska, Institute of Social, Economic and Government Research, 1974).

3. Paul Carr, Greater Anchorage Area Borough Planning Department, July 1973: personal communication.

4. The research assistants are Nettie Peratrovich and Jane Reed.

5. There are some exceptions to this. Alaska Psychiatric Institute has involved its staff in collecting and discussing date collected by staff in field trips to Native villages. Other agencies may give an occasional seminar or workshop on cross-cultural relationships.

6. Eliot Friedson, Professional Dominance: The Social Structure of Medical Care (New York: Atherton Press, 1970), p. 153.

7. George A. Brager and Sherman Barr, "Perceptions and Reality: The Poor Man's View of Social Services," in Community Action Against Poverty: Readings from Mobilization Experiences, ed. George A. Brager and Francis Purcell (New Haven: College and University Press, 1967), p. 80.

8. Erving Goffman, Asylums: Essays on the Social Situations of Mental Patients and other Inmates (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961), p. 35.

9. Peter M. Blau, The Dynamics of Bureaucracy: A Study of Inter-personal Relations in Two Government Agencies, Revised Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 36-55.

10. Fred Smith, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Family and Children Services, July 1973: personal communication.

11. Family Defense, A Bulletin of the Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc. no. 1 (Winter 1974), p. 1.

12. Dorothy M. Jones, "Child Welfare Problems in an Alaska Native Village," Social Service Review 43 (September 1969), pp. 297-309.