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Volume XXV

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHY FOSTER PARENTS CONTINUE AND CEASE TO FOSTER <i>Nolan Rindfleisch, Gerald Bean and Ramona Denby</i>	5
CLIENTILISM AND CLIENTIFICATION IMPEDIMENTS TO STRENGTHS BASED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE <i>Charles D. Cowger</i>	25
WHEN DO SINGLE MOTHERS WORK? AN ANALYSIS OF THE 1990 CENSUS DATA <i>Marta Elliott and John F. Packham</i>	39
SYMPOSIUM ON FAMILIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMUNITY AND UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS Guest Editors: Linwood Cousins, Loretta Williams and Peter Battani	
PARTNERSHIPS FOR VITALIZING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS: CELEBRATING A RETURN <i>Linwood H. Cousins</i>	61
COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES <i>Mark Joseph and Renae Ogletree</i>	71
RECLAIMING COMMUNITIES AND LANGUAGES <i>Rebecca Benjamin, Regis Pecos, Mary Eunice Romero and Lily Wong Filmore</i>	81
INTERFACING AFRICAN AMERICAN CHURCHES WITH AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS: AN EXPANDING CONTINUUM OF CARE WITH PARTIAL ANSWERS TO WELFARE REFORM <i>Barbara W. Rogers and Douglas Ronsheim</i>	105

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE IN THE
RURAL SOUTH 121

*Margaret E. Griffin, R. Dwight Hare, Patrica A. Baggerly,
Melinda M. Leftwich, Sue Standifer and Susan A. Elkins*

PARTNERS FOR CHANGE: COMMUNITY RESIDENTS
AND AGENCIES 133

*Julie O'Donnel, James Ferreira, Ralph Hurtado, Ellen Ames,
Richard E. Floyd, Jr. and Lottie M. Sebren*

WELFARE "REFORM": COM'IN' UP ON THE ROUGH
SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN 153

Loretta J. Williams, Roland Ward, and Attieno Davis

BOOK REVIEWS

Social Welfare in Global Context. James Midgley. Reviewed
by Cryl Abrahams, University of Calgary. 181

*Modern Housing for America: Policy Struggles in The New
Deal Era.* Gail Radford. Reviewed by Robert Leighninger,
Louisiana State University. 183

Social Security in the 21st Century. Eric R. Kingson and
James H. Schultz (Eds.). Reviewed by Howard Karger,
University of Houston. 186

Social Work in the 21st Century. Michael Reisch and Eileen
Gambrill. Reviewed by Daniel Harkness, Boise State
University 189

Letters to Christina: Reflections on my Life and Work. Paulo
Freire. Reviewed by Arline Prigoff, California State
University, Sacramento. 191

BOOK NOTES

Social Policy in Britain: Themes and Issues. Pete Alcock. 195

Teen Mothers and the Revolving Welfare Door. Kathleen
Mullan Harris 196

<i>Table of Contents</i>	3
<i>Social Policy: Reform, Research and Practice.</i> Patricia L. Ewalt, Edith M. Freeman, Sturart A. Kirk and Dennis L. Poole (Eds.).	197
<i>The Dual Agenda: The African-American Struggle for Civil and Economic Equality.</i> Dona Cooper Hamilton and Charles V. Hamilton.	198

Why Foster Parents Continue and Cease to Foster

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This study addressed the following question: What factors thought likely to influence the license status of foster family homes predict to continuing and what predict to ceasing to foster? This study was conducted in eight urban counties in a large Midwestern state. Using logistic regression, a 13 variable model was developed. The factors with odds ratios that predicted greater likelihood of closed license status were: when the foster mother is white, respondent wanting to adopt but being unable to do so, concern about agency red tape, disagreement with the statement that social workers reached out to foster parents, and respondents not having foster care as an income source. Factors with odds ratios that predicted greater likelihood of active license status were: named in an abuse and neglect allegation, seeing children sent back to a bad situation, not enough money/small clothing allowance, a significant personal loss of a family member, being unclear about what agency social workers expected and having too little time to get other things done.

Introduction

State departments of social services carry out a range of federal child welfare policies, including P.L. 96-272. However, licensing of foster homes and residential facilities remains exclusively a state administrative and fiscal responsibility. State departments typically administer or supervise the operation of county public children's service agencies, private child placing agencies and private non custodial agencies which recommend family foster homes for licensure.

Some state licensing officials have expressed concern over the issue of maintaining an adequate supply statewide of qualified foster homes and over the issue of possible crowding in foster homes (Biggs, 1992). Biggs questioned whether children are better protected through placement and whether infants should be placed in group care because the supply of suitable foster homes is inadequate as some counties proposed.

Nationally, there has been a crisis in child protection service prompted by a shortage of suitable foster family homes able to provide safe and supportive care when children must be placed away from their own homes. This problem has been documented in national perspective by Kamerman and Kahn (1990) and General Accounting Office reports (USGAO, 1989; USGAO, 1993).

In 1989 the GAO reported there was an increasing need for foster home placements and a decreasing number of foster parents. The GAO consulted foster care professionals and the literature on foster care to identify causes for the nationwide shortage of foster parents. Professionals said that recruiting and retaining foster parents were becoming more difficult. Three factors were seen as causes for a decreased pool of potential parents from which to recruit: 1) lack of support for foster parents in dealing with the more complex emotional, behavioral and physical problems of today's foster children, 2) the poor public image of foster care and 3) changes in society, such as more working women.

Professionals expressed the belief that pre-service training can contribute to retention of foster parents when it helps to select appropriate parents and prepares foster parents for the challenges of caring for foster children. However, a substantial number of licensed homes at any one time may not have children placed in them (Campbell & Downs, 1987; Baring-Gould et al., 1983).

Systematically developed knowledge is needed from the vantage point of foster parents about factors predicting the homes that might be no longer licensed and homes that continue to be licensed. This broadened base of information will confirm or disconfirm the views of professionals and better inform policy makers as they address the challenge of retaining on a statewide basis an increasing percent of those homes that should and can

be retained through interventions by child placing/ licensing agencies.

Empirical Background

Studies of Reasons for Leaving Foster Care

Baring-Gould et al. (1983) identified reasons for foster home closure in Alaska . They found changes in the foster parents' situation (62 percent), inadequate delivery of agency social services (26 percent), and disillusionment about what foster parenting includes (25 percent) were the three most frequently mentioned reasons for closure. About 18 percent of the homes were closed involuntarily. Similarly, Urquhart (1989) assessed how factors concerning the separation and loss experience affected retention. Significant differences between open and closed homes were found on two major dimensions: training and agency services and supports. Downs (1986), using the 1980 Westat Survey of Foster Parents in Eight States, examined characteristics of black foster parents and their relationships with child welfare agencies. She found that black foster parents differ from white foster parents in demographic characteristics, are more likely to care for children of relatives and have more problematic relationships with child welfare and collateral agencies.

Cummins (1994) proposed an interactive model of ceasing to foster. This model was grounded in fifteen in-depth interviews with randomly selected foster parents who had recently ceased to foster. Cummins' argument is that the goals of foster parents and of agencies are only partially shared and as a result, the parties conflict; this condition in turn impacts foster parents' level of trust, consciousness of differential power and how they use training and social service support. Cummins claim is that respondents were motivated to foster out of love and commitment to children. A lack of agency commitment was perceived in the generally low level of involvement of agency staff with the child and family and in negative attitudes of staff toward foster parents. The agency was seen as guided by "monetary" concerns, large caseloads and paperwork. Together, these interacting factors lead to a loss of faith in the agency and to the decision to cease to foster. These

factors were potentiated by precipitating personal stress, illness, frailty and losses through death and divorce.

The GAO survey of professionals' views (1989) reported increasing numbers of foster parents were ceasing to provide foster care because they did not receive support and positive recognition in dealing with difficulties they face in caring for today's children. Such difficulties include violent and sexually precocious behavior, risks that foster families will be exposed to communicable disease and false allegations of abuse against foster parents by birth parents (USGAO, 1989). Examples of lack of support for foster parents included failure of some social service agencies to treat foster parents with respect and to establish working partnerships among foster parents, birth parents, potential adoptive parents, children and agencies. Other issues were low reimbursement rates, little respite for foster families, difficulty obtaining liability protection, inaccessible social agency caseworkers and insufficient foster parent training.

Response to a 1989 national survey (Carbino, 1992) in the United States showed pioneer efforts of a few state foster care agencies and foster parent associations to help foster parents facing child maltreatment allegations. Most agency policies and procedures, however, reflect little awareness or understanding of the issue for foster parents, prescribe abrupt and potentially deleterious action, and may be strongly influenced by considerations of agency legal liability.

Studies of Training and Reimbursement Effects on Retention

Boyd & Remy (1979) did a follow up study of 120 licensed families two years from the time the sample was identified. The researchers reported a substantial positive effect of training on licensing outcomes even after controlling for the foster parents' personal qualities of assertiveness and activism and children's risk characteristics. Chamberlain, Moreland, and Reid (1992) sought to learn if increased support and training of foster parents plus an additional monthly stipend (n=31) had an influence on their perseverance as licensed homes. A control group (n=27) received a stipend of \$25.00. The drop out rate for the treatment group was 9.6 percent and for the control group, 25.9 percent.

Studies Predicting Status

Gidron's prospective study (1984) identified predictors of retention and turnover among service volunteer workers (n=123) in three Israeli community centers. The entire service volunteer population was examined at two points in time within an interval of six months. He sought to identify the personal (social/demographic), organizational (supervision) and attitudinal variables (satisfaction and source of rewards) which would distinguish the "stayers" (n=41) from the "leavers by choice" (n=35). Being prepared for the task, task achievement (the client makes progress), relationship with the other volunteers, and the work itself (challenging, interesting, independence, responsibility) were identified as best discriminators between the two groups.

Campbell & Downs' (1987) analysis of the 1980 Westat Survey of Foster Parents in eight States (n=1074) examined the relation between economic incentives and the supply of foster-care services. They found limited support for the hypothesis that a direct relation exists between level of board rates and the number of children in a home. Respondents in the study who had no child in placement (27 percent) were compared with parents who had a child in placement using a logistic regression model. Four independent variables in the model predicted to having a child in placement: more available time for fostering, no problems with the public agency, and controls for age (41-60) and more than a year of fostering experience (duration). Real board rates were not uniform in their influence on supply across the eight states. Tucker & Hurl (1991) investigated how foster home exit rates vary with age, and whether the age-dependence of exit rates is maintained after taking into account the effects of certain foster home characteristics and environmental conditions extant at the time of entry. The study supports the pattern of exits characterized by initially increasing and subsequently decreasing exit rates. The following control variables had significant and negative effects on exit rates: particular child (status), total number of foster homes in the population (density), an increase in foster care rates (incentives), child rights and foster homes defined as partners (institutional change) and increase in supportive services (program change).

Methodological Issues in Retention Studies

Two of the methodologically strong studies in this group were based on data collected outside the United States (Gidron, 1984; Hurl & Tucker, 1995). Only Boyd and Remy (1979) and Cummins (1994) focused on fostering in urban areas in the U. S. Designs contained serious limitations. Only one of the studies was prospective in design (Gidron, 1984) and one used a control group (Chamberlain et al., 1992). Only two of these obtained large samples (Campbell & Downs, 1987; Tucker & Hurl, 1991).

Dependent variables in these studies have been variously defined. Since the main problem in foster care has typically been perceived by many professionals as a shortage of homes, they have emphasized recruitment. This has resulted in the specification of "supply of homes" and "child in placement or not" as dependent variables of interest. Various factors have emerged as possible predictors of retention. There is need to test these alternative influences on license status in competition with each another and thereby distinguish those that are relatively strong predictors from those that are relatively weak.

Purpose

The purpose of this article is to report the results of research that attempted to develop a holistic understanding of the factors that influence the status of licensed foster homes. This objective was achieved through addressing the following question: What factors influence foster parents' decisions to continue or discontinue fostering?

Methodology

Design

The retrospective study design provided for a comparison between two large groups of foster parents from eight urban counties. All respondents were licensed as foster parents at some time during the year long period that defined the sample, though some of the respondents discontinued as licensed foster parents at some time during this same year. Because of the recency of the experience of the closed home respondents, opinions expressed

by this group, while influenced by the recency of their experience as licensed foster parents were probably affected only minimally by their status as discontinued homes at the time of data collection.

Sample

The sample in this study was composed of two groups. The first group consisted of all the foster homes that closed in eight urban counties in the state from November 1, 1991 through December 31, 1992. Enumeration of this group was provided by the State Department of Human Services using its statewide Family and Children Services Information System. The initial sample size was 809.

The second group was composed of 809 active foster homes randomly selected from the population of open homes in the selected counties as of December 31, 1992. The number of cases selected for each county was proportional to the number of closed cases in that county and to the number of foster homes licensed by public and private agencies respectively in each county. All homes selected for inclusion in the study were open homes at some time between November, 1991 and December, 1992 even if the homes that closed were open for a brief period of time.

Approximately 25 percent of the sample consists of foster parents associated with private agencies in the eight participating counties. Nearly 75 percent of the homes were licensed to accept both sexes, whereas 25 percent would accept boys or girls only. About 65 percent of the foster homes had children stay up to two years. Thirty-five percent of the homes had children stay two years and beyond. The sample was closely divided regarding expected length of stay. Fifty-three percent expected children to remain more than one year while 47 percent expected the length of stay to be less than one year. A full range of types of foster homes such as regular, treatment, infant, and relative homes were represented in the sample.

Examination of the social demographic characteristics of the total sample revealed that about half of the foster mothers were African American. The marital status of the total group consists of 60 percent who were married and about 40 percent who were single parents. About 40 percent of the sample mothers were in the

age range 18–40, while another 50 percent were in the 41–60 range. The respondents showed variation in educational level, ranging from less than 8th grade through graduate degrees. Income data revealed a similar range. Twenty-six percent of the respondents had less than \$20,000 per year income while the upper end of the distribution showed that 18 percent had more than \$50,000 a year income. The average length of service of these licensed foster parents was five years.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

A new instrument was developed for this study. Item construction was based on information collected during in-depth interviews with fifteen randomly selected closed foster homes during the summer of 1992. Themes that emerged from inductive analysis of the fifteen interviews defined constructs that guided question construction for the survey instrument. Additional items were derived from a review of studies that used diverse outcome variables such as continuance, dropping out, supply of homes and exit rates. Besides sets of questions that measured the characteristics of the home as a licensed entity and social demographic characteristics of the foster parents, the following sets of variables were measured.

1. Perceptions by foster parents of reasons for becoming licensed. Eight items were included. They were scored on a four point scale ranging from "Not at all" to "A great deal". To what extent was each of the following a reason you became a licensed foster parent? Examples of items used: Wanted to save children from harm. Wanted to increase household income.
2. Perceptions of foster parents that focused on reasons they might cease fostering. Twelve items were included. They were scored on a four point scale ranging from "Not at all" to "A great deal". To what extent do (did) the following conditions affect your willingness to continue as a licensed foster parent? Examples of items used: Conflict with the child's social worker. Dealing with the foster child's difficult behavior.
3. Foster parent's role and relationship with agency representatives. Nineteen items were included. They were scored

on a seven point Likert type scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". Examples of items used: I have been satisfied with the type of children placed with me. My foster children's social workers have treated me like a team member.

4. Opinions about fostering itself and about oneself as a foster parent. Seven items were included. They were scored on a seven point Likert type scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". Examples of items used: I believe that being a foster parent is a calling to do what I do best. If I had to, I would provide foster care without reimbursement of any kind.
5. Training effects. Six items were included. They were scored on a seven point Likert type scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". Examples of items used: I have felt competent to handle the types of children placed in my home. Foster parent training I have received has been based on my real training needs.
6. Items assessing role clarity, workload and four types of social support were derived from those used and reported by Himle et al. (1991). Seven items were included. They were scored on a five point scale ranging from "Never" to "Very often".

Data were collected through a mailed survey. Considerable efforts based on Dillman's Total Design Method (1978) were made to increase return rates. These efforts included: a letter of support from local public children services agencies, a second questionnaire mailing, phone follow-up, and a third mailing. A saturation point was reached when complaints were made by foster families about continuing to receive the instruments and phone calls. The true sample size of active homes was 804. Twenty-six homes were not reachable or did not meet the study's definition of active home. Another twenty-one homes originally enumerated as closed, returned questionnaires and indicated they were active with another agency. These were classified as active respondents. For closed homes, the enumeration was revised downward as follows: ninety respondents could not be found or did not meet the study's definition of a closed home. The true sample size of closed homes was 720.

Five hundred forty-four questionnaires were received from active homes for a 68 percent return rate. Three hundred questionnaires were received from closed homes for a 42 percent return rate. The total return rate was 55 percent. Usable questionnaires totaled 539 for active homes and 265 for closed homes. The percent of unusable instruments returned by closed homes was greater than it was for active homes. This circumstance reflected limitations of respondents attributable to literacy and inability to complete usable questionnaires because of frailty and aging.

Statistical Analysis

The primary objective of this study was to identify factors that predict the status of the foster parents as continuing to be licensed or no longer licensed. The sampling strategy was designed specifically to collect information from two groups of foster parents, those who were closed and those who were active at some time during a single year. This two-group distinction formed the primary dependent variable of interest in the study. The statistical method of choice when modeling a two-group, or dichotomous, dependent variable is logistic regression. Logistic regression has a rich history as a powerful statistical tool with uses primarily in economics and health care (Cox, 1977; Hosmer and Lemeshow, 1989). However, interest is growing in using the approach in social work research (Morrow-Howell and Proctor, 1992; Dattalo, 1994).

The results presented in the next section were obtained from an analysis and model building strategy suggested in Hosmer and Lemeshow (1989). As a first step in analysis, the field of possible predictors was narrowed by a simple examination of distributional properties. Items that were highly skewed or exhibited other distributional problems were dropped, especially when it was believed that appropriate transformations would not correct these problems. Next, each measure in the reduced variable set was examined jointly with license status. Measures related to license status as indicated by the likelihood chi-square ($p < .05$) were used as a basis for logistic regression model building. Finally, a step-wise logistic regression procedure was used to identify a statistically optimized set of measures that predict the status of foster homes.

Results

Table 1 presents the results from the logistic regression procedure. These findings were obtained using a stepwise model identification process. While stepwise approaches need to be constructed and interpreted with caution (Cohen and Cohen, 1983), the exploratory nature of the study and the goal of optimizing the predictive, not explanatory, capacity of the model justified the use of the stepwise approach. Regression coefficients and standard errors are shown for each variable in the columns labeled *B* and *S.E.*, respectively. The Wald statistic and its related significance (*Sig*) are shown in the next two columns. The Wald statistic tests the null hypothesis that a predictor's regression coefficient equals zero. Since this model was statistically optimized through a stepwise procedure, all of the variables retained have high Wald values that are statistically significant. Finally, the last column (Exp B) presents an important measure - the odds ratio.

Predictors of Discontinuance

The odds ratios discussed in this section are linked to variables that predict that a foster home will close. For example, the odds ratio for foster mother's race is 1.62. Because of the way race was scaled, this ratio indicates that the odds of a home closing increases about 1.6 times when the foster mother is white. Similarly, the odds of a home closing increases about 1.8 times when foster care is not a source of income. Two variables had odds ratios over 2.0. They are "Wanted to adopt but was not able to" and "Agency red tape." In the case of the former item, the odds ratio indicates that the odds of a home being closed increases just over two times when a reason for becoming a foster parent is that the respondent wished to adopt but was unable to do so. In the case of the item concerning red tape, the odds of a home being closed increased 2.1 times when there was an increase in the negative perception of agency red tape. Finally, three variables had modest odds ratios predicting closure, namely, received less support from other foster parents, had several workers at the same time and perceived that social workers did not reach out.

Table 1

Logistic Regression of Factors Likely to Influence the License Status of Foster Homes (n=804)

Variable	B	S.E	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Foster mother's race	.4848	.1770	7.5010	.0062	1.6238
Foster care as income source	.5906	.1792	10.8571	.0010	1.8051
Wanted to adopt but was not able to	.6942	.2144	10.4820	.0012	2.0021
Not enough money / small allowance	-.5449	.2433	5.0154	.0251	.5799
Significant personal loss	-.7445	.3683	4.0875	.0432	.4750
Agency red tape	.7452	.1896	15.4519	.0001	2.1068
Child abuse / neglect allegation	-1.0364	.2670	15.0726	.0001	.3547
Child sent back to a bad situation	-.8383	.1776	22.2751	.0000	.4324
Support from other foster parents	.4610	.1901	5.8806	.0153	1.5857
Had several workers at same time	.4723	.1851	6.5084	.0107	1.6036
Workers reached out to me	.5792	.1825	10.0682	.0015	1.7845
Clear re: worker's expectations	-.3781	.1933	4.0099	.0452	.6790
Little time to do other things	-.5250	.2780	3.5658	.0590	.5916
Constant	-1.3138	.9009	2.1412	.1434	

-2*Log Likelihood=1019.305 (constant)

-2*Log Likelihood=855.630 (all variables)

Model chi-square=163.675, df=13, p < .001

Pearson chi-square=781.722, df=790, p=.576

Predictors of Continuance

The remaining set of odds ratios, those with values less than 1.0, correspond to the variables that predict continuation of being licensed. An interpretation of these ratios is that unit increases in each variable predicts an increased likelihood of being in the sampled group of continuing homes rather than in the sampled group of homes no longer licensed. For example, the variable with the lowest odds ratio is "Being named in an allegation of child abuse/ neglect" (.354). This finding can be interpreted as the increase in the odds predicting continuance as a licensed home.

The interpretation of this result must take into account the way questions were framed. Respondents were asked "To what extent do (did) the following conditions affect your willingness to continue as a licensed foster parent?" Although the result may appear counterintuitive, "Named in an allegation of abuse/neglect" predicted to continuing to be licensed. This finding suggests that being named in an allegation operates as a source of stress which affects willingness of those who are licensed to continue to foster. Five of the twelve measured conditions thought likely to affect willingness to continue were significant in the final regression result. However, none of these five variables predicted closure of foster homes.

A similar interpretation can be attributed to other independent variables in this same set. For example, "Not enough money/ small allowance" with an odds ratio of .579, "Having a significant personal loss" with an odds ratio of .475 and "Seeing a child sent back to a bad situation" with an odds ratio of .432 predicted continuance of being licensed.

Two measures that assess the goodness of fit of the final model are also shown in Table 1. The classic statistic that measures fit, the Pearson chi-square, has a value of .576. The Pearson chi-square assesses the fit between the actual status of foster homes and the status, or probability, of foster homes predicted by the model. Mid-level probabilities are desirable for this measure since the retention of the null hypothesis of no difference between actual and predicted probabilities indicates the model fits the data.

The second measure of fit in Table 1 is the model chi-square. This statistic tests the null hypothesis that the regression coeffi-

cients for all the variables in the model, taken together, equal zero. It is equivalent to the omnibus F test in multiple regression. The chi-square value of 163.675 with 13 degrees of freedom is statistically significant and indicates a model that fits the data well. For this statistic a small probability is desirable since we want to reject the null hypothesis of regression coefficients equaling zero.

Implications

The purpose of this research was to develop a holistic understanding of the factors that influence retention and ceasing to foster among licensed foster homes. In pursuit of this objective we addressed the following question: What factors influence foster parents' decisions to continue or discontinue fostering?

Personal Perceptions/characteristics

Results confirm the significance of two variables identified by Cummins (1994) in her qualitative study. Respondents became licensed because they were not able to adopt through other channels and were encouraged to adopt through foster care. This circumstance predicted that foster homes would no longer be licensed. It appears that respondents sought to adopt and when they were successful they left licensed fostering quite satisfied.

Significant personal loss of a family member was the second variable from this set. It predicted to continuing to be licensed. In this case, the implication seems quite straightforward. Agencies should take into account that foster parents while they have children in their care are vulnerable as are all families, to the stresses and losses particular to their stage in the life cycle. Among these are occurrences such as illness, divorce, death and other types of separation. Neither should withdrawal from active fostering be viewed as permanent for all who discontinue since about 20 percent of the foster homes no longer licensed reported they intended to return to fostering. It is noteworthy that other measured motivations for becoming licensed failed to distinguish between the two groups.

Role and relationship with agency representatives

That the presence/absence of problems with their agency and

social workers operates as an influence on license status (Campbell & Downs, 1987; Baring-Gould et al. , 1983; Jones, 1975) was confirmed in the findings of this study. Seven variables contained in the results reflected this set.

Carbino's (1992) concern about how protective agencies deal with allegations of abuse/neglect in foster homes is mirrored in the concerns of the respondents in this study about being named in an abuse/neglect allegation. At a minimum, public agencies should conduct investigations of maltreatment in foster homes through an independent investigative unit separate from the administration of the placing agency. Local agencies should not be put in the position of conducting investigations of their own foster homes lest the main effect communicated be that the agency places its own reputation above that of the well being and continuance of the foster home. States should be alert to the need to establish FAST Programs (Foster Allegations Support Teams) in the interest of maintaining and reclaiming as many foster homes as feasible following an allegation.

The variable "Seeing children sent back to a bad situation" was grounded in qualitative interviews with closed homes (Cummins, 1994). One significant test of foster parents' trust in the decisions of social workers and a reflection of their own view of fostering occurs when a very young foster child is reunited with its own family. This is an area in which partially shared goals can be viewed as grounded in differences in role conception among agencies and foster parents as between rational and natural systems perspectives (Hurl & Tucker, 1995). One pilot interview revealed extended, vivid and painful documentation of a foster family's adverse experience with its agency upon seeing a child sent back to a bad situation. This conflict resulted in a protracted power struggle over the future of a second young child subsequently placed in their home. The potential for foster parents to have differences with their agency over permanency planning philosophy or over the wisdom of its application in specific cases is enduring and meaningful.

The results of this study affirmed that clarity of role definition/role ambiguity and workload (Himle et al., 1991; Biggerstaff & Rodwell, 1993) influenced license status. The variables role clarity and workload, i.e., left with little time to do other things,

are predictors of continuing to be licensed. The former finding highlights the importance of well articulated policy and role definitions presented and reinforced deliberately and accountably by staff with foster parents especially in view of the rates of staff turnover typical of the child welfare field. Often foster parents have to work with more than one social worker at the same time. While the study results affirm the importance of foster parents' being clear about what agency social workers expect of them, the results did not reveal that foster parents perceived that they were viewed as team members by agency staff members.

Consistent interpretation should be made regarding services available to foster parents including respite from the often consuming demands and feelings of responsibility experienced by foster parents when they accept the challenge of caring for the community's children. Getting support from other foster parents confirmed a similar finding of Gidron (1984). Results reinforced Downs' (1986) finding regarding the importance of social workers' reaching out to facilitate foster parents' involvement. These results highlight the importance of agencies' actively using multiple, varied and ongoing approaches to support foster parents.

Agency policy and procedures

Low reimbursement rates and agency red tape were identified as barriers to continuance by the GAO (1989) and Chamberlain et al. (1992). Hurl & Tucker (1995) reported that reimbursement plays a role in explaining the persistence of foster parents. These claims were confirmed by study results. Not enough money, and in particular small clothing allowances, predicted to continuing to be licensed. Where funding limitations are unavoidable in the short run, honest acknowledgment by staff of this circumstance and credible pursuit of alternative resources would be a minimum skilled response to the conscientious concerns of foster parents. Troubling however, is the frustration which arises when foster parents conclude they are getting the "run around" when they seek special allowances or individual attention for the children in their care.

Social demographic factors

Black and white foster parents participated in this study in almost equal numbers. Being white was a predictor of foster home closure. While the point in the life cycle at which black foster parents became licensed is later than for whites, being black was a predictor of continuing to be licensed. Although impressionistic studies of the supply of foster home beds in relation to estimated need have portrayed black participation in foster care in problematic terms, black participation in foster care need not be viewed as problematic from the viewpoint of retention in this sample.

Several variables thought likely to predict to foster home status did not do so. These were: reasons to become licensed, training effects, opinions about fostering itself, entry into paid work (Campbell & Downs, 1987), preparation and sense of achievement (Gidron, 1985) the length of time the home was licensed, separation and loss issues (Urquhart, 1989) and agency affiliation whether public or private.

The absence of findings as reported above suggests that foster parents share non-differentiating reasons for becoming licensed, a non-differentiating experience in training and preparation and in coping with separation and loss and a common experience as affiliates of public or private child caring agencies. The fact that continuing foster parents defined their situation in essentially negative terms should be the occasion for heightened resolve to improve policy and practice in regard, for example, to "agency red tape", "seeing a child sent back to a bad situation" and "named in an allegation of abuse/neglect".

Limitations of the Study

Securing a higher return rate from closed homes was a challenge. The non-responding foster families probably were more geographically mobile, some were frail elderly, some adopted foster children and did not see the study as involving them, while some sampled homes were disaffected. Difficulty in reaching some closed homes for follow-up occurred because a considerable portion of these homes had unlisted telephone numbers. Those foster homes no longer licensed that returned questionnaires may have been more like those continuing to foster and less like the

discontinuing homes which did not respond. In this regard it can be noted that the mean score on an item to measure overall satisfaction with the fostering experience was identical for the two groups. Selection bias in the light of the problematic return rate of closed homes may have had an influence on the results since possible variability may have been truncated in a number of measures. This in turn may have had an impact on the study's ability to detect differences between continuing and discontinuing homes in addition to those reported here.

Future Research

Efforts to test the interactive model argued by Cummins (1994) should start with the assumption that goals are only partially shared by agencies and foster parents and that understanding retention should take the resulting conflict as a starting point. Replication of the study reported here with a broader sample would extend generalizability beyond the eight urban counties in this large Midwestern state. Further attention to clarifying the measurement characteristics of the instrument is also indicated.

Conclusion

The findings of this study are important because they reflect the perspectives of foster parents. They also shed light in a holistic way on the challenges facing professionals and officials responsible for the maintenance of licensed foster homes. Also they reveal the relative strength of factors likely to influence license status.

Jones (1975) concluded his article on foster parents who cease to foster with an observation that is germane to the concerns of licensing officials and to the findings of this study.

The view that higher recruitment is the answer may be incorrect. It may be more fruitful to examine critically the assessment, preparation, and support given to foster parents after recruitment. There is little to be gained from higher recruitment of foster parents if large numbers of recruits cease to foster after only a short period as an active foster parent.

It seems imperative that knowledgeable, deliberate and competent attention be given to work with licensed foster parents after they have been licensed.

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Clientilism and Clientification: Impediments to Strengths Based Social Work Practice

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A strengths-based practice perspective is, at best, weak and, perhaps, irrelevant in social service structures that are powered by social control values, driven by the market economy, and protected by professional self interests. This paper proposes that the relationship between the patron and the client, as expressed by the metaphor "clientelism" in the development literature, and "clientification", as described by Habermas, are informative as significant obstacles to the implementation of strengths-based social work practice and social service delivery. The paper argues that for strengths-based practice to be viable, it and its advocates must confront more fundamental change by becoming more policy focused and implementing action strategies to overcome fundamental barriers while generating empirical evidence of its efficacy.

During the past decade there has been an increasing social work interest in strengths and a strengths based, social work practice perspective (DeJong and Miller, 1995, Goldstein 1990, Kisthardt, 1993, Rapp et. al. 1994, Saleebey, 1996). This perspective was developed for and has been primarily intended for those personal social services whereby the helping process principally relies on interaction between a worker and a client. While obstacles to the implementation of this perspective have, on occasion, been casually referred to by these writers, the impediments are far more fundamental than have been indicated. A strengths-based practice perspective is, at best, weak and, perhaps, irrelevant in social service structures that are powered by social control values, driven by the market economy, and protected by professional self interests. This paper proposes that the relationship between

the patron and the client, as expressed by the metaphor "clientelism" in the development literature, and "clientification", as described by Habermas, are informative as significant obstacles to the implementation of strengths based, social work practice and social service delivery. Indeed, clientelism and clientification are associated with dependency, the antithesis to the purposes of strengths-based models. Vital change in how "clients" are viewed and encountered is not possible without essential transformation that reflects new power relationships in the structuring of professional roles, the organization of services and social policy choices. Finally, the paper will argue that for strength-based practice to be viable, it and its advocates must confront more fundamental change by becoming more policy focused and implementing action strategies to overcome fundamental barriers while generating empirical evidence of its efficacy.

The paper is based on the notion that the purpose of social work is the expansion of choice with "choice" referring to the range of social and economic alternatives available to individuals and collectives. As such, choice provides people with control over existing problem situations and, in turn, their own lives. For people to be able to make choices, they must have viable options available. Therefore, social work is also about the distribution of resources and the promotion of social and economic justice. Maximizing choice is a job left undone for social work, social services, and, indeed, for the welfare state. The welfare state and its two institutional instrumentalities that are of concern in this paper, social services and the social work profession, evolved as a response to social upheaval brought on by free market economics and economies during the waning years of the industrial revolution. While they have experienced some growing pains and periodically faced opposition from the political right, social services and the profession of social work are essentially resilient, and with proper direction, will likely live to a ripe old age. They have been and will continue to be resilient because they receive their nourishment from the excesses of "free" markets, and it appears that "free" markets will be around for a long time. Part of the job left undone, and the concern of this paper, is for social work and the social services to come to terms with the issue of dependency, wherein dependency is related to the worker/client relationship.

The potential for social work and the social services to create dependency has been neither sufficiently considered nor fully debated as a critical factor in the development of social welfare policy. Proponents of the welfare state have found it necessary to defend social programs on this matter from both the right and the left and have not done so in a convincing manner. In the United States and Western Europe and in many other parts of the world, welfare reform, based on notions that the welfare state creates dependency, has become a popular agenda of the political right during the last two decades. Coincidentally, advocates of practice models based on notions of empowerment and strengths that have become prominent during this same time period are also concerned about dependency (Kondrat 1995, Hanna and Robinson 1994, McKnight 1995, Penderhughes 1994, Saleebey 1996). However, it is important to differentiate between the dependency concerns of the political right and the dependency concerns of those who promote a strengths-based social work practice. There are many differences between these two groups, though both are concerned about "choice." It seems apparent that the political right is most concerned that the welfare state will hinder the health of free markets and economic choices assumed to be available to all its citizens in a capitalist society. In particular they are concerned that government involvement in income distribution, housing, health care, and employment will create dependency. In contrast, the typical dependency concern for those who promote strengths-based practice is that deficit and pathology based models of practice utilized in personal social services will lead to dependency. Those who support strengths-based practice assume and/ or support the notion that income distribution, decent housing, adequate health care, and the right to a job are basic rights of all citizens and represent essential responsibilities of government (Saleebey, 1996).

Clientelism and Development

During the decades of the 70's and the 80's, various critics of international development programs used the metaphor of "clientelism" as having special meaning related to what was wrong with development programs instituted in third world

countries (Randall and Theobald, 1985; Legg and Lemarchand, 1972; Cammack, 1982; Clapham, 1982; Cardoso, 1973; R. Theobald, 1982). The central idea of this criticism was that development programs, whether initiated externally or internally, had the common characteristic of fostering dependence. This, of course, was troubling to those who believed the the primary concern of social welfare policy and social development to be the expansion of choice.

The concept "clientelism" was part of the nomenclature of "dependency theory," a popular theory of development that grew out of the 1970's. This theory was a response to the prominent "modernization" theory, a romantic notion of development of the previous decade that had associated development with progress. Modernization theory fostered the establishment of networks and institutions in developing countries that were similar to those of advanced industrial societies and was built on a belief system that free market innovation, increasing productivity, and growth would result in integrative change, more and better jobs, and greater choice, (Rustow, 1967; Coleman, 1960; Apter, 1965; Huntington, 1971; Almond and Powell, 1966). The assumptions of modernization theory were severely criticized on a number of grounds and from various perspectives, including severe criticism by a number of writers associated with or identified as "dependency" theorists. Their criticisms described the theoretical and empirical contradictions of growth such as class conflict and the changing composition of social classes, growing inequality, compensatory political controls, the "marginalization" of the labor force through capital-intensive industry, the rising social overhead costs such as higher crime rates, family breakup, pollution, and the fact that there are insufficient natural resources to facilitate or sustain world wide development at a level experienced by the West.

While dependency theory has a number of analytic and prescriptive limitations (Apter, pp. 29-31; Randall and Theobald, pp. 99-136), its basic criticism of modernization theory and its description of the process of clientelism essentially have been unchallenged. Central to the idea of clientelism is the patron-client relationship characterized by; 1) a distributional system of goods and services based on an unequal or asymmetrical relationship

between a superior patron and an inferior client or client group, and 2) an exchange between patron and client that does not allow the client choices (Randall and Theobald, 1985). The metaphor, "clientelism," was initially used by anthropologists studying tribal societies. When kinship alone was unable to guarantee the necessities of existence for peasant cultivators, their critical situations were alleviated by their attachment to wealthy and powerful individuals (Powell, 1970). Clientelism may take the form of exchange of material goods for labor, votes and or informal support. Ultimately, it limits people's choices and makes them dependent on the patron. Frank (1969), in his study of Brazil, and Cardoso and Faletto's (1976) Latin American work, argue that the interrelationship of the international economy, the nation state and the alliances of social classes within the states perpetuate an international third-world dependency, and, in turn, a patrimonial relationship within the state.

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable internally to a patrimonial system in that they tend to have a large political, economic and social gap between those who run them and their citizens. They must maintain themselves by extracting resources from the domestic economy, and they must provide benefits for their citizens. The people who run the state and provide the services are drawn overwhelmingly from the most educated and articulate sections of the population. In their hands the state becomes not only a benefit in itself but a means to defend itself against domestic discontent. The gap between the government and the citizens is bridged through a patron-client relationship which provides a political security for those in power (Clapham, 1955). Social workers often play similar roles in low income neighborhoods in this country. While clientelism has something to offer both parties, it does not allow for choices. Since it is founded on the premise of inequality, the benefits between patrons and clients are unequal. In addition, Clapham has argued that clientelism serves to intensify ethnic conflicts, is inefficient in allocation (the wrong persons get the job) and encourages corruption. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the modernization theory has been revived, with free markets becoming even more central in the ideology of development theory.

Clientelism and Clientification in Personal Social Services

The concept "client" and the actual existence of clients in the human services are a twentieth century phenomena arriving concurrently with the development of personal social services and the advent of helping professions to staff those services. In the modern welfare state, particularly in personal social services, this dynamic is exacerbated by the rising professional class of experts (i.e., helping professions including social work) who have high investment in their own status in the society and are able to institutionalize their increasing status through legal and bureaucratic instrumentalities. "Client" can only be understood in the context of a professional helper who has a particular kind of expertise that is to be applied to the "client's" problem. The description of the actors, their objectives, and their roles in a typical social worker-client interview will illustrate an unequal or asymmetrical relationship between a superior patron and an inferior client or client group. The paradigm that has helped perpetuate clienthood is a social political phenomenon (Holmes, 1996, p 151).

Clientelism represents a unique type of labeling in a professionalized and specialized society whereby people receive the label and social role of "client" and, in the process, forfeit a degree of power and independence. Habermas (1974) argued some 20 years ago that a product of the welfare state, as it was being developed in Western Europe, was a "clientification" process whereby the citizen was being relegated to a new status of "client." In the process, his or her "life world" was being colonized, depriving the individual of his or her social competence. Clientification represents a phenomenon similar to clientelism but with a greater emphasis on the process involved and the personal effects the process has on the individual. As an example of Habermas' notion of the expansion of client status in the welfare state of the developed world, in Illinois, as in many other states, all children who are wards of the state must have a DSMIV designation in order to receive service. Holmes (1996) describes how professionals make clients from people through a process of substituting, revising, and influencing the "client's" story until the meaning the client ascribes to it is replaced with an "official" story, which is then

supported and reinforced by existing professional, cultural, bureaucratic and economic factors.

The Relationship of Clientelism and Clientification to Powerlessness and Dependency

The significance of clientelism and clientification to a strengths-based practice is related to issues of powerlessness and dependency. As indicated above, the role of client is a role of powerlessness. Clientification and powerlessness are also cyclical in nature. People become clients because they are powerless and become powerless because they are clients. The importance of powerlessness is found in the social sciences under a number of rubrics representing different theoretical perspectives (Mirowsky and Ross, 1989, p. 132). The literature on learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975); locus of control (Rotter, 1966) in cognitive psychology; "fatalism" by anthropologists (e.g. Madsen, 1973); and personal efficacy (Kohn, 1972), self-directedness (Kohn and Schooler, 1982), and mastery (Pearlin et. al., 1981) in sociology, all provide research evidence on the importance of people believing they have control over their own lives. Mirowsky and Ross' review of research of a sense of "mastery" (1989), and their own research (1983) found that a sense of mastery is associated with "achievement, status, education, wealth, and work . . . whereas fatalism and a sense of powerlessness are associated with failure, stagnation, dependency, poverty, economic strain, and work that is simple, routine, and closely supervised". The sense of powerlessness not only is depressing and demoralizing in and of itself, but, worse, it can "undermine the will to seek and take effective action in response to problems (Mirowsky and Ross, 1989)." Powerlessness and being a client are both related to dependency, whereby a person or group is relegated to a social role and is perceived by all parties (including the 'dependent') as being solely a recipient with little of value to contribute. The dependent thereafter habitually survives by meeting minimum requirements of disequal exchanges. The dependent in this context has little power as he or she is reliant on more powerful external resources. The exchange is an unequal or asymmetrical relationship between a superior patron and an inferior client or

client group. Clientification is problematic because it is associated with a decrease in the client's sense of control, and concomitantly, a sense of powerlessness. Dependency and a sense of powerlessness become mutually reinforcing, whereby the person has the expectancy that his or her own behavior cannot determine the occurrence of future outcomes beyond those that are prescribed by more powerful outside forces.

There are various manifestations of this patron-client relationship in Western societies. One example would be the local machine politics of U. S cities whereby family members become dependent on political structures as precinct captains deliver jobs and services and become a resource for family problems in exchange for votes. In the modern welfare state it may be a "contract" between a worker and a low income single parent who has been accused of neglect and must perform certain identified behaviors in order to have a child returned; a mental health "patient" who must perform "life skills" and/or "behavior objectives" in order to receive additional services and or emotional support from the worker and the program; a public aid recipient who must attend employment socialization classes in order to continue to receive assistance for her children; or a mental health patient who must know and follow the rules, be contrite and be well socialized to his/her appropriate client role, give proper respect and homage to his or her "workers," and behave as if the agency and/or the worker knows best.

Declientizing Social Work Practice

Practice models founded on notions of empowerment and strengths provide great potential for social services to provide people with more viable and additional choices. Indeed, such models typically promote notions of mutuality, collaboration, and partnership (Penderhughes, 1994; Saleebey, 1996; Kisthardt, 1996). However, with few exceptions these models are presented in the context of personal social services, providing guidance to the worker while assuming the worker has practice prerogatives in how he or she views and interacts with clients. An appropriate next step for advocates of this approach would be to become more focused on the fundamental structural and institutional changes required to support and nurture practice.

Few realize how radical-strengths based practice is, if taken seriously. A fundamental change in the worker-client relationship requires a paradigm shift that would truly be a professional revolution. There is ample evidence that the profession has been moving in the opposite direction with its obsession with status (Specht and Courtney, 1993). Change that would declientize would require major shifts regarding notions of mission and purpose of the social services and support from professional groups that are willing to give up power and assist clients to acquire power.

Continuing the Agenda for Strengths Based Practice

Where do we go from here? For a strengths-based practice paradigm to have significant impact, declientification must occur. For that to occur a number of alternatives appear necessary. The models and perspectives of strengths-based practice must become conceptually more holistic to include the political, structural, and organizational ramifications of the approach and move beyond the narrow focus of promoting client strengths in direct practice perspectives to critical analysis and action at the institutional, organizational and policy levels. For social welfare policy to address this problem, it is crucial that policy choices are promoted whereby exchange between the providers of services and recipients is directed toward alleviating unequal power relationships, maximizing recipient choices, and maximizing recipient control. Strategies developed to this end have been utilized in the past.

Some have argued that the label of "client" in and of itself is depreciating and should be changed (Sanders, 1989. Falck, 1988). Dunst et. al (1994), after much deliberation, agreed to refer to their "clients" as "help seekers." Others have argued for the use of "consumer" while still others have used "co-producers" (Abrahamson, 1989). Changing nomenclature is not fundamental change. However, the use of the word "client" creates a dilemma as there does not seem to be an alternative word that is sufficiently descriptive while at the same time broadly applicable. Minimally, it would seem that the word "client" should only be used to represent a voluntary relationship whereby an informed person voluntarily enters into a relationship with a professional. Such a

relationship assumes choice and provides a better opportunity for choice to be viable in the interaction between the worker and the "client." When the purpose of social work practice is clearly social control, such as working with involuntary people, strengths-based practice is particularly important as the implementation of choice is hindered by the involuntary nature of the relationship. Unthinkingly, calling these people "clients" in the same manner as referring to other people who voluntarily utilize the services of the social worker would suggest a more generalized acceptance of the client-worker relationship as representing social control and disequal power. In resolving this dilemma, the choice of a name for those whom we have traditionally called "clients" should be carefully considered, but should not be a distraction from more fundamental change that would equalize the power relationship between social workers and those with whom they work; that peoples' strengths may be utilized and dependency alleviated.

To maximize choice is to give up power. The strengths based practice literature is clear about that reality in the description of direct practice with individual families and groups. However, for strengths-based practice to become viable it must be dogged about strengths, empowerment, and action at all levels of practice. It may require joining with clients, social workers and others in social action to influence the profession, social policy and/or service delivery. Collective action is an obvious instrument for the utilization and realization of peoples' strengths and therefore a deterrent to dependency. Self interest motivated by the promise of free market rewards is more powerful than impressive ideas. Strengths-based practice is not going to win people over or influence policy on the basis of its values or theoretical foundation. Without collective action a strengths perspective doesn't have a chance against managed care and other recent changes in the delivery of social services that are now driven by market forces.

Finally, in the absence of empirical evidence of effectiveness (i.e., that strengths-based practice really does empower and decrease dependency), the richness of the ideas of strengths-based practice is incomplete, inadequate, and naive. While ideology is important and, indeed, powerful, if people believe it, social work practice is increasingly influenced by empirical evidence demonstrating effectiveness. The epistemological debates that

have occurred in social work over the last two decades have little relevance to, and even less impact on, decision making in the policy and planning world of social services where empirical evidence is increasingly valued. Strengths-based models of practice and new understandings of the relationship of workers to clients must be tested. The work that has been done is promising (e.g. Chamberlain and Rapp, 1991; Parsons and Cox, 1994; Rapp, 1996), but has just begun.

In the United States we went through a stage of "maximum feasible participation of the poor." In the United Kingdom and the United States we have written about, experimented with, and argued over issues of residual versus universal services, the means test, client vouchers, clients as consumers, clients as co-producers, and client rights. Yet, clients are still clients with their status, control, and power relationship to the body politic and institutions of social provision remaining essentially the same, if not deteriorating, over the past two decades. Dependency is a difficult issue and perhaps more complex than is indicated herein. However, if one is to confront the problem of dependency, minimally the role and status of the client as such relates to control, choice, and empowerment, is crucial to the analysis, development and implementation of social policy. In fact, in the absence of such an essential consideration, social policy and provision will continue to benefit the providers and assure that clients will remain clients.

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When Do Single Mothers Work? An Analysis of the 1990 Census Data

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This study analyzes the relative effect of the amount of public assistance income received one year on the probability that a single mother is employed the following year compared to a variety of other determinants of employment status. The analysis is based on a national sample which was drawn from the Public Use Micro data 5 percent Sample (PUMS) of the 1990 U.S. Census. It consists of the 275,744 female householders who were divorced, separated, widowed or never married, and living with their own children age 18 and under. Logistic regression was utilized to calculate the probability of being employed in 1990 according to sources and amounts of income in 1989, level of education, age, work experience, number and age of children, race, and marital status. The results indicate that greater amounts of public assistance income reduced the probability of being employed. However, several other factors—including race-ethnicity, family form and size, educational background and previous earnings—were significant, independent determinants of labor-force status. In particular, African-American women, women with children under six, women with relatively low levels of education and low earnings in the previous year, and never-married women all faced a reduced probability of being employed in 1990 regardless of how much public assistance income they received in 1989. The paper concludes with an assessment of the implications of these findings for current debates on the relationships among welfare receipt, work incentives, and employment.

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Introduction

Under what conditions do single mothers engage in paid employment? Conventional wisdom, including proponents of welfare revisions abolishing AFDC as an entitlement, suggests that there is a direct, negative relationship between the receipt of welfare benefits and employment. Indeed, recently passed legislation is premised on the idea that time-bound limits on assistance *alone* will compel most recipients to participate in work activities. Welfare reform initiatives are also based on the assumption that individual deficits, rather than personal and family resources, are the primary barriers to economic independence (Marcenko & Fagan, 1996; Rank, 1994; Sidel, 1996). There have been few systematic empirical efforts, however, to isolate the relative effects of individual characteristics compared to the effects of welfare benefits on single mothers' labor force participation. The purpose of this study is to make an empirical assessment of the complex process underlying single mothers' attachment to the labor force that is informed by a qualitative understanding of the trade-offs between employment and welfare. The analyses will demonstrate that there is a negative relationship between public assistance income received one year and the probability of being employed the year following. However, it will also reveal that welfare benefits are by no means the only component of single mothers' lives that determine whether or not they are employed. Women's family responsibilities, education, work experience, and prior earnings play key roles in determining their employment status.

Single Mothers, Welfare Receipt, and Employment Status

What do we know about the employment patterns of single mothers on welfare, and the factors that hinder or enhance their chances for securing jobs that meet their cost of living? Most single mothers work for pay at least part of the time they are receiving welfare benefits, although much of their employment remains unreported to the welfare officials to avoid a loss of benefits commensurate with their earnings; indeed, a well-know disincentive

to work of the AFDC program was that reported earnings were essentially rendered a 100 percent tax by a reduction in welfare benefits equal to the amount earned (Jencks & Edin, 1990; Harris, 1993). According to Harris, as many as one-third of AFDC recipients worked for pay at any given time, while Edin and Jencks maintain that no single mother in their sample was able to subsist without supplementing their welfare checks with other sources of income. Thus, the empirical question addressed here, when do single mothers engage in paid employment, must be modified to reflect the reality that most single mothers work for pay even when on welfare. The more distinctive question then becomes, when do single mothers *officially* work for pay? Specifically, when do single mothers find and take jobs that they must report to their local welfare agency? Or, in cost-benefit terms, when do they find work that is rewarding enough in terms of pay and benefits that it makes economic sense to forgo welfare payments and Medicaid?

Recent research on the determinants of employment among single mothers on welfare highlight the importance of women's educational levels, family size and number of public assistance programs benefits are received from (Harris, 1993; Rank, 1994). These studies indicate that single mothers who are high school graduates and who have relatively fewer children are significantly more likely to become employed. Higher levels of education result in more job skills and job-seeking skills, and hence, more job opportunities, while family size is tied to women's difficulty securing high-quality, affordable child care. Single mothers receiving benefits from two or three programs compared to one program are less likely to become employed (Rank, 1994). Women who receive benefits from multiple programs such as AFDC, food stamps and Medicaid are less likely to become employed because they have more to lose by doing so; that is, the type of jobs they are able to acquire are unlikely to provide health benefits or to allow women to break even financially after taking into account child care costs.

The effects of women's own characteristics on their employment status should be considered in the context of their local labor markets. Human capital will only lead to employment when there are job openings nearby that are commensurate with women's qualifications. It is difficult to model the structure of labor markets

in great detail but unemployment rates do serve as an overall indicator of the availability of jobs. Research results are mixed: In some studies, the effect of local unemployment rates on single mothers' employment is significant and negative, as expected (Harris, 1993), while others find that it is significant and positive (Rank, 1994). Harris' finding is more convincing since she uses a nationally representative sample (the Panel Study of Income Dynamics), whereas Rank uses data from Wisconsin only. Relatively higher rates of unemployment reflect a lack of job opportunities in the local area which would presumably depress single mothers' odds of being employed. The current study is unable to test the effects of local unemployment rates owing to the obligation of the Census Bureau to maintain confidentiality by suppressing data related to individuals' geographic location. However, the role of job opportunities can be inferred from women's history of labor force attachment and earnings. We assume that women with a history of weak attachment to the labor force and low earnings have had fewer opportunities in their local labor markets to secure steady, well-paid jobs.

Although there is an extensive literature within economics on the determinants of labor force participation, very few studies have been concerned specifically with female heads of household (Moffitt, 1992). What literature does exist dates back to 1981 and earlier, (see Danziger, Haveman, & Plotnick, 1981) and suggests that AFDC income does reduce the number of hours single mothers work for pay by anywhere from 1 to 9 hours per week. However, if female heads increased their work hours by this amount, the resultant increment to their earnings would be unlikely to bring them out of poverty (Moffitt, 1992). Thus, the economics literature that does exist indicates that AFDC income is a work disincentive, but without it, single mothers would remain in poverty (Butler, 1996).

Although it is commonly believed that people are poor because they are lazy and lack motivation to find a job (Kluegal and Smith, 1986), there is no empirical evidence to support the widespread existence of such attitudes among the poor. On the contrary, the results of in-depth qualitative research on single mothers consistently shows that they would prefer to support themselves and not depend on public assistance if only it were

possible to make ends meet on the types of jobs available to them (Polakow, 1993; Rank, 1994; Schein, 1993). Furthermore, receiving welfare benefits has negative psychological effects on women, progressively lowering their self-esteem the longer they are receiving it (Elliott, 1996). In sum, there is no evidence of any incentive to be on welfare other than sheer economic necessity of single mothers with limited opportunities in the paid labor force. Therefore, the analysis and interpretations in this study are premised on the assumption that single mothers make rational choices between continued welfare receipt and "official" employment, balancing the opportunities and constraints that face them.

Research Questions

Three inter-related research questions guide the analysis undertaken in this study:

*First, what are the descriptive similarities and differences among single mothers by receipt of public assistance income?*¹

For example, do single mothers on public assistance tend to have more children in the household than single mothers who do not receive public assistance income? Similarly, are the former group less educated, on average, than the latter, and more likely to have never married, rather than divorced, widowed or separated? How do the average earnings of women on public assistance compare to those who are not on public assistance? Answers to this set of questions will allow us to compare and contrast the financial and employment-related obstacles faced by single mothers, and to examine similarities and differences between those who do and do not receive public assistance.

Second, how is the employment status of women with children affected by the receipt of public assistance, and what are the relative effects of other sources on income on the probability of being employed?

For instance, what is the effect of receiving public assistance in the past year on the probability that a single mother is employed? Are women who have received public assistance within the past year less likely to be employed? If so, does the effect of public assistance vary by the amount of public-assistance income received, wherein greater amounts of public assistance discourage women from working? Answers to these questions will allow us to gauge

the *relative* importance of the receipt of public assistance vis-a-vis other sources of income on the probability of future employment.

Third, what factors influence labor-force status regardless of receipt of public assistance income?

For example, are mothers with more children less likely to be employed, regardless of how much public assistance they receive, than mothers with fewer children? Similarly, are divorced mothers more likely to be employed than never married mothers? Does educational level affect the probability of employment, regardless of how much public assistance is received? In other words, what characteristics of women interfere with their ability to be employed that are not related to how much public-assistance income they receive? Answers to this final set of questions will allow us to compare and contrast the relative effects of racial-ethnic background, family form and size, and education on labor force status, irrespective of the influence of public assistance. In summary, answers to each of these three sets of questions will be addressed through an descriptive and explanatory analysis of a representative, national sample of single mothers.

Data and Methods

The Data

A national sample of 275,744 single mothers was drawn from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing Public Use Micro data Samples (PUMS) 5 percent sample of the U.S. population. Single mothers were defined as women who lived with their own children age less than one year to 18 years of age, who reported being divorced, separated, widowed, or never married, and who defined themselves as the head of their households.² Women of all racial-ethnic categories were included in the sample, and were divided among whites, African-Americans, Mexicans, Puerto-Ricans, other Hispanics, Asian and Pacific Islanders, American Indians, and the remaining, which included fewer than 100 Alaskans and Aleuts and several thousand uncategorized women. The analyses are weighted with the individual-level weight provided by the Census Bureau to correct for the over-sampling of less populated areas and under-sampling of more densely populated areas. A normalized weight variable is used so

that the weighted sample size is equal to the unweighted sample size. Thus, the sample sizes shown correspond to 5 percent of the U.S. population. Measurement of all variables is displayed in the Appendix.

Method of Analysis

The first stage of the analysis addresses the first research question by presenting a descriptive portrayal of single mothers in the U.S., and by identifying significant differences between single mothers who reported public assistance income in 1989 and single mothers who did not. This stage entails examination of differences in means between groups. The second stage of the analysis addresses the second and third research questions of how the receipt of public assistance affects employment status, and the extent to which other factors predict employment status above and beyond the receipt of public assistance. We use logistic regression to predict whether or not single mothers were employed in April of 1990 when the Census was administered.³ The results indicate the relative effects of public-assistance income, other sources of income, demographic characteristics of women, their prior work experience, and their family composition on the probability of employment. We then present predicted probabilities of employment for different groups to show the effects of various levels of independent variables on the probability of employment with all other variables held constant.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 displays descriptive statistics for all single mothers, and separately for two groups defined by receipt of public-assistance income.⁴ All between-group differences are statistically significant. While 64 percent of all single mothers officially work for pay,⁵ only 22 percent of mothers on public assistance report having jobs. It is likely that the officially employed women on public assistance are only marginally employed, given the restrictions that governments set on the amount of income women are allowed to earn before their public assistance is taken away.⁶

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

1990 U.S. Census Data: Single Mothers of Female-Headed Households	All Single Mothers n=275,744		Single Mothers with Public Assistance Income n=75,740		Single Mothers without Public Assistance Income n=200,004	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Employed	.64	.48	.22	.42	.80	.40
Welfare Recipient	.27	.45	1.00	.00	.00	.00
Income in 1989						
Household income, \$1,000s	19.17	18.04	9.90	10.31	22.68	19.07
Family income, \$1,000s	16.91	15.71	8.48	8.51	20.10	16.61
Personal income, \$1,000s	14.70	13.70	7.09	6.40	17.59	14.60
Earnings, \$1,000s	11.19	12.88	2.06	5.19	14.65	13.23
Social security, \$1,000s	.31	1.71	.15	.96	.37	1.92
Public assistance, \$1,000	1.15	2.51	4.17	3.20	—	—
Poverty status	155.79	128.02	69.94	65.63	188.30	130.83
Background						
Age	34.88	8.39	32.39	8.45	35.82	8.18
Education	3.42	1.44	2.77	1.13	3.67	1.46

continued

Table 1, continued

1990 U.S. Census Data: Single Mothers of Female-Headed Households	All Single Mothers n=275,744		Single Mothers with Public Assistance Income n=75,740		Single Mothers without Public Assistance Income n=200,004	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
In school now	.12	.32	.10	.30	.13	.33
Disabled	.04	.21	.10	.31	.02	.14
Work						
Looking for work	.09	.28	.16	.37	.06	.23
Worked in 1989	.74	.44	.36	.48	.88	.32
Weeks worked in 1989	31.50	22.66	9.71	16.80	39.75	18.79
Year last worked	2.05	1.85	3.58	2.19	1.47	1.30
Family						
Children under age 6	.39	.49	.55	.50	.33	.47
Number of children	1.79	.99	.17	.19	.64	.87
Never married ^a	.28	.45	.43	.49	.22	.41
Divorced	.47	.50	.31	.46	.53	.50
Separated	.19	.39	.21	.40	.18	.38
Widowed	.07	.25	.05	.22	.08	.26

continued

Table 1, continued

1990 U.S. Census Data: Single Mothers of Female-Headed Households	All Single Mothers n=275,744		Single Mothers with Public Assistance Income n=75,740		Single Mothers without Public Assistance Income n=200,004	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Race/Ethnicity						
White ^a	.59	.49	.47	.50	.64	.48
African-American	.32	.47	.41	.49	.29	.45
Mexican	.03	.17	.04	.19	.03	.16
Puerto-Rican	.02	.13	.03	.18	.01	.10
Other Hispanic	.01	.11	.01	.11	.01	.10
Asian or Pacific Islander	.02	.12	.02	.12	.02	.12
American Indian	.01	.12	.02	.14	.01	.11
Other	.00	.04	.00	.04	.00	.04

^a Reference Category

Twenty-seven percent of all single mothers received public assistance in 1989, and those who did tended to be younger, less educated, less likely to be in school, and more likely to have a disability that prevented working than single mothers who did not receive public assistance.

In all categories of income except social security and public assistance, single mothers who did not receive public assistance reported significantly higher incomes than those who did receive public assistance. This finding contradicts the myth that public assistance income affords single mothers a lifestyle comparable to that of single mothers with jobs. The income of the average single mother on public assistance is 30 percent below the poverty line, whereas the income of the average single mother not on public assistance is 88 percent above it. This contrast makes it abundantly clear that single mothers who must depend on government income assistance are markedly worse off economically, even with benefits, than are single mothers who do not require income assistance.

Almost three times as many single mothers on public assistance said they were looking for work as did single mothers not on public assistance, indicating that although fewer women on public assistance have jobs, a substantial number of them are trying to find one. While 88 percent of single mothers not on public assistance worked an average of 40 weeks in 1989, 36 percent of mothers on public assistance worked an average of 10 weeks. Most single mothers without public assistance worked for pay currently or within the last year, whereas most single mothers on public assistance had not worked in at least a year.

Single mothers on public assistance were more likely to have children under 6 in the home, and had more children under age 18 in the home, than did single mothers not receiving public assistance. Furthermore, single mothers on public assistance were more often never married, whereas single mothers not on public assistance were more often divorced. Never married mothers, many of whom became mothers in their teens, may face a greater obstacle to entering the labor market than divorced mothers because they are less likely to have any work experience or job skills, and less likely to have support from the fathers of their children. African-American single mothers were much

more likely to have received public assistance, whereas white single mothers were more likely not to have received it. Similarly, Mexican, Puerto-Rican and American-Indian single mothers were over-represented among recipients of public assistance income.

Multivariate Analysis

Table 2 presents the results of a logistic regression of employment status on public-assistance income, among other variables. The results indicate that the more public assistance income a single mother received in 1989, the less likely she was to be employed in April of 1990. For each \$1,000 in public-assistance income a single mother received, the odds of her being employed are reduced by .86. Receipt of social security income also depresses the odds of being employed, where for each \$1,000 received, the odds of employment are reduced by .96. Given the much lower average social security income, \$310 per year, this effect is negligible. However, the effect of earnings is positive and more substantial: for each additional \$1,000 earned in 1989, the odds of employment in 1990 increase by 1.12 such that for the average woman with \$11,000, the odds of employment are 12.32 greater than for women with no earnings. Comparing single mothers who did or did not receive public assistance, we see that the average earnings of single mothers on public assistance, \$2,000, translates into a 1.24 increase in the odds of employment compared to no earnings, whereas the average earnings of single mothers not on public assistance, \$14,650, translates into a 16.41 increase in the odds of employment compared to no earnings. In other words, what a single mother is able to earn on the labor market is related to whether or not she is employed. The less a woman was able to earn in 1989, the less likely she was to be employed in 1990.

A number of factors independently affect the probability of employment regardless of how much public assistance is received. Looking first at background factors, older and more educated women are more likely to be employed, whereas women who are currently in school, or who have a disability that limits their work, are less likely to be employed. Work experience was operationalized in a variety of ways, only one of which is included in Table 2 because of the high correlations between the

Table 2

Logistic Regression of Probability of Being Employed in 1990
n=275,651

	B	Standard Error	Odds Ratio
Income in 1989			
Earnings	.110***	.001	1.12
Social Security	-.042***	.004	.96
Public Assistance	-.152***	.0003	.86
Background			
Age	.017***	.001	1.12
Education	.221***	.004	.96
In school now	-.565***	.0003	.86
Disabled	-9.966***	.949	.00
Work			
Worked in 1989	2.117***	.018	8.305
Family			
Children \leq age 5	-.454***	.015	.64
Number of kids	-.095***	.007	.91
Never married ^a	—	—	—
Divorced	.351***	.017	1.42
Separated	.165*	.018	1.18
Widowed	-.001	.030	1.00
Race			
White ^a	—	—	—
African-American	-.231***	.014	.79
Mexican	.063	.035	1.06
Puerto Rican	-.469	.053	.63
Other Hispanic	-.032	.055	.97
Asian/Pacific	-.043	.055	.96
American Indian	-.218***	.049	.80
Other Race	-.211	.162	.81
Constant	-2.486		

^a Reference category

* $P < .05$

** $P < .01$

*** $P < .001$

different indicators. Women who worked for pay in 1989 have much higher odds (8.305) of being employed than women who did not. Models with alternative specifications of work experience (results not shown) indicate that the last year worked and the number of weeks worked in 1989 are both positive predictors of the probability of being employed in 1990. The measures of work experience, in one form or another, all serve to control for the women's continuity of employment, and for selective factors into employment, such that the effects of other variables can be viewed as independent of individuals' tendency to be employed.

Among aspects of family life, the presence of one or more children under age 6 in the home depresses the odds that a woman is employed by .64. Similarly, the more children a woman has, the smaller her odds of being employed, with each additional child depressing the odds of employment by approximately .91. Single mothers who are heads of household must find someone to care for their children while they are at work. It is likely that lack of adequate child care is largely responsible for the negative effects of having young children, or several children, on women's employment status. Given the costs of high-quality child care, and the low availability of government subsidies to poor women for child care, it is not surprising that the more children a single mother has, particularly children under age 6 who cannot go to public school during all day, the harder it is for single mothers to be employed.

Turning to the effects of marital status, divorced or separated mothers are more likely to be employed than are never married mothers, but there are no significant differences between widows and never married mothers. The odds of a divorced or separated woman being employed are 1.42 and 1.18 greater, respectively, than the odds of a never married woman being employed. We suspect that the spouses of divorced and separated mothers are under greater legal and social obligation to provide support for their children than the fathers of never married mothers' children. With this greater support, however meager, comes additional resources to provide single mothers with the opportunity to be employed. Even without child support, divorced or separated mothers may be able to rely on former husbands or mothers-in-law to share with the child care.

Among racial and ethnic groups, African-American and American-Indian women are less likely to be employed than whites. There are no significant effects on the probability of employment of membership in any of the other racial-ethnic categories once income, background, work, and family are taken into account. To some extent, racial discrimination in hiring explains these differences. However, a sizable literature suggests that obstacles to employment such as social isolation, faced disproportionately by minority mothers, have more to do with poor job prospects for un-skilled or semi-skilled entrants to the labor force than with discrimination (Wilson, 1996).

Predicted Probabilities

Table 3 presents predicted probabilities of employment for categories of women defined by race-ethnicity, amount of earnings received in 1989, and amount of public assistance income received in 1989, with all remaining variables held constant at their mean levels. The table shows that for each racial-ethnic group, the probability of employment increases substantially as earnings increase when public assistance income is held constant at \$1,000. For example, among white women with no earnings and \$1,000 public-assistance income, the probability that they are employed in 1990 is .362, whereas for white women earnings \$2,000 and \$1,000 public-assistance income, the probability

Table 3

*Predicted Probabilities of Being Employed in 1990**

	White	African-American	American-Indian
No earnings			
PA (\$1,000)	.362	.311	.314
Earnings (\$1,000)			
PA (\$1000)	.388	.335	.338
Earnings (\$2,000)			
PA (\$1,000)	.415	.360	.363
Earnings (\$3,000)			
PA (\$1,000)	.479	.422	.425

* All independent variables held constant at their mean values for the sample.

of employment increases to .415. The same pattern is evident for African-American women and for American-Indian women, although in both cases, the probability of employment is lower overall. These figures demonstrate the powerful effect of earnings on the probability that a single mother holds a job, regardless of the fact that she received public assistance income in the past year. The overwhelming conclusion of these results is that if women are able to make substantial money, they will work, regardless of what they are entitled to in benefit dollars.

Table 4 depicts the combined effects of education, work experience, and presence of children under age 6, on the probability that a single mother is employed for white women and African-American women, respectively. The top panel of Table 4 shows that white women who were employed in 1989 have a good chance of being employed again in 1990, ranging from .658 to

Table 4

Predicted Probability of Employment by Education, Children Under 6 in the Home, and Race for Single Mothers

	8th grade or less	9-12th grades	High-school diploma	Bachelors' degree	Masters' degree
Whites, Worked for Pay in 1989					
Kids Under Age 6	.658	.706	.749	.853	.879
No Kids Under Age 6	.752	.791	.825	.901	.919
Whites, Did not Work for Pay in 1989					
Kids Under Age 6	.188	.224	.265	.411	.466
No Kids Under Age 6	.267	.313	.362	.524	.579
African-Americans, Worked for Pay in 1989					
Kids Under Age 6	.604	.656	.704	.822	.852
No Kids Under Age 6	.706	.750	.789	.879	.901
African-Americans, Did not Work for Pay in 1989					
Kids Under Age 6	.155	.186	.222	.357	.409
No Kids Under Age 6	.224	.265	.310	.466	.522

* Adjusted for never married women without disabilities, not in school, and with the sample mean level of earnings, social security income, public assistance income and number of children.

.919, regardless of education or age of children. However, the probability does increase monotonically with level of education, and is higher among white women who do not have children under age 6 in the home. The next panel of Table 4 shows much lower predicted probabilities of employment for all white women who were not employed in 1989, ranging from .188 to .579, and once again these probabilities vary positively with level of education, and are higher among women without children under age 6 in the home. In the bottom half of the table, we see the same pattern of results for African-American women, although the predicted probabilities are all somewhat lower, owing to the negative effect of being African-American on the odds of employment. It is important to bear in mind that the changes in probabilities observed in Table 4 apply to women who received average levels of public assistance income in 1989. In other words, these figures represent how a change in work experience, education, or presence of children under 6 would affect the probability of employment for women who already receive some public-assistance income.

These results emphasize the salience of recent work experience, or continuity of employment, in predicting women's employment status in 1990. Though it is a strong predictor in and of itself, whether or not a woman worked for pay in 1989 also represents the effects of unmeasured selection factors into employment, such as the availability of jobs in the local labor market, and women's access to social networks to assist them in finding work. The only definitive interpretation that can be made of this effect is that it is harder for a woman to find employment if she has been out of the labor force for at least one year than if she has been employed for at least part of the past year. However, it is evident from these tables that past work experience, and all that it reflects about women's access to employment, does not ensure continued employment. Women with lower levels of education are less likely to have steady work with incomes that meet or exceed what they are able to receive through public assistance. When coupled with the potential expenses of child care that arise when there are children under age 6 in the home, the rewards of working may not outweigh the government benefits to which single mothers are "entitled." Jencks and Edin (1990) have clearly

shown that the rewards of full-time low-wage employment to single mothers have little chance of improving upon the living they can make by combining welfare income with unreported paid work. The present study uses a national sample to confirm the complex interplay among women's employability, availability of jobs, and the challenges that arise when there are young children to be cared for, in the process of determining whether or not a woman officially works for pay.

Discussion

In this study, we have examined a number of distinct differences between single mothers according to whether or not they have recently received public assistance income. Many of these differences are not surprising, and conform to society-wide stereotypes of who goes on welfare and who does not. However, these data do not indicate that receipt of public assistance causes single mothers to have less desirable employment characteristics (e.g. less education, fewer marketable skills, less work experience) compared to single-mothers who do not receive public assistance. On the contrary, our analysis has shown that these characteristics serve to bar women from the workforce. Although our results show that the receipt of public assistance income depresses the odds that a single mother is employed, a number of other factors affect employment status regardless of public-assistance income. Younger, less educated, women are less likely to be employed as are women with children under age 6 in the home and women with relatively greater numbers of children. African-American and American-Indian women are less likely to be employed than white women. Perhaps most importantly, women with relatively low earnings in the past year are less likely to be employed in the present than women with relatively higher earnings.

The policy implications of these findings fit squarely into current debates on the connections among welfare receipt, work incentives, and employment. Foremost, while the results clearly indicate that public assistance income inhibits women from working, they do not suggest that if that income is taken away, single mothers will immediately enter the labor force. Rather, the findings point to a number of obstacles to employment faced by young single mothers that must be addressed for them to have

the opportunity to be employed. The most concrete obstacle single mothers face is their lack of access to affordable, high-quality child care services. Recent research has demonstrated that subsidizing child care costs is a key factor affecting poor and near-poor mother's decision to work (GAO 1994a). High-quality child care is expensive and many single mothers simply lack the earning power to make employment a rational alternative. Thus, future reform efforts must consider the provision of subsidized child care, so that mothers may earn more by working than they would by staying with their children and receiving public-assistance income.

The second obstacle facing single mothers is poor or inadequately developed education and job skills. Recent reforms such as the Family Support Act of 1988 (FSA) and, specifically, the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program created under FSA, have been charged with providing an increasing proportion of AFDC recipients with education, training, and other necessary services such as child care and transportation that they need to obtain jobs and avoid long-term welfare dependence. Nonetheless, while limited data suggests that such programs can have a positive, yet typically modest impact (GAO 1994b), these piecemeal efforts can do little to stem the tide of declining employment and income prospects for those who have fared the worst over the past two decades: young individuals with low levels of education and work experience (William T Grant Commission, 1988; Mishel & Bernstein 1996) and those who are socially isolated in inner cities (Wilson 1996). Greater attention to the broader structure of employment and opportunity, such as federal efforts to create jobs opportunities that provide a living wage and standard benefits, is critical for protecting the interests of this vulnerable population as the welfare revisions signed into law unfold.

Three categories of charges are typically leveled at the American welfare state: social welfare programs are undesirable, ungovernable, and unaffordable (Marmor, et al., 1991). As evidenced by recent passage of welfare reform legislation, high among the "undesirable" is the idea that welfare creates work disincentives and, thus, exacerbates the economic prospects of individuals that such programs are designed to improve. It would be inaccurate to suggest that critics of welfare reserve their animus

solely for the work disincentives created by welfare receipt, or that they do not possess an appreciation of diverse factors which affect employment of single mothers with dependent children; nonetheless, recently passed legislation appears to be premised on the idea that time-bound limits on assistance *alone* will compel most recipients to participate in work activities. Our study clearly indicates that while the receipt of public assistance income depresses the odds that a single mother is employed, a number of social structural factors affect employment status irrespective of the receipt of public assistance. The policy implications of this analysis are equally clear: improving the employment prospects and self sufficiency of single women with children requires greater attention to the socio-economic determinants of labor force status, not to mention the broader structure of employment opportunity faced by this segment of the population.

Notes

1. In this study, "public assistance income" includes: (1) Supplemental Security Income made by Federal or State welfare agencies to low-income persons and persons who are age 65 or older, blind, or disabled; (2) Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and (3) General Assistance. We use the terms "public assistance" and "public assistance income" as shorthand references for income received from any or all of these sources.
2. The decision to consider household heads was dictated by the need to know the number of natural-born or adopted children in the household. This variable was only defined for household heads. It is noteworthy that 80.1 percent of all single mothers in this sample were household heads.
3. Women are categorized as either employed or not, without distinguishing between those who are categorized as "unemployed" or "out of the labor force". The definition of "unemployed" used in the Census—that is, having applied for a job within the past month—excludes women who are interested in working, but are discouraged from applying because of repeated failure. Therefore, the distinction between being unemployed and out of the labor force is somewhat artificial.
4. Public assistance income was reported for the entire 1989 calendar year, while labor-force status refers to April, 1990, when the Census was taken.
5. We assume that if a woman receiving public assistance was willing to report her employment to the Census Bureau, the welfare agency in charge of setting her benefit levels was also privy to that information.
6. Most women on AFDC under-reported their earnings so to avoid losing benefits, without which they would not have had the means to support their families (Jencks & Edin 1991; Kerlin 1993).

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Appendix:

Measurement of Variables

Variable Label	Measurement of Variable
Employed	1=Employed in April, 1990
Welfare recipient	1=Reported public assistance income in 1989
Income in 1989	
Household income,\$1,000s	Income of householder, all residents age 15 and up
Family income, \$1,000s	Income of all family members age 15 and up
Personal income, \$1,000s	Total income of householder
Earnings, \$1,000s	Wage or salary income
Social security, \$1,000s	Pensions, survivors benefits, disability insurance
Public assistance,\$1,000s	SSI, AFDC, General Assistance
Poverty status	Percent above/below poverty level of 100.
Background	
Age	Age, in years
Education	1=8th grade or less, 2=9–12th, 3=High school grad, 4=some college, 5=associate degree, 6=BA, 7=MA, 8=professional degree, 9=doctorate
In school now	1=Currently attending school
Disabled	1=Disability prevents employment
Work	
Looking for work	1=Currently looking for work
Worked in 1989	1=Worked for pay in 1989
Weeks worked in 1989	Number of weeks worked for pay in 1989
Year last worked	1=1990, 2=1989, 3=1988, 4=1985–87, 5=1980–84, 6=79 or earlier, 7=never
Family	
Children under age 6	Own children age 6 and under in the home
Number of children	Number of children ever born/adopted in the home
Never married	1=Never married, 0 otherwise
Divorced	1=Divorced, 0 otherwise
Separated	1=Separated but legally married, 0 otherwise
Widowed	1=Widowed, 0 otherwise
Race/Ethnicity	
White	1=White, not Hispanic, 0 otherwise
African-American	1=African-American, not Hispanic, 0 otherwise
Mexican	1=Mexican, 0 otherwise
Puerto-Rican	1=Puerto-Rican, 0 otherwise
Other Hispanic	1=All other Hispanic, 0 otherwise
Asian or Pacific Islander	1=Asian or Pacific Islander, 0 otherwise
American-Indian	1=American-Indian, 0 otherwise
All other races	1=Alaskan, Aleut, and "race not specified"

Partnerships For Vitalizing Communities And Neighborhoods: Celebrating a "Return"!

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In 1994, ten community and university partnerships joined the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to develop training strategies that would improve social systems and better serve families and neighborhoods. The partnerships and training strategies were to be based on what the Foundation refers to as the "assets model"—or seeing the strengths and assets of families and neighborhoods, rather than their deficits, as the primary building block for social systems (Parsons, 1997). Called the "W. K. Kellogg Foundation Families and Neighborhoods Initiative, Community/ University Partnerships," according to Beverly Parsons, a program evaluator, "Funding is provided for sites to demonstrate that partnerships can indeed be formed among community-based organizations and institutions of higher education to work on critical issues in the area of inservice and preservice education" (Parsons, 1997, p. 1).

In short, the initiative aimed to create partnerships through which the development of knowledge and effective human service training and practices affecting family life could flow in a circular direction between neighborhoods, communities, universities and colleges, and local human service agencies. The initiative aimed to resist a top-down approach in which knowledge is passed from universities and colleges to agencies and then to families, neighborhoods, and communities. At the conceptual center of these efforts is the assets-based approach to community development and organization developed by John Kretzmann and John McKnight in *Building Communities From The Inside Out* (1993).

The articles that I will introduce shortly are celebrations of this partnership and others like them all over our nation. They are written from different vantage points and describe a range of relationships between university- and agency-based professionals, working alongside neighborhood and community residents and leaders. Because we have chosen to sustain the goal of mutuality, the articles are also joint collaborations which vary as to the conventional norms and standards of presentation generally preferred in academic journals. However, within these articles are many important lessons and portraits, reflecting both the complexity and rewards of community organizing and development, and challenges to the enrichment of family life. In this brief introduction, I hope to contextualize the general richness and complexity of the tasks undertaken by the partnerships we celebrate here. But more importantly, I will attempt to describe the double meaning behind the concepts "return" and "vitalization" cited in the title of this introduction. These concepts have been chosen because they summarize and elaborate themes which are shared by all of the projects represented in this special Symposium. Furthermore, they aid in instructing us about the multifaceted and complex work and experiences of these partnerships.

Life in Communities and Neighborhoods: It's real y'all!

Communities and neighborhoods share an important responsibility with families for nurturing, supporting, and protecting its members. Yet, similar to families, communities and neighborhoods are complex places. In this regard, Robert Fisher (1994) and John McKnight (1995) force us to throw our illusions away by documenting the motion of community and neighborhood life, especially as these geographic and social spaces interact with rapid changes in the economic, political, and sociocultural spheres in the growing yet shrinking world at large. Fisher says, moreover, that communities and neighborhoods are territorial spaces whose values, goals, and activities are not inherent but rather they mirror the class and racial/ ethnic conflicts of the larger social, economic, and political system of which we are all a part.

In another way, communities and neighborhoods comprise "transclass groupings in which identity, community, and culture

become contexts through which people come to construct and understand political life; where the rationale of community participation is a reaction against centralization, bureaucratization, rigidity, and the remoteness of the state and related institutions" (Fisher and Kling, 1994, p. 10). Taken together, such characteristics make for neighborhoods and communities that are polyvocal and in possession of no single narrative that can characterize and explain the lives of its residents. Still, this is only part of the story.

Another part of the complexity and richness of life in communities and neighborhoods involves internal challenges and "counterfeits" which John McKnight says are related to the invasion of professionalized services—professionalism, medicine, human service systems, and the criminal justice system (1995, pp. ix-xi). In other words, neighborhoods and communities that are already challenged by a host of internal and external problems tend to be made even weaker and "more impotent" by service systems that are in a sense too powerful, too authoritative, and too strong.

Where do these factors lead us as professionals wanting to partner with neighborhoods and communities? I think that the articles in this special edition provide a few answers.

Partnerships: A Return!

It remains valid that we (educators, social workers, agency representatives and related human service providers) must "Let the People Decide" their destinies in communities and neighborhoods (Fisher, 1994). However, abiding by this dictum does not mean that communities and neighborhoods must go it alone. Indeed, we must partner with neighborhoods and communities in a way that respects the *strengths* and *assets* that existed prior to our professional entrance; and we must respect and understand how these strengths and assets have been challenged, have multiplied, and have further developed through the struggles of daily life (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993; Adams and Nelson, 1995; Fisher and Karger, 1997). Undertaken in this spirit, a return to partnering is a *restoration* of the many beneficial liaisons in partnerships beginning with the settlement houses in New York and Chicago, The Back of the Yards alliances fostered by Saul Alinsky and others, to the work of COPS (Communities Organized For Public Service)

in Hispanic Communities in Texas, NTIC (National Training and Information Center) in Chicago, and ACORN (Association of Communities Organized for Reform Now) in very poor communities throughout the U. S.

On the other hand, a return must exceed mere restoration of meaningful partnerships. In its second sense, to return or re-turn means to turnover, turn around, undo, dismantle, deconstruct, critique, resist, and so forth, our ways of conceptualizing, interpreting, and otherwise doing our work in communities and neighborhoods. Such a return certainly applies to universities and other institutions comprising their own communities of official knowledge, and consequently, official solutions to social, economic, and political problems.

In all, returning requires an active stance by professionals, but not in the traditional senses of leadership models we have depended upon in varying degrees in many instances of community work. McKnight (1995) identifies and rightly challenges such approaches. Rather, we must make, as the partnerships in this special edition have done, a more radically beneficial return to partnering through a spirit of reciprocity, as well as mutual learning and strengthening. As one community-centered family practitioner has put it, rather than lead and take possession of and responsibility for the souls and destinies of people—which is a major temptation on the part of strong professional servers—we must “*join* with others in their current experiences so that we may accompany them into a new experience in life” (emphasis added) (Aponte, 1994, p.186).

Joining implies listening to the realities of others and letting them resonate in such a way that one’s own vision is temporarily given up for the sake of experiencing the vision of the other, in all of its nuances. When our professional visions do return, they are flavored by the complexities and realities of the lives of the residents with whom we share the task of change. In this regard, Fisher and Kling (1994) say that those who do community and neighborhood work must seek not only to understand the complexities of life there, but must, with community and neighborhood residents, search for new cultural orientations and a blending of insights from the old and the new. That is quite a challenge for professionals, but the partnering that is described

in these articles shares just such a spirit and attitude, thereby demonstrating the very real possibility for a radical return.

The Vitality of Partnering

Communities and neighborhoods are not the only ones benefiting from or needing to be vitalized by effective partnering. Generally speaking, the destinies of all peoples in the United States, not to mention the destinies of those beyond our borders, are intertwined: as local communities and neighborhoods go, so go the worlds around them. Speaking specifically, the professionals who partner with neighborhoods and communities can and need to grow, develop, and mature in their institutional roles. They can be made wiser and stronger because of what they stand to simultaneously learn about the people they work with and about themselves—the mutuality of life and change—as they participate in a purposeful, risky, life enriching enterprise. Vitalization, consequently, is no trivial matter and is, as it should be, at the core of the work of the partnerships represented in these articles.

The Articles

We begin the series of articles with a reprint of an essay by Mark Joseph and Renae Ogletree. They describe the dilemma faced by comprehensive community initiatives as well as principles for resolving it in their monograph "Community Organizing and Comprehensive Community Initiatives." Joseph and Ogletree elaborate on a key issue identified by McKnight (1995). That is, how can initiatives for community change that are formulated outside communities achieve "a level of genuine local participation and work effectively to build local capacity" (Joseph and Ogletree, p. 93). They carefully elaborate on this theme to outline the essential elements for facilitating community change initiatives.

In "Partners for Change: Community Residents and Agencies," Julie O'Donnell, James Ferreira, Ralph Hurtado, Ellen Ames, Richard E. Floyd, Jr., and Lottie M. Sebran (a professor, a director of a child welfare training center, a juvenile crime prevention agency director, a coordinator for an interdisciplinary

training project, and two community council representatives, respectively) speak directly to the issues raised by Joseph and Ogletree. By addressing culture, class, and language in a low-income and culturally diverse urban community in the area of Long Beach, California, they illustrate the components of collaborative processes that either facilitate or inhibit successful community outcomes through community—agency partnerships. Like Joseph and Ogletree, O'Donnell and associates find a way to strike a successful balance between committed residential and agency involvement and their dependence upon one another.

"Reclaiming Communities and Languages" is an article that extends the arguments and experiences of O'Donnell and associates. Comprising a partnership between the University of California-Berkeley and the New Mexico Office of Indian Affairs, Rebecca Benjamin, Regis Pecos, Mary Eunice Romero, and Lily Wong Fillmore (two university professors and two leaders of the Indian community) chronicle the story of a small community (about 900 members) whose indigenous resources were disrupted by a seemingly beneficial and progressive externally driven project—the building of a dam by the Army Corps of Engineers to control the flow, and, consequently, flooding, of Albuquerque by the Rio Grande River. The "Dam Story" is a sort of meta-narrative (i.e., a process story) through which we can grasp the dissolution and restoration of very important community resources and cultural components and processes, such as language, that give meaning and purpose to the lives of community members. Beginning and ending with language as a central focus, we are taken on a journey through a maze of traditional and non-traditional social services, interpersonal and inter-generational processes within and between families, and the consequences of all of these processes for community revitalization and reclamation. Clearly, the university partners learned a lot from this project as they gave themselves over to their partners in the community.

Alongside the narrative of Benjamin and associates is another vitalizing community experience centered around small, rural communities in the Appalachian region of Tennessee. Comprising a partnership between six social service agencies and the Tennessee Technological University, this article describes the challenges and successes associated with assisting small communities

in improving the quality of child care. This story reaches into the heart of the welfare reform debate by addressing issues related to parents who are in the process of moving from dependence on public assistance to economic independence. The partners attempt to tackle the ideological and practical problems involved in helping poor people who are heavily clothed in their own sociocultural systems of beliefs and practices regarding family life and child care, while they are also in the choking grips of interlocking economic, political, and social conditions beyond the borders of their communities. In the midst of successes and failures, this partnership has sought to facilitate the construction of community structures that have the potential to live beyond the life of the partnership.

Finally, the last two articles center on urban communities (the physical, economic, political, social, and spiritual eyesore of our mainstream American conscience). Their stories and experiences interact with current welfare reform debates and initiatives as well, and generate passionate challenges and practical knowledge for a radical return to community organizing and development and the vitalization of family and community life.

In "Interfacing African American Churches With Agencies And Institutions: An Expanding Continuum of Care with Partial Answers to Welfare Reform," Barbara Rogers and Douglas Ronshiem (A director of a Christian Life Skills program and a director of a pastoral institute, respectively) call for reconsideration of how we define, understand, and employ faith-based services in the context of low-income black communities and initiatives driven by welfare reform. These authors tell the story of a Pittsburgh, PA community through the lens of a program for the delivery of social services to families and youth. The philosophical basis of the authors' partnership with the community generates two radical moves. First, they recognize the limitations of faith-based services for filling the void resulting from welfare reform, while at the same time demonstrating how to structure an effective continuum of care. Secondly, they present the community and their experiences with collaboration there in such a way that exposes parallel processes—they call this isomorphism—in other communities and institutions facing racial and related sociocultural issues in terms of mainstream-generated inequalities.

The two sides of return and vitalization are also reflected in the actions of a partnership between the Dudley neighborhood of Boston and the city of Chelsea, Massachusetts, and two universities, one private and one public. In "Welfare 'Reform': 'Com'in' Up On The Rough Side of The Mountain'," Loretta J. Williams, Rolanda Ward, and Attieno Davis (a professor, a graduate student, and a community activist, respectively) passionately write about the inequalities of economic and political racism, while at the same time describing the internal work that was required within the context of their community and neighborhood partnership. The authors mark their return by providing a multifaceted description of the problems and solutions in their neighborhood and community work, and an interrogation of the historical and contemporary basis of the problems they addressed. In addition to the positive outcomes for community residents, the professionals involved in the partnership have clearly benefited from a strengths-based and assets-based approach to their work. These professionals are indeed well served by experiencing the living context of the ways in which meanings constructed *within a spirit of meanness* among legislators and others have been appropriated and reappropriated to shape perceptions of low-income black people (and other poor people of color) and the problems they faced. In the final analysis, we are reminded by this article and all the others that community and neighborhood partnering begins and ends with commitment in the face of unrelenting problems and disingenuous leadership.

In concluding, I believe that the implications of the efforts of the partnerships these articles describe are multifaceted, yet singular: We must return to partnering! We must partner, however, in ways that overturn and vitalize, as well as generate and increase wisdom, maturity, and practical knowledge and resources for communities and neighborhoods. Of course, that almost goes without saying. On the other hand, we, as professionals and institutional representatives, must also take a vitalizing and overturning stance to guard against good intentions gone awry. Hence, as professionals, community residents, and concerned others, let us embrace the seriousness of these challenges as we also celebrate what we have attempted to achieve and what we stand to learn

from the experiences of these partnerships in communities and neighborhoods.

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Community Organizing and Comprehensive Community Initiatives

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In order for comprehensive community initiatives (CCIs) to be sustained beyond their initial funding period, they must "take hold" in a community and develop the capacity of community members to control and guide the community-building process. Given that CCIs are usually formulated largely by sources external to the community, such as private foundations and government agencies, it can be difficult for CCIs to achieve the necessary level of local participation. Furthermore, conflicts over the dynamic of power within the CCI, and differences over internal versus external interest, can make interaction between external agents and community members problematic. The author suggests that CCIs can increase their chances of promoting effective, sustainable community development through the devotion of resources to a community organizing process that is implemented early in the initiative, and remains an integrated part of the search to identify and build upon the assets of the community.

Introduction

Comprehensive community initiatives (CCIs) face a common dilemma: How can an externally initiated effort develop and facilitate the local control, support, and capacity necessary for an initiative to be effectively based and sustained in a community? Although CCIs target community-level change, they are formulated largely by sources external to the community, such as private foundations and government agencies. In order to initiate a process of community development and reform that can be

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sustained beyond the period of initial funding, the initiative faces the challenge of taking hold in a community and working to develop the capacity of community members to control and guide the community-building process.¹ Given that these efforts are initiated, for the most part, *outside* the community, how can they most effectively achieve this level of genuine local participation and work effectively to build local capacity?²

In this essay, we will focus on community organizing as an integral element of the solution to this dilemma. Although there is substantial agreement about the value of community mobilization and organization in any initiative that seeks to build community, no consensus exists about the use of community organizing as a tool in the work of CCIs. Few initiatives have dedicated significant resources to developing effective community organizing, although some have done more than others. In this essay, we suggest that CCIs can make better use of the community organizing process to increase their chances of promoting effective, sustainable community development.

We consider community organizing to be an ongoing *process* rather than merely a *phase* or *outreach strategy* of a community-building effort. We suggest that this broader conception of community organizing may be the key to the successful grounding of the initiative in the community. Our objective here is not to discuss the mechanics of community organizing but to make an argument for a more effective use of community organizing as an integral element of community-building initiatives. We do not seek to detail the *how* of organizing but rather the *why*. We hope that this essay can serve as a helpful framework for others to discuss issues of detail such as developing an organizing strategy and selecting community organizers.

Defining Community Organizing

In contrast to models of organizing that rely mainly on confrontational tactics, target a limited set of short-term issues, and may leave few lasting skills in the hands of community members, we conceive of community organizing as a long-term, relationship-building and capacity-building process that attempts to identify, include, and build upon a range of key resources, both

internal and external to the community. The key to organizing for CCIs is effectively engaging a broad range of community members and helping them to develop and build upon the skills and relationships necessary to sustain the community-building effort beyond the life of the initiative. By our definition, a community organizing process thus includes: the identification of key local resources, the gathering of information about the community context, the development and training of local leaders to prepare them to serve effectively as representatives of the community and as full partners in an initiative, and the strengthening of the network of the various interests both internal and external to a community. By this definition, however, few CCIs make an early and sustained effort in this regard.

Effective Community Organizing for CCIs

An organizing process that aims to identify local resources and build local capacity is crucial to *all* elements of the initiative. However, in many of the current CCIs, community organizing is considered a strategy for broad resident outreach that is usually initiated only once programs have been designed and launched. A better use of community organizing's strengths would be its integration into the *entire* process of initiative design, planning, and implementation. To illustrate this point we will consider the utility of organizing to some of the key elements of initiative planning and implementation.

Defining the target community. The target community for an initiative is often selected by actors external to the neighborhood who may lack complete information or understanding about the diversity of individuals who reside within the target area and, more important, how those individuals interact and coexist with each other. Most often the target area for the initiative is selected on the basis of preexisting boundaries, such as census tracts or neighborhood designations, without reference to the actual patterns of interaction within those boundaries. Often, decisions about target area and its needs are made on the basis of public perceptions about a community, which may differ from the realities experienced by those who live in that area, leaving open

the possibility that initial decisions about the initiative will not advance the goal of a community sense of ownership.

One clear role for organizing is to learn more about the networks and relationships among the individuals and groups who live and work within the targeted geographic area. This approach would both engage the community and clarify the definitions of community characteristics by answering questions such as the following: What meaning do the preexisting boundaries hold for the residents of the area? To what extent do the physical boundaries chosen by the initiative coincide with meaningful patterns of social, political, and economic interaction by the residents of that area? What is the nature of the different communities that coexist within the larger community and how do they interrelate? Do existing networks and patterns of interaction promote a strong sense of community among the residents, and if not, what potential exists for community members to develop and work toward a shared vision?

In one initiative, for example, by engaging neighborhood residents in the process of delineating boundaries for the initiative, the decision was made to designate both a core and secondary target area. These areas were chosen both on the basis of residents' indications of the community areas in the most dire need of development and the range of community assets that should be included within the geographical scope of the initiative.

Understanding the community context. Many CCIs explicitly seek to build upon existing strengths in a community rather than looking upon development as a deficit-correcting exercise. Successfully building on community strengths requires not only identifying assets but also understanding what it will take to effectively mobilize and coordinate those assets. Moreover, while much of the rationale for selecting a community may be based on external perceptions and available data, a workable strategic plan and set of priorities for the initiative will require an understanding of the residents' own experience of their community.

Better understanding the community context—especially the hidden resources of a community (e.g. informal leaders, underground economy, informal networks)—is an essential part of determining where local strengths lie and how residents view the

community. Community organizing is a tool specifically designed for bringing this information to light. Through talking with residents and stakeholders, an organizer can help determine how things really work in this community—where informal networks of communication and interaction exist, what residents perceive as their greatest needs, what their experience has been with past development efforts, and how they can be integrated into a new one.

Even the process of surveying the community, if used with organizing in mind, can have additional benefits. In the preliminary stages of one multi-site community development initiative, a series of training sessions were held to help community residents develop the skills required to conduct a community asset survey of the neighborhood. The community plan that followed was formulated, in large part, based on the information gathered from the survey. The planning team included those who had participated in the survey and those who had informed their interviewers that they would like to be a part of the subsequent planning process. Not only did this survey process result in the identification of common areas of concern and the growth of new bonds and relationships between residents, but those who participated in the survey developed new skills and a capacity to serve their neighborhood in an important way.

Governance structure for the initiative. Many CCIs aim to include a range of players—residents, agency heads, business owners, and government officials—in the governance of the initiative, often explicitly stating that those individuals traditionally shut out of decision-making channels will be ensured a meaningful role in the decision-making process. This effort at community-based governance of an initiative is key to the facilitation of eventual community ownership. An effective organizing process will help a CCI reach beyond those local actors who already have connections to the external power structure to reach informal leaders who will bring legitimacy, knowledge of the community, and access to a broader constituency to the decision-making body. By exploring the networks and systems beyond the community, organizing can also identify players from outside the community who would bring important skills, knowledge, and resources as

members of the governance structure. In short, by dedicating the resources and time necessary to gather information about the community and its members, a community organizing process can help identify who should be involved, how they can be recruited, and what skill development, if any, those individuals would need to participate meaningfully in the initiative.

Building the capacity and skills of residents and stakeholders. It is not enough for CCIs simply to identify the existing and potential leaders in a community. Building the capacity of individuals to carry out the tasks associated with the implementation of an initiative is an explicit goal of CCIs. In practice, this means identifying or creating opportunities for the development of skills such as conflict resolution, meeting facilitation, administering funds, and community organizing. It is with these skills that residents and stakeholders can begin to assess and develop their own power and ultimately control and direct resources in the community. The chance to build skills also enhances residents' belief that they can control and affect their own destiny in a positive way.

A sense of community. A challenge faced by all CCIs is developing and sustaining the support and involvement of the community residents and stakeholders. It has been argued that a stronger sense of community leads to more effective community action. Certainly, for the initiative to successfully gain the cooperation and input of those most directly impacted by the effort, residents and stakeholders must be encouraged to feel a part of a shared effort. An organizing process can determine the factors that lead residents to identify positively with being members of the community, the forms of social interaction that reinforce feelings of belonging and membership, and the mechanisms through which the residents of the community care for and share with each other, and it can help to facilitate opportunities to build on existing networks.

For resident participation to be sustained throughout the life of the initiative, one of the objectives should be to work toward meeting the immediate needs of the community as identified by the residents. Organizing around a specific short-term issue, such as trash removal or the boycott of a community business,

may effectively generate short-term interest and participation. The challenge is to turn short-term support into a commitment to a long-term effort through the collective development of a shared vision.

Challenges to Community Organizing in CCIs

Why is community organizing not used more effectively in CCIs? In part, this is due to a limited appreciation of the utility of organizing for building capacity and developing community support. However, it is also due to several factors that challenge the implementation of an effective community organizing process. In this section, we briefly examine some of the key challenges to community organizing in CCIs.

Power and community control. While much of the rhetoric describing these initiatives indicates that power will be transferred, at least in part, to community residents and stakeholders, the power dynamics between external actors such as private foundations and local government and internal actors such as community-based organizations, human service agencies, community businesses, and community residents make power sharing extremely complicated, if not problematic. Not only might there be conflicts between internal and external interests, but there are often competing agendas both among internal participants and among external participants. To the extent that the initiative is explicitly intended eventually to be owned and controlled by members of the community, the conflicts may be heightened both on the part of external interests reluctant to relinquish control and among internal interests who seek to control new resources.

Limited resources. Few of the current CCIs allocate funding specifically for community organizing. Often community organizing is the first item to be cut from an initiative budget. Staff efforts to dedicate the maximum amount of funding toward operating and program costs can leave little funding for the process of learning about the community and organizing community members to participate in the initiative.

Time. Just as important as dedicating sufficient resources to fund community organizing is the dedication of the time to initiate and develop an effective process. Often, the pressure for

programmatic action and visible outcomes leaves little time for the incremental and often time consuming process of exploring the community context and identifying and training local leaders.

Strategy. Though we have argued for a broader conception of community organizing, we have not attempted, in this paper, to outline the mechanics of an organizing strategy. This leaves unclear *how* the tasks we have outlined above are actually carried out. An important challenge for a CCI is to select those who will carry out the organizing tasks and integrate them into the work of the initiative. Critical questions about the mechanics of community organizing that deserve exploration include the following: Who should carry out the various organizing tasks? What experience and skills are needed in order for the organizers to be effective? What is the best make-up of an organizing team? How can the organizers best learn about the community context? How should the organizers negotiate and carry out the multiple roles of information gathering, recruitment, mediation, leadership development, and training?

Conclusion

In order to develop the local control, support, and capacity necessary for a CCI to be based and sustained in a community, a more effective use of community organizing is needed. A community organizing process, as we have presented it here, should focus on building the capacity of community members to design, implement, and sustain the initiative. The organizing process should seek to identify and build upon the assets of the community and work to develop existing networks and links to outside resources. In order to be effective, it is important that the organizing process be initiated early and made an integral part of the initiative. Through this type of organizing, CCIs can improve their potential to become supported and sustained by community members, and the mission of each effort will no longer be simply maintaining or meeting the goals of an initiative, but it will instead be to carry out a plan owned by the community that is designed to ensure its healthy existence.

Notes

1. For the purposes of this essay, by "community," we mean the geographical area targeted by an initiative, and by "community members," we refer to the range of individuals who live and work in that targeted area.
2. We do not mean to imply that community-building efforts initiated from *within* the community do not require a similar focus on community organizing—however, our focus in this paper is on the CCI phenomenon and the particular tensions raised by the inside-outside structure of CCIs.

Reclaiming Communities and Languages¹

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This article discusses efforts by tribal leaders and members of Cochiti Pueblo, one of the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico, to restore aspects of community life that had been damaged by federal programs—programs that had been carried out without careful study of how they might affect the community. The construction of a dam above the Pueblo by the Army Corps of Engineers nearly three decades ago resulted in the destruction of the pueblo's farmlands. It caused profound disruptions in the lives of the people in this agrarian community, not only in economic terms but in nearly every other aspect of life in the Pueblo. The loss of the indigenous language since the building of the dam is viewed by community leaders as the most crucial change because the language was the key to participation in the life of the community. This article documents these changes, and discusses steps being taken to revitalize the language, and to reclaim the community's future.

Introduction

The gradual loss of indigenous languages has been a matter of great concern for American native communities. Of the many

hundreds of languages that evolved in the Americas, only 175 are still spoken today. Of the indigenous languages of North America, 89% are said to be moribund² (Krauss, 1992; Crawford, 1996). Only a few such languages are still being learned and spoken by children.³ In the W. K. Kellogg Foundation sponsored Partnership between the University of California-Berkeley and New Mexico Office of Indian Affairs this issue has become the focus of our attention in the various communities where we have been involved.

The doctoral fellows⁴ in our program work on research and developmental activities in a variety of arenas affecting their communities: governance, resource management and development, customary law and tribal justice systems, education—both traditional and formal, and environmental protection. As they work in these domains, however, the Fellows have come to realize that language loss is involved in many of the issues confronting their communities. The indigenous languages are critical aspects of their cultures: language is the means by which knowledge and traditions are transmitted from one person to another, and from one generation to the next. The loss of the indigenous languages in these communities weakens the connections between people and their past, present and future. There is ample reason for concern when a language is threatened with loss.

Our partnership has been actively involved in a number of New Mexico native communities: The Pueblos of Aacutecoma, Cochiti, Zuni and Tesuque, especially, and Laguna, Zia, Nambé and the Tlingit communities on Alaska's Prince of Wales Island, as well. In each place, we have seen how the rapid erosion of the indigenous language threatens the cultural and social integrity of the community. In each arena of our collective endeavors, we have come to realize that the indigenous language is more than a mere alternative means of communication. A language embodies cultural concepts and precepts that have been crucial to the conduct of life in these American native communities. They are often not translatable, nor can their meanings be paraphrased accurately. Place names, for example, can convey schemata that encode a people's historical and spiritual relationships to their physical world. Address terms and greetings can convey recognition and acceptance of systems of relationships that are essential to the

conduct of social life in these communities. A language reflects the origins, culture, history and social experience of the people who devised and spoke it in the first place. For the communities in our Partnership, the indigenous languages represent their unique connectedness to the continent where they emerged as Peoples. When their languages are lost, the knowledge bases they encode are endangered and are threatened with loss as well.

In our consideration of how families and communities can be strengthened, we have determined that the work must begin with the reclaiming and renewal of their languages. At the heart of every project our Partnership has initiated have been language revitalization efforts. In this paper, we describe the activities in one community, Cochiti Pueblo, where these efforts have had some substantial results. The case of Cochiti Pueblo illustrates both how language loss figures in the problems confronting Native American families and communities and how language revitalization can strengthen them.

Background

The Pueblo of Cochiti is located at the base of the Jemez Mountains in New Mexico, about thirty miles southwest of the city of Santa Fe. It is a relatively small community, with 900 plus tribal members. The median age of Cochiti residents is 26.8 years, according to the 1990 Census. Cochiti Pueblo is situated on land covered with many mesas and canyons. On the eastern end of the Pueblo sits a huge dam—an ominous structure built by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1969 to control the flow of the Rio Grande River. This was necessary, Pueblo leaders were told, to keep the Rio Grande from flooding the city of Albuquerque from time to time. But while the dam, the eleventh largest in the United States, has been beneficial to the city dwellers to the south, it has had devastating effects on Cochiti Pueblo. For many members of the Pueblo, the dam is a literal and figurative watershed. It demarks the point at which life in the community changed. People speak in terms of “before the dam” and “after the dam.”

Community and Family Life Before the Dam

Before the dam was built, family and communal farming of the land was a major economic activity. What was life in Cochiti

like in those days? One person who was a child during the pre-dam period recalls a time when family members worked together in their fields. He recalls fields of corn alongside plots planted with chili peppers and squash. Most of all, he remembers golden melons growing in the sun. Children who were tempted to pinch a ripening melon from a neighbor's field restrained themselves, knowing that they would eventually be invited to share in the bounty. The children waited until they saw the work of harvesting begin. Then they would offer their services, knowing that the reward for helping harvest the field would be juicy slices of melon, as much as they could eat.

Those who remember Cochiti before the dam describe it as a world which was truly a community, despite repeated efforts by the federal government to destroy its cultural and spiritual traditions and its integrity (Sando, 1992).⁵ At the heart of Cochiti society is the family—beginning with the nuclear unit and around it in ever-widening circles, the layers of the close-knit extended family, this being the critical social unit. The concentric circles of family relationships expand outward from family to clan,⁶ and clan to moiety,⁷ and moiety to the community itself. These relationships are determined, not only by blood but by religious considerations as well. Thus, individuals and families are multiply linked and are bound to one another in intricate ways. In the days before the dam, families and neighbors worked together cooperatively in community settings. The most important ways in which residents worked together were in the maintenance and furtherance of the community itself.

Cochiti, like other Pueblo communities, was able to retain its traditional way of life, despite repeated attacks by outside forces and agencies, because of the inherent strength of its social structure and traditional form of government. It has two kinds of governments: a secular system, and a traditional, theocratic one. The secular governance system was established by the United States government in 1864, following the issuance of "land patents", which acknowledged the rights to the land that had been "granted" to the Pueblos by the Spanish crown during the period of Spanish domination. The term "recognize" rather than "grant" would have been a more accurate description for the concession made by the Spanish crown in 1689: the land in question had

been owned and occupied by Pueblo people well over a thousand years before the arrival of the Spaniards. Nonetheless, when the U. S. government granted land patents to the Pueblos in 1869, it was on the basis of the Spanish land grants made two hundred years earlier (Sando, *op. cit.*). The secular government is charged with enforcing the laws and regulations of the community. It is headed by a governor and lieutenant governor, and two other officials called "fiscales", who are chosen annually to deal with secular matters, and to manage the economic, social, educational, and political affairs of the community.

The religious governance structure was in place well before the Spaniards installed elements of a secular system in the hope that it would overwhelm and thwart the religious structure. But the religious domain was and continues to be where the real leadership of the Pueblos is vested. A tribal council, consisting of former governors and fiscales, is the governing body with the authority to set policies and adopt laws for the community to follow. This governance structure is headed by the community's religious leader, the cacique. Each year, a war chief, war captain and aides are chosen by the governing body. These leaders are responsible for overseeing and leading the ceremonial life of the community for the year in keeping with the traditional calendar.

The two forms of governance structures function smoothly together to run the affairs of state and to manage community affairs. Critical to the success of this complex structure is the willingness of tribal members to participate in the community's governance and work. An important part of community life is individual commitment and obligation for doing the work necessary to sustaining the social order. When an individual is chosen for a position of leadership, whether in the secular or religious domains of governance, he does not refuse the honor and responsibility of serving the community. Those who are chosen to serve as leaders are expected, and consider it a privilege, to devote the period of service to the community, usually a year at a time. Leaders give up regular employment for their term of office, because they must give all of their time and attention to the community while in office. But at the same time that those who are chosen to serve as leaders are expected to commit themselves fully to the roles and responsibilities of office, so too are other

tribal members expected to help these leaders when their help is requested. The system works because the culture places great importance on individuals being willing to participate in activities that benefit the entire community. From the time children are young, they are socialized to view service for the common good as one of the highest values. Tribal members who show the greatest commitment to community service and participation are afforded the highest respect in communities like Cochiti.

In the pre-dam period, these values were shared by all. The community enjoyed the fruits of its agricultural endeavors and felt sustained by its rich ceremonial and communal life. Members of extended families lived in close proximity to one another, and shared in the work and responsibility of rearing children and caring for the elderly. As much as the community demanded of its members, it gave back to them in mutual support. No one—not the young nor the old nor the infirm—was neglected. There was a sense of communal support in the most real sense. And thus, Cochiti had been able to prosper and survive despite all of the encroachments and attacks from the outside world. But that was before the dam.

Changes in Families and Community After the Dam

Soon after it was built, the people of Cochiti discovered that seepage from the dam was turning the corn fields into swamps, and leeching minerals into the surrounding areas, destroying the land for farming. Families who had depended on farming soon found themselves without a livelihood. Life in the community changed. Many people had to leave the community to look for work in urban areas. Living and working away from the community, they were no longer able to participate in its work or in its social and ceremonial life. The traditional life of the Pueblo which had been based on an agricultural economy was threatened, and the many layers of social and communal life that rested on this agrarian foundation were weakened gradually.

Work on the outside sometimes changed the perspectives and the values of individuals in fundamental ways. Some people adopted the larger society's faith in economic growth and development as keys to survival and success. Some came to regard

obligatory participation in the governance and ceremonial affairs of the community as onerous duties that kept individuals from advancement and progress in the work world. They regarded as progressive programs offered by federal agencies to "improve" life in the community by renovating public buildings and utilities. These programs imposed conditions on how the renovations were to be done and what materials could be used, but these were seen as improvements over older methods and materials. For example, buildings like the kivas, the traditional ceremonial buildings in which important religious activities and events take place could not be constructed of adobe which requires a great deal of upkeep. They had to be constructed of more durable materials like stucco and concrete. Adobe must be resurfaced annually to prevent deterioration. The job of replastering the kiva was one of the activities that brought the women of the community together each year. But it was much more than a mundane service activity for the women. This particular job had an important religious function as well. The fresh coat of clay was applied to the adobe with bare hands, leaving the imprint of women's hands right on the buildings which brought the community together. Those hand-prints symbolized the women's blessings on the community itself. The modernization of the public buildings reduced the need for constant upkeep, but it also eliminated the need for people to come together to work at keeping the community together.⁸

Another major force for change was the Bureau of Indian Affairs's boarding school program whereby Native American children were removed from families and tribes to be educated at schools located hundreds and even thousands of miles from home. The federal government had two major programs to assimilate Indians into the larger society. The boarding school program was established late in the 19th century for the purposes of "civilizing" American Indians by disassociating them from family and tribes through education (Adams, 1988).⁹ The other program, that of moving Indians off the reservation had as its purpose the termination of the reservation system, was initiated in the 1950s (Getches, Wilkinson, & Williams, 1993).¹⁰ After Indians were done with school, the government offered them financial incentives to relocate to urban areas, in the hope that they would be assimilated into the larger society. The members of the community who had

been sent away to boarding schools under the federal government's program to assimilate Indian children into the larger society, and who were relocated to urban areas after they completed school under the government's relocation program, tended to stay away from the community. When they did return, they sometimes brought with them changed outlooks on the relationship between the individual and the community, on families, and on what constituted a desirable way to live one's life.

Thus, both communal and family life changed in Cochiti. The community structure remained the same, but willingness to participate in its governance activities and its social life changed dramatically. Whereas before the dam nearly everyone participated in the life of the community, after the dam only the most committed individuals did. Before the dam, the community spoke with one voice on issues that affected its future. After the dam changed people's lives and outlook, the voices were sometimes discordant, particularly on questions of economic development.¹¹ There were those who argued for progressive changes in the management and development of the community's resources. They argued for changes in the decision making process and in the governance structures. But there were those who held out for maintaining tried and true practices and the traditional life style of the community.

The changes in the family were structural and functional. Whereas the traditional unit was the extended family, the nuclear family gradually became a more common configuration. This change was influenced in part by the development of housing which did not allow families to live in close proximity to grandparents and related others,¹² but it was also the result of changes in outlook that came from living and working in the city. These changes in family structure and in residential patterns affected the socialization of the community's children in dramatic ways (c.f., McKnight, 1995).

In the traditional pattern, responsibility for rearing and educating children was shared by members of the extended family, clan and the larger community. Children were in daily contact with grandparents, aunts and uncles, all of whom saw themselves as primary agents of socialization. Through their interactions with the children, members of the extended family inculcated in them

the values, beliefs, practices, and traditional knowledge of the community. Thus, the language and the culture of the community were passed on to the children in keeping with the socialization practices that have sustained Cochiti people for as long as anyone can remember. Traditionally, children participated in the affairs and work of the family and community alongside other family members. In home and community settings, children listened to the adults as they discussed the meanings of the events in which they are engaged or for which they are preparing. In this way, they gained familiar with the community's complex system of cultural symbols, and came to understand the history and experience of the people. As they shared in the work of the community, they acquired prevalent attitudes and beliefs, and adopted the practices that have allowed Cochiti people to live in harmony with both their spiritual and physical worlds.

With the changes in family structure and in residential patterns, child-rearing practices changed. Away from the extended family and community, young parents were on their own as they raised their children. Because of the assimilative influences the parents themselves encountered in school and in the workplace, many of them were far more fluent and comfortable in English than they were in the indigenous language, Keres. The language they spoke at home was English, and thus, the language in which they socialized their children was English. Their children learned English and virtually nothing of Keres, the language spoken by grandparents and other people in the community. When they visited the grandparents in the Pueblo, they could communicate with them only in English. And in turn, the relatives interacted with the children in the only language they understood, English.

These shifts in language development occurred even in families that remained in the community. Head Start proved to be a major factor working against the continued use of Keres even in homes where children were still being socialized in that language by parents. In Cochiti as in many other communities across the country, a Head Start Center was established, offering preschool age children early education opportunities which were to prepare them for school by compensating for putative deficiencies in the social, cognitive and linguistic skills needed for academic success (Wong Fillmore, 1990). In Cochiti as elsewhere the emphasis was

on teaching the children English along with other school related skills that were supposed to facilitate their entry to school. The results were just as devastating on the children's retention of the primary language as they were for children from non-English homes elsewhere (Wong Fillmore, 1991a; 1991b).¹³ Their early encounter with the assimilative forces that are present in such compensatory education programs resulted in many children setting aside the language of the home in favor of English once they learned it. The younger children are when they come up against such assimilative forces at school, the faster they lose their primary language. Under these circumstances, second language learning is not usually an additive process, with bilingualism its outcome. In societies like ours which do not place much value on minority groups retaining and using languages other than English, the process of second language learning tends to be subtractive, with the second language displacing and eventually replacing the primary one. The older children are when they confront the assimilative forces they invariably encounter in school, the better able they are to deal with them. But when children are three or four, the ages of children served by Head Start, they are especially vulnerable. By the time the Head Start children enter the public school system, they have had two years of English, and the language they associate with school is English. In fact, their preferred language both at home and at school is English.

And as they used more English and Keres less, the communicative effect these children had on family members at home was not dissimilar to the one their city-dwelling cousins and friends were having on their families. People tended to accommodate to their apparent linguistic preferences, and to talk to them in the language they were using—English. Thus, the children had less and less access to Keres, and if they did not lose it altogether, they were certainly not developing it further. This was the turning point for the language. When children no longer learn and speak the language, it is in decline.

But that was not the only change in the rearing of children. With the younger parents working in jobs outside of the community, they were participating less frequently or not at all in the everyday work and social life of the Pueblo. This meant that their children were not involved in such activities, and therefore

missing the many opportunities available to earlier generations of children to acquire the skills, knowledge, understandings, and perspectives that are critical to the continuation of the community's heritage and traditions. Although these parents tried to raise their children in the ways they themselves were reared, they could not provide all of the socializing experiences that were available in the community. As noted before, when children are included in the everyday life of the community, they are treated to explanations and discussions of the meanings of cultural practices and traditions. But in the period following the construction of the dam, children were spending considerably less time working alongside family members of all ages and interacting with adults other than their parents at community affairs. When children are reared away from the community, they do not have opportunities to acquire the cultural information and skills that would allow them to participate in its social and ceremonial life, nor do they always have the inclination to do so. Most importantly, when they do not understand or speak the language of the community, they do not have access to the knowledge base that it encodes and which enables people to stay connected. Thus, the traditional ways in which children in the community were educated have been weakened or compromised. This was one of the changes in the community that led to the realization that steps had to be taken to stem the loss of language and traditional practices before it was too late to do anything about it.

Efforts to Strengthen the Community and Families Through Language

In Cochiti, the Tribal Council played a pivotal role in determining that the indigenous language, Keres, was the key to strengthening family and community life.¹⁴ It recognized how crucial Keres had been to social and religious practices in the community, and it was aware that the use of Keres in everyday discourse in homes and in other community settings had greatly diminished. The Tribal Council determined that any effort to broaden participation in the work and affairs of the community had to begin with a close look at what was happening to the language, and with a consideration of how education could help

revitalize the language. To that end, the Tribal Council appointed a committee—the Indian Education Committee—and charged it with the responsibility of studying the language situation in Cochiti and the educational needs of the young people in the community. It also commissioned an Education Task Force to examine how well the public schools were serving the needs of the community's children, and to investigate what role the schools might have played in creating the language situation the community faced.

Among the undertakings of the Indian Education Committee for Cochiti Pueblo was a survey of language vitality in the community: Who among the elders, parents of school age children, and children ages 9 to 18 was speaking Keres to whom, in what contexts, and under what conditions? The study found that individuals who were thirty-five or older were fluent in the language; those who were younger were not. Thus, it appeared that the generation that came after the dam generally did not speak the language. Of the post-dam generation, the younger the individuals, the less likely they were to speak or understand the language at all. It was also found that the older Keres speakers accommodated to the linguistic needs of the English speaking children when they were present. The result was that less and less Keres was spoken in the community, and there were fewer and fewer opportunities for the children to hear and learn the language. The children reported hearing Keres used in the home and community by parents and grandparents, but said that they understood little of it. All of them expressed an interest in learning the language, however.

There had been one programmatic effort to teach Keres to Cochiti children at school before the survey was conducted. A program begun a decade ago at the off-reservation public school offered Cochiti children bilingual instruction in Keres and English. The program, which was supported by state bilingual funds, was initiated by a Cochiti tribal member¹⁵ who worked as an administrator in the school district. The teacher of this program was a fluent Keres speaker from Cochiti who had received training from the Summer Institute of Linguistics for Native Americans (SILNA), and the program was apparently effective. But that changed with the death of the administrator who started the

program. When he died, the program came under the control of non-Cochiti school administrators who were not supportive of the original concept. They changed the bilingual program to a pull-out language teaching program¹⁶ using methods that were not suitable for the children of this community. The emphasis changed from teaching the children to communicate in Keres, to teaching them isolated vocabulary items from written word lists.¹⁷ Instead of a serious heritage language program, the children were treated to instruction on words, greetings and short phrases—but only if they completed their other school assignments first.

In their deliberations, the Tribal Council, Indian Education Committee and Education Task Force determined that any educational effort directed toward revitalizing the language had to be community based, consistent with its cultural practices and values, and focused on the needs of the community. Whatever was to be done had to be consistent with the larger goals of rebuilding the community, and had to involve people at all levels of the community. It was decided that language revitalization in this community would not work simply by teaching Keres through formal instruction, nor could the task be entrusted to the public schools. Instead, the language had to be taught and learned in the context of the work and everyday activities of the community itself. The hope was that the program would bring tribal members back into the life of the community. By bringing people of all ages together to engage in activities that had connected people in the past, tribal leaders hoped they would renew some of the traditional social ties. Visiting was one social practice that was identified as useful for reconnecting people.

In the past, neighbors and relatives visited back and forth frequently. Such visits often involved children who were brought around to chat and spend time with elderly neighbors and relatives. During these visits, the children heard the adults discussing current concerns in the community, trading remembrances of past events, or commenting on matters of cultural significance. With elderly relatives and neighbors, these discussions were likely to be in Keres, and thus, the children were exposed to the language of their heritage in social use. In the past, these visits were often made to elderly residents of the community for the purpose of

bringing them home-cooked meals. Children often served as the delivery person, and they would stay to visit with the recipient for a while. Sometimes children would visit elderly relatives or neighbors to see whether they needed help with chores, like cutting and stacking firewood, cleaning the yard, or picking fruit from the trees. These visits provided the elderly with help and company, and the young with natural occasions and opportunities to learn from the elderly.

In the post-dam period, social service programs such as Meals on Wheels took over the function of delivering hot meals to the elderly. With the younger members of the community engaged in off-reservation employment and schooling, services like Meals on Wheels seemed to fill important needs in the community (McKnight, 1995).¹⁸ It soon became apparent that such services might meet the needs of the elderly at one level, but they could not meet other equally important social needs. A delivery person did not stop to visit. He might stay for an extra minute or two in an emergency—say to change a light bulb or to move a heavy object—but he could not stay longer than a few minutes because there were other deliveries to make. Thus such social services were often not as beneficial as the neighborly services they replaced.

Visiting was just one area of social practice which tribal leaders saw as providing opportunities for language and social renewal. Equally important were the community work days that used to involve tribal members of all ages. In the pre-dam period, people worked together regularly to clean the community, plaster buildings, clear drainage ditches, and resurface the plaza. Men and women of all ages and the children of the community would come together and work side by side. And as they worked, they talked. Tribal leaders saw such activities as opportunities again to bring people together to work and to learn from one another. If tribal members who knew Keres were to use it during these activities, they would provide a natural context for others to learn the language in the most effective way possible.¹⁹

It should be noted that Tribal leaders saw activities like these as more than mere vehicles for language teaching and learning. They recognized that in bringing people together they were also creating the means for renewal and maintenance of community

ties and spirit. For a plan like this to succeed however required a broad commitment by tribal members to participate in such activities. Meetings were held in the community at which the plan was developed and a consultant from the University of New Mexico²⁰ provided an intensive training program on second language learning and development, and on language teaching methods. Through these training sessions, community members who were fluent speakers of Keres gained an awareness of how they might support the efforts of individuals who were trying to learn the language in their everyday encounters with them. These training sessions were also the means for preparing a small group of Keres speakers from the community who could serve as language teachers when formal classes were established. Six language teachers and some fifteen elders committed themselves to participate in language teaching efforts in the community as a result of these sessions.

Cochiti's Language Revitalization Project

In establishing its language revitalization program, tribal leaders adopted a set of goals with important consequences for the community. The first was to reestablish the sole use of Keres in the community for all traditional activities. Since it was in traditional domains such as ceremonies, governance and administration, and the tribal justice system that the use of the language was most critical, emphasis was placed on efforts to reestablish the use of Keres in such activities. Mentoring relationships between Keres speakers and learners were seen as an especially appropriate way to help tribal members gain skills and confidence in using the language in these domains. The mentor structure for teaching knowledge and skills is consistent with traditional practices. Traditionally, those with expertise and knowledge in the meaning and conduct of ceremonies and other traditional practices shared what they knew while working with others who wanted or needed to acquire such knowledge. It is in the context of mentoring relationships that individuals have the opportunity to learn the formal registers of Keres which are needed in some traditional events and activities. There are in any language forms or "registers" which are reserved for special purposes and

which may differ considerably from everyday speech registers: for example, the register used in performing marriage rites and other ceremonies; the register used in legal proceedings and documents, etc. The only way to learn such registers is by participating in the activities in which they are used.

A second goal for the language revitalization project involves bringing the older and younger generations in the community together, and helping people connect with one another in mutually beneficial ways. One important way is by pairing young people—adolescents—with elderly members of the community. The youngsters help their elderly companions by performing useful services for them: chopping wood, shopping, running errands, and doing other chores in their homes. The elderly are encouraged to talk in Keres to the young people who have been assigned to them, thus giving them access to the language they need to learn. At the same time, they also share with their young companions their cultural knowledge and skills. Another intergenerational activity has been undertaken by the chairwoman of the Indian Education Committee in forming a group of women of different ages with varying degrees of Keres fluency to discuss traditional practices and knowledge. The participants in this group are women ages twenty through sixty, with an occasional teen-ager in attendance as well. They talk about cooking, traditional beliefs and practices in child-rearing, preparations for ceremonies, how people are related, and they share stories and recollections of the past. In this way, women of one generation share their cultural knowledge and understandings with women of another, and they also help one another achieve greater levels of fluency in the language.

The third goal of the revitalization effort is to reestablish the use of Keres in the home and in everyday life—not an easy goal to achieve, particularly for those who do not yet have much facility in the language. And yet, it happens. On one occasion, an elder discusses events in the community in Keres with his family: his wife, grown daughter and two teen-age grandchildren. The members of this family vary in their ability to understand and to speak in the language, but each listens intently as the grandfather speaks. They nod occasionally, and indicate when they understand and when they do not. Patiently the grandfather

continues his discourse—repeating, explaining, modeling words now and then for his grandchildren. They repeat the words, and he smiles as they do, pleased with the effort they are making to understand what he is saying, and to speak the language. In this vignette, all three generations make an effort to communicate in Keres. Ordinarily, the discourse would have taken place in English, the language everyone in this family (with the exception of the grandfather) knows better than they do Keres. It took an enormous commitment and effort on the part of all family members to participate in this conversation. But this is what it takes to reestablish the language in the home and community. Several initiatives were designed to reclaim Keres as the language of everyday discourse in the community. Tribal leaders realized that they had to facilitate the learning of Keres and provide opportunities for people to practice using it. They established language classes to help tribal employees learn Keres, which is the language in which tribal affairs will eventually be conducted. Tribal members who are fluent in Keres are asked to use it exclusively during the workday, and to use it while speaking to non-fluent speakers for fifteen minutes each day. Keres classes for other adults in the community are also offered as part of this initiative.

The final goal for the Cochiti language revitalization program is the teaching of Keres to the children of the community. This goal was given high priority since Tribal leaders recognized that the very survival of the language depended on the children of the community learning and speaking it. The plan here has been to establish Keres language classes in the schools attended by the children, and for tribal members to have a voice in deciding both the content to be taught and the methods to be used. The leaders decided that this could be accomplished by working with the schools, and by having elders visit the schools during the language classes to provide help and support for the teaching effort. Another means to accomplish this goal is by providing training for Head Start and public school language teachers in effective language teaching methods—methods that have been found to be more consistent with the goals of the community.

The emphasis on teaching Keres to the children of Cochiti is placed on language development activities that are carried out in the community. After school and week end activities such

as camping trips and community work experiences are seen as important vehicles for immersing the young people in Keres. In all such activities, the goal is to use Keres to the extent possible. Thus, while engaged in work that benefits the community the children are hearing and practicing the language they are learning.

A summer language and cultural program for the children of Cochiti was initiated in 1996, with six fluent speakers of Keres serving as teachers. These teachers who had received training in language teaching methods in the community taught the children a curriculum of traditional knowledge in Keres which was organized around the ceremonial calendar. The program had been planned with an expected enrollment of around thirty children. Thirty five showed up on opening day; by the end of the first week, over eighty children, ages four through sixteen were in attendance. The high mark was ninety-nine, three times the number originally expected. The program of studies which included activities such as learning traditional songs and stories; making ceremonial garments and accoutrement; hosting a traditional dinner to which the community's elders were invited by the children—in Keres; and a host of other activities related to community events that take place in the summer. The program generated great excitement in the community, and the parents were as enthusiastic about it as the children were. The program is set to begin soon for the second year, and from all signs, the level of support and participation will be as great as before.

Some Lessons from Cochiti

The issues of community and language revitalization concern many Indian communities throughout the United States. There are currently some important on-going efforts aimed at revitalizing indigenous languages in communities across the country. Notable among them are the Navaho bilingual programs in the Navaho Nation (Rosier and Holm, 1980; Platero, 1975); the Hualapai bilingual education program at Peach Springs in Arizona (Watahomigie and Yamamoto, 1992); the Karuk people's language camps and their master and apprentice programs in Northern California (Sims, 1996); the early childhood education language programs by the Blackfeet in Montana; the preschool

Hawaiian language immersion programs on Oahu; the bilingual programs in public schools at a number of locations in Hawaii; and the Mohawk immersion programs in upper New York State.²¹ These programs differ in size, but in all cases, the impetus for their establishment came from the communities served, although the ones in public schools are usually not community-controlled. None of these efforts are as multi-faceted as the language revitalization program at Cochiti Pueblo, however. What makes the Cochiti effort unique is that it is as comprehensive as any program as we have seen. Such an initiative could not have been mounted without the full support and involvement of the Tribal Council. Most of all, it was the far-sighted vision of the leaders in this community that helped them decide to adopt a multi-faceted approach reaching all levels of the community. The programmatic approach it chose in reclaiming the language is unprecedented in its breadth and scope. It is too early to know what the eventual outcome of these community wide efforts will be, but judging from how the program is evolving and working thus far, the outlook is good.

From the experience so far, we believe that there are lessons that can be learned from Cochiti's initiative. The following are a few such lessons and some related principles that other communities might find useful:

1. The leadership and motivation for language and community development must come from the community itself. Outside support is helpful and sometimes necessary, but leadership cannot come from the outside. It is critical that those who have the greatest stake in the initiative's outcome be involved at all levels, starting with taking the lead.
2. Efforts to strengthen a community must have the support of the real leadership in the community. In the case of Cochiti, the Tribal Council not only took the lead by appointing the Indian Education Committee and the Education Task Force to study the language situation in the community, it also gave its support and backing to the activities these groups eventually proposed.
3. The approach taken in the initiative must be ones that the community decides are appropriate, given the problems it

faces, and given the historic and cultural context in which the community finds itself. Solutions must be consistent with the cultural practices of the community undertaking the initiative, and should come directly from the community itself. In Cochiti, the decision to place the emphasis on language revitalization was not arrived at casually; it was only after careful study over a long period of time that the Tribal leaders decided to reclaim the community's language, and how to do it.

4. Language and community revitalization efforts must be both horizontal and vertical in reach. It is not enough to work on just one segment of the community, or with just a few people at a time. In Cochiti, the decision to initiate programs to reach as many tribal members as possible, and to design activities to reconnect members of the community across generations, has signalled to everyone the seriousness of the initiative. The program has had an immediate impact on the community, and it appears to have succeeded in getting people involved in the effort.
5. It takes time to restore a community's linguistic and cultural resources. It can't be done without a real and sustained commitment from people in the community to do whatever is necessary to achieve the objective. Efforts that depend on outside funding are hard to sustain. In Cochiti, there is a real commitment from tribal members to make the program work.

Closing Remarks

In the summer of 1996, two momentous events occurred in Cochiti Pueblo. One took place toward the end of the summer language school, when many of the children had acquired enough Keres to have some confidence using it, not only with their teachers but with one another and with their parents too. The sound of children's voices speaking to one another in Keres as they worked and played together was a sign that the community's language had found new life. The other event was the harvest of corn and alfalfa grown in Cochiti Pueblo—the first crops in twenty-seven years. After a long fight with the U. S. Congress, the Pueblo of

Cochiti won a twelve million dollar settlement in 1992 for the damage done to its farm lands by the building of Cochiti dam. Half of the money was used by the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a drainage system that would allow the surrounding land to be reclaimed. The crops that were harvested in 1996 were grown on the first parcels of land that have been restored to health. To some, these might not seem like such important events. To us, they are portentous. The future of the land and the language is being reclaimed.

Notes

1. The community development activities described in this article have been generously supported by the W K. Kellogg Foundation through its Families and Neighborhoods Initiative. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Foundation.
2. Just five years ago, Krauss (1992) reported that 187 of the indigenous languages of the Americas were still spoken, although 80% of those in North America were moribund. Three years later, in 1995, the figure he gave in a talk at Dartmouth University (cited in Crawford, 1996) had changed to 175—a net loss of 12 languages in the intervening years. He also revised his estimate of the percentage of North American languages that could be considered moribund to 89%.
3. Yup'ik, Zuni and Navaho are several that come to mind, but in each case, there has been a dramatic decline over the past several decades in the numbers of children who enter school speaking the language at age 5. When children are no longer learning and speaking a language, it is in decline. A language can be considered moribund when it is spoken only by adults who are beyond the child-rearing years.
4. There are 6 doctoral fellows in the UCB-NMOIA Partnership. They are from the Pueblos of Cochiti, Acoma, Zuni, and Tesuque. One fellow is a member of the Tlingit and Tsimshian tribes of Prince of Wales, Alaska.
5. The Pueblo peoples endured ruthless exploitation and oppression at the hands of the Spaniards after they appeared as colonizers in the region in 1589. According to Sando (1992), during the 80 years of Spanish domination, many pueblo people were killed or sent off to Mexico where they were sold as slaves. In 1846, at the conclusion of the Mexican-American War, a civil government was established in New Mexico, and the land holdings of the Pueblos were confirmed by the U. S. Congress, two years later with the ratification of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. But while land rights were recognized, the individual rights of Pueblo people were not respected. In 1923 the federal government imposed the Religious Crimes Code, prohibiting the practice of all native ceremonies. There were constant efforts to force Pueblo people, as with other American natives, to assimilate into the larger

society culturally and linguistically. Under the guise of bringing Indians under the “civilizing influence” of formal schooling, children were removed from families and sent to boarding schools where they were not allowed to speak their languages or to follow their cultural and religious practices (Adams, 1988). These acts had devastating effects on all of the indigenous languages of this country. Pueblo people were not granted U. S. citizenship until 1948—thirty six years after New Mexico achieved full statehood. See Sando (1992) for an excellent historical examination of the social, political and cultural experiences of the Pueblos by a Pueblo scholar.

6. Clan membership is matrilineal.
7. Cochiti, like many other pueblos, is divided into two moieties for social and ceremonial functions (Sando, 1992).
8. This is an instance of how “solutions” from outside of the community can result in breaking down the relationships and activities that held the community together as McKnight (1995) has argued in *The Careless Society*.
9. See Adams, 1988, for an account of federal policies for dealing with the “Indian problem” through schooling Adams argues that while these policies may have been motivated by benevolent sentiments towards the Indians, it is also clear that policy-makers were motivated by the desire to take back the land that had been set aside as reservations. By “civilizing” Indian people through schooling, “they would be drawn inevitably into the White economy; they would come to hunger for the goods of the Whites just as the Whites hungered for Indian lands” (Adams, 1988, p. 17). Once the Indians abandoned their reservations for life in the larger society, reservation lands would become available for non-Indian homesteading and farming.
10. For a discussion of the federal policy to terminate the reservation system under the guise of “freeing” Indians from the “oppressive” control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, see Getches, Wilkinson, and Williams, 1993, pp. 229–251.
11. One such dispute over economic and resource development had to do with a plan to build a huge housing subdivision on Pueblo lands which would be open to non-Indians. The master plan called for the eventual creation of a community of 30–40,000 people—promising economic development for the Pueblo. Tribal members who wanted to maintain Cochiti’s traditional lifestyle recognized that a development of that size would quickly overwhelm the Pueblo with its population of a thousand tribal members at the time. This situation created an internal schism between the progressive and the traditional groups within the community.
12. This began when HUD funds were used for building much needed housing in the Pueblo. What HUD offered was single family housing in a subdivision located away from the core community.
13. See Wong Fillmore (1991a & b) for reports of studies that found evidence of massive disruption of communication patterns in the homes of language minority children after attending preschool programs in which they immersed in English. In one study, 64.4% of the families reported that their

children stopped speaking and eventually lost the languages of their homes and families after spending from 1 to 2 years in English-only preschools. The families also reported loss of family intimacy along with the loss of the family language, which in most cases was the only language spoken by the adult members of the household. In those homes, what was lost was the very means by which parents could continue to socialize their children in language the parents knew well, and the means for supporting and guiding their children as they grew older.

14. For a detailed account of the tribal leadership's role in the planning and development work in Cochiti, see Benjamin, Pecos and Romero, 1996.
15. The tribal member was the late Mr. Carlos Pecos.
16. The children are removed from their regular classrooms for 30 minutes each day for lessons that teach them words in Keres.
17. The Tribal Council has declared that its language should remain an oral one, in keeping with the community's oral tradition of communication and knowledge transmission. It is therefore inappropriate and inconsistent with the community's wishes to teach it to the children through the medium of writing. See Benjamin, Pecos and Romero (1996) for a discussion of the concept of literacy in this oral society.
18. McKnight (1995) discusses how the professionalization of services can have the effect of undermining the social and human needs of people despite meeting their practical need for the social service.
19. The most effective methods are those developed over the years at the Linguistic Institute for Native Americans (LINA). Teachers from many tribal groups from across the nation have been trained to use these methods in language teaching programs at the Summer Institute for Linguistics for Native Americans (SILNA). Christine Sims has long been the driving force in LINA and SILNA.
20. Dr. Rebecca Benjamin of the College of Education at the University of New Mexico.
21. A personal communication 1997, from Leanne Hinton an expert on language revitalization efforts by members of indigenous communities. She is on the Linguistics faculty at the University of California at Berkeley. For discussions of such efforts, see Hinton (1994).

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Interfacing African American Churches with Agencies and Institutions: An Expanding Continuum of Care with Partial Answers to Welfare Reform

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It is unrealistic to presume that churches and other private charities can fill the void resulting from welfare reform (Sider, 1995; Conniff, 1997); yet there are ways to structure an effective church- and community-based continuum of care that will help to do so. In this article African-American churches are viewed as major players. An explanation of the systems theory of isomorphic replication provides a key to understanding the success of this collaborative model, which addresses issues facing communities while building on their strengths and assets and reckoning with the challenges of working collaboratively. Recurring issues of race, culture, trust, and control are studied in various dimensions of the collaborative process, providing insight that can turn stumbling blocks into a map for creative systemic change.

Mounting evidence that grassroots and faith-based groups are doing a much better job of addressing community issues than government does (Frame, 1997; Schorr, 1988; Shapiro, 1996; Sherman, 1996; Sider, 1995) may explain in part the sudden surge of interest in having such groups pick up the tab for welfare reform. While that is a colossal and impossible task (Sider, 1995; Conniff, 1997), the interface of churches and agencies in a collaborative effort to bring wholeness and well being to families is being

realized on a small scale in Pittsburgh, PA. The African-American church in particular is a formidable resource—the one long term, indigenous institution in the Black community that encounters and embraces individuals, families, and extended families from birth to death in a holistic way.

Families and Youth 2000 is a collaborative of four African American churches, a neighborhood health center, a church-based grassroots community organization, and a counseling and therapy agency whose purpose is to strengthen the well being of families and youth in the East End of Pittsburgh. The agencies in the collaborative provide counseling, therapy, health care, mentoring, life skills, youth leadership education, and training. The church-based services include family and youth recreation, youth development activities, job skills programs, home management training, ministry to single mothers, recovery ministry, data management, the Christian Life Skills Mentoring Program, and tutoring. All services are available to parishioners, unchurched community residents, and those referred from within or outside the collaborative.

The Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute (PPI) convenes a bimonthly case and site conference meeting to assure maximum effectiveness in services provided to participating residents and other referrals. While confidentiality is protected, cases benefit from the sharing and review provided by group input by professional therapists and community lay people from all of the collaborating sites. Christian Life Skills (CLS) serves as coordinating agency for the collaborative, assuring general information sharing and the maximization of coordinated and collaborative efforts in keeping with the overall mission.

Pittsburgh's East End community is approximately 80% African American. *Black and White Economic Conditions*, a 1995 Benchmark Report published by the University of Pittsburgh, indicates that among 50 large U.S. cities Pittsburgh has the highest percentage of black males age 25–54 not in the labor force (30.9%); the second highest percentage of black children in poverty (56.7%); the highest poverty rate for blacks age 18–64 (35.2%); and the largest disparity in labor force participation between black and white males age 25–54 (18%). In summary the report states that “. . . Pittsburgh has one of the poorest, most economically disadvantaged populations of any large city in the U.S.”

(p. 5) The East End is clearly representative of these conditions. Teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock births, and poor academic performance are also issues in these communities. Although some churches, local public school parent organizations, and a variety of other community groups had independently implemented grassroots programs and activities to strengthen and improve the quality of life from within the communities, Families and Youth 2000 is the first sustained effort on the part of community agencies and churches to maximize through collaboration their capacities in exerting a positive impact on the community over time.

Families and Youth 2000: Origins

In 1990 the directors of two white agencies began to acknowledge limitations in comprehensive health care services for the growing African-American population in the community. They invited the director of CLS to discuss this concern because of her involvement with a network of African-American churches. This was the beginning of the vision for Families and Youth 2000.

Discovering the Pattern of Isomorphisms

In the seven years since the dialogue began, some patterns have emerged that are worthy of close study for what they can teach us about our interrelatedness as human beings, recursive patterns of co-evolution, and other behaviors tied to a concept of isomorphic replication of context. Hofstadter (1979, p. 49) indicates that the term *isomorphic* applies when "two complex structures can be mapped on to each other, in such a way that to each part of one structure there is a corresponding part in the other structure; 'corresponding' means that the two parts play similar roles in their respective structures."

Recurring patterns are replicated in a variety of domains as distinct, as Hofstadter (1979, p. 49) points out, as art, music, and mathematics, for example. Tracking reciprocal and recursive relationships of various domains or systems is a means of utilizing the principle of isomorphism. "Parallel process phenomenon occurs and recurs in a remarkable multiplicity of forms" (Doehrman, 1976, p. 82).

From the inception of the collaborative, this pattern has been at work and observable. Early on issues of culture, control, race, and trust emerged in the group. Those issues continue to have a

major impact. They have been manifested in a variety of settings and in a variety of ways. We have recognized that these issues reside within us, as individuals, within each of the seven sites of the collaborative, and within the collaborative as a whole. The same issues have emerged repeatedly as the collaborative and its members have interacted with groups and institutions outside the collaborative. These issues play a major role in shaping public policy, congressional decisions, and world issues.

Early Stage in the Life of Families and Youth 2000

When PPI and East Liberty Family Health Care Center (ELFHCC) recognized the existence of cultural and racial barriers, they knew they needed an alternative approach to service delivery. Issues of access, financial resources, communication, values, and beliefs created major barriers to the delivery of comprehensive services.

These barriers were addressed by identifying the churches as an asset within the community that—because of their values and beliefs regarding well being—could serve as a mediating structure to enhance access and communication between the health facilities and the community. The preexistence of a network of churches associated with Christian Life Skills was an additional asset that further facilitated the remediation of the barriers and difficulties. By working together, the churches could have an impact on a significant segment of the community. They could also advise and assist the health agencies in understanding and negotiating racial and cultural barriers.

Trust and Control in Collaborative Membership/Participation

Issues of trust and control emerged when the director of CLS recommended that representatives of the churches be invited to join the group in creating the design that would become Families and Youth 2000. The resistance by the leadership of the two white agencies persisted for more than a year. At the same time personal relationships were growing, and trust was building among representatives of the churches within the Christian Life Skills network. Later, when letters were sent to numerous churches inviting them to participate in the collaborative, the churches already involved in CLS exhibited the strongest and most immediate response.

Race, Culture, Trust and Control in Selecting Evaluators

These issues emerged as key issues again when it was necessary to select an evaluator for the project. There was skepticism on the part of the African Americans in the collaborative as to whether the university evaluators would collect data for their own benefit, misinterpret the nuances of the African American religious experiences expressed in the context of the project, and fail to truly assist and advance the purposes inherent in the collaborative. This was addressed by hiring non-white evaluators with significant cross-cultural backgrounds and sensitivity to the culture of the church.

*Mid-Stage in the Life of the Collaborative**Trust and Control in Employment Policies*

At this point in the life of the collaborative employees at two of the sites challenged employment decisions involving the Director of CLS, who had a leadership role not only within her participating congregation but also as Director of the Families and Youth 2000 Collaborative. While it was recognized that she had been a leading force in bringing the collaborative together, some individuals now believed that she had too much influence and control.

The former members of the congregations who had been part of the initial CLS networking had been replaced by new persons who did not have the history of the relationship and trust building. These concerns led to the following decisions: (1) the collaborative would participate in team building and conflict resolution training with an outside facilitator, and (2) the collaborative would begin to develop a strong formalized infrastructure by compiling a booklet describing the history and vision of Families and Youth 2000 and a policy and procedures manual to govern its work.

Racial and Cultural Issues Within the Collaborative

Aspects of the employment concerns referred to above were perceived to be related to systemic racism that severely impacts economics and gender issues in African-American communities (Bangs & Hong; Nobles, 1989), and ultimately their families.

Members of the collaborative came to recognize that their reason for coming together (to holistically enhance the well being of African-American families and youth) would not exempt them from encountering within the collaborative the very issues they were fighting to rectify on a larger systemic level. That is, just as racism, economics, and gender have an impact at the societal level, this is also true at the level of the collaborative. This is an example of a phenomenon in two different domains where a pattern is replicated.

Trust, Control, and Culture in Engaging Systems Beyond the Collaborative—University Systems and Family Systems

University Systems—While the collaborative was struggling internally to address issues of race and control, the Families and Youth 2000 project manager had initiated discussion with the University of Pittsburgh regarding a course that he wanted to teach at the University as an adjunct faculty member. For an outsider to approach the university and offer a course was unheard of. Furthermore, the proposed course was an interdisciplinary course requiring cooperation across several academic areas. The course, "Building Interdisciplinary Partnerships: A Team Based Approach to Community Services," was introduced at a luncheon for deans, department heads, and others as a means of moving issues of collaboration from practice at the community level to training at the university level.

After the presentation there were many questions, and though there was some skepticism and some criticism, there was also enough interest to move the idea forward. It took three years to institute the course, given the culture of the university. The intent of the course, which is offered at the Graduate School of Public Health, is to provide a multidisciplinary training for graduate students in order to assure their capacity to work cooperatively with other service providers across disciplines and to work with sensitivity, respect, and understanding in the context of the community. The project manager had to adjust to the cultural environment of the university and all of its internal systems in order to succeed.

Family Systems—At the community level, trained volunteers from Bethany Baptist Church in Homewood initially met with some skepticism when they approached families in the neighborhood. The invitation to participate in a year-round program after receiving Christmas gifts from the local Project Angel Tree (a program for families of incarcerated men) made residents wonder if the church volunteers were yet another wave of social service providers intruding into their personal business. With time, however, it became clear that these volunteers did not carry the bureaucratic baggage the residents often encountered with other providers. They truly cared about people, listened, respected them, and brought a refreshing added dimension to their interaction—prayer and a relationship with Christ. This approach to community enhancement through church-based natural helpers has brought new hope to families and the community.

The Current Stage of Life with the Collaborative

As the churches, natural helpers, professionals, students, and the various other collaborative members reach out to each other and to those beyond themselves, there is hope that the collaborative will be an ever-widening circle of advocacy, support, and enhancement in the many facets of community life that are essential to well being. A strategic plan for deliberate asset building has great potential for an exponentially large return in enhancing community life at every level. This expanding continuum of care can be mutually enhancing for all systems involved. Here are some current examples of its impact.

Trust/Control/Cultural Issues in Enhancing Academic Institutions

Intern Placements—University interns are now being placed in nontraditional settings such as churches in the African American community and the coordinating office of the grassroots church-based network—Christian Life Skills. They strengthen the efforts of the churches while gaining experience in counseling, community planning, program and curriculum development, as well as cross-cultural and interdisciplinary collaboration.

University in the community—Classes and individual students are visiting the neighborhoods to learn from community leaders,

natural helpers, and other lay people about the expertise they have in working for community enhancement.

Community in the University—Practitioners from the community are being invited to lecture at university sponsored conferences and courses in order to provide timely input on how to interface effectively with the realities of community life.

Race/Trust/Culture/ Control Issues in Enhancing Community Health

Coordination of Church-Based Community Health Initiative—History documents the misdiagnosis and the misuse of medication and experimentation among African Americans and other people of color in the United States. To avoid the perpetuation of racism and disregard for cultural variables, hospitals in the vicinity are recognizing the potential coordinating role of Families and Youth 2000 in facilitating access and more effective service to underserved residents of the community. By addressing racial, cultural, and trust issues traditionally encountered in health care settings, the collaborative is playing a unique role in traversing culturally diverse systems to enhance the health of the community. Partly as a result of this effort, some health care services will be provided in local schools, churches, and a community center.

MUI/Seminary Training, Internships, and Modeling—A Mutually Beneficial Relationship—A linkage with the Metro Urban Institute of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has provided training opportunities for lay leaders in the churches and field placements for seminary interns who assist with efforts in the congregations and community. The Metro Urban Institute (MUI) of the seminary has become a place where urban church leaders can share ideas, issues, and efforts, and build church-based collaboratives to enhance their community outreach. Families and Youth 2000 is seen as a model from which other groups of churches can learn how to develop collaboratives that provide comprehensive community-based care.

Faith /Health Consortium— In addition, the linkage with MUI led to a reaffirmation of a joint program between the seminary and the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh. This in turn has led to the convening of a Faith/Health Consortium, which is now in conversation with the Carter Center in Atlanta (Emory University) and its Interfaith Health Program.

One of the strengths of this new thrust is that it validates what many in the African American church and community have always embraced as a life style—the integration of spiritual orientation with every dimension of one's being. The added voices of this nationally recognized center and the local institutions of higher learning affirm a strong and significant asset that the evaluators are still trying to discover how to assess—spirituality.

While spirituality has been at the heart of the collaborative (which describes itself as Christ-centered) since its inception, conversations around how to effectively evaluate that dimension are still in process. Again the mix of divergent cultures raises new questions about praxis. A number of persons within and outside the collaborative have observed that spirituality may not be easily measurable, but people who experience the positive changes it brings into their lives know it exists (Fitzgerald, 1996; Larson, 1992; Shapiro, 1996).

The pastors of the churches participating in Families and Youth 2000 have expressed great enthusiasm about the Faith/Health Consortium and other health partnerships with hospitals and health centers. They have already agreed to work together to bring wholeness—which includes spiritual well being—to individuals, families, and communities.

A Theological Framework for Health and Other Policies—As the churches interface with the health community, the theological framework from which they operate has emerged as a guiding light in developing the overall policies and procedures for the collaborative. This recognition emerged when the collaborative was considering a partnership with a local group to provide an alternate site in a pregnancy prevention project. The collaborative, with its pastoral leaders, reached consensus that Families and Youth 2000 would advocate abstinence outside of marriage in addressing issues of sexuality. The partnering agency was pleased with this church-based complementary opportunity for a more whole-person approach to sexuality and general health care.

In this instance, while the cultures of the two delivery systems are very different, there is an acceptance of the cultural distinction, a recognition of the validity of the contribution that can be made in the particular cultural context, and a trust and respect for the

decision makers who are in control of the policies and procedures that guide the church.

Race/Trust/Culture and Control in Enhancing Overall Community Well Being and Promoting a Shift in Public Policy

Reaching Out

Families and Youth 2000 members have chosen to come together for ecumenical worship as a way of celebrating their experience in community with each other and with Christ. They have followed this occasion with a reception where additional information sharing, recruitment of volunteers, and exposure to the various resources and services available through the collaborative are presented. Conducted as a semi-annual event, this is the collaborative's deliberate attempt to embrace more participants in understanding, owning, and participating in the efforts of Families and Youth 2000.

As word of the collaborative spreads through deliberate ongoing contact with community groups beyond it, linkages with the collaborative have resulted in a smorgasbord of services to unchurched as well as church families and youth. As we engage groups with cultures different from our own, we are able to recognize cultural patterns and boundaries that must be respected in how we engage each other. We must recognize issues related to locus of control, race, and trust. Some of these issues emerge and are dealt with best over time.

Leveraging Access and Resources

As Families and Youth 2000 works toward a better quality of life for families and youth, systemic change becomes a necessary aspect of the process. The collaborative attempts to leverage influence for greater access to and improvement of recreational facilities in the community so youth will have an alternative to gang behavior and violence. It also hopes to leverage more job opportunities for youth and adults. After studying the efforts of faith-based groups such as Families and Youth 2000, there has been a shift in recent public policies at the county level, where faith-based groups are now invited to apply for funding not previously

accessible to them. Families and Youth 2000 just received its first grant from Allegheny County.

Across the country there is a growing movement wherein religious faith is accepted as an aspect of culture that should not necessarily preclude access to public funds for community-based initiatives (Frame, 1997; Sherman, 1996).

Key Factors for Effective Interaction of Divergent Systems

The connecting of different systems (e.g., government and religious groups), in order to make possible an expanding continuum of care, can be mutually enhancing for all systems involved. In addressing patterns—such as culture, race, trust, and control—common to these divergent systems, several key factors transcend the differences and make possible effective interaction. The factors include time, good communication, relationship building, and mutual respect. Such ingredients can create a wholesome context where conflict resolution and problem solving can occur. Further, documenting agreed upon solutions and guidelines for how systems interact can also facilitate the process.

In the book *Collaboration: What Makes it Work* (Mattessich, 1992), the writer outlines the necessary ingredients for an effective collaborative effort. However, beyond these ingredients, if participants are oblivious to the recurring patterns in the various systems that interact, they may overlook commonalities that impact upon them regularly.

Good communication, relationship building, mutual respect, and time, are process oriented in contrast to society's tendency to emphasize products rather than process. African culture and Biblical thought—two grounding elements in the Families and Youth 2000 collaborative—emphasize process over products and ends. That is to say, *how* we treat one another is much more important than the selfish pursuit of money, prizes, control, or power for selfish gain. The collaborative remains grounded in its central focus and purpose through periods of prayer and reflection in the context of most collaborative meetings. For Families and Youth 2000, time, good communication, respect, relationship building, written guidelines, shared times of prayer, and reflection all strengthen the collaborative and keep it vibrant.

Our Mode/Process of Interaction is a Choice

Across our country, in large systems and small, we repeatedly encounter issues of race, culture, trust, and control. These issues can be ignored or addressed incompetently. On the other hand, it is possible to recognize the replication of isomorphisms in the various systems where we interact and deliberately encounter them through life-giving rather than oppressive processes. A collaborative comprised of all key players—recipients of services as well as service providers—will more effectively address issues of race, culture, trust, and control.

The collaborative needs to reflect, in its continuum of players/decision-makers, the continuum of services it intends to provide. Families and Youth 2000 has discovered that at varying points in the process recipients and providers change roles, and there is great mutuality to the work of the collaborative.

In the face of welfare reform and the dismantling of federally funded social services, which will be devastating for many, we must recognize our capacity as community groups to alleviate rather than exacerbate the problem. We do violence to one another, and our children do likewise, because violence is committed in multiple layers in interacting systems of our nation—in congress, board rooms, institutions of higher learning, and later in families, communities, and the media. These are isomorphic replications of unhealthy processes for addressing issues of race, culture, trust, and control. We need to shift from violent ways of interacting to life-giving processes of interaction.

The racial disparities in Pittsburgh (Bangs & Hong 1995), manifested in the worst employment and economic standings of African American males among 50 large U.S. cities, are consistent with another study indicating that the majority of African Americans feel the U.S. economic and legal systems are unfair to blacks (Tapia, 1996). These racial and resultingly economic and legal (control) barriers have a devastating impact on the African American family (Edelman, 1987). It is important to note that in highlighting gender, Bangs and Hong (1995) point to a major issue of power and control in this society. Note also the works of Billingsley (1992), Kunjufu (1995), Madhubuti (1990), McGhee (1984), Nobles (1989), and Stewart (1978).

When historically many social scientists and mental health professionals have had a hostile attitude toward religion as a factor in well being (Fagan, 1996; Larson, 1992), it is understandable that many in the religious community would be reluctant to trust systems associated with such professions.

Conclusion

Racism, ungrounded cultural biases, mistrust, and power/control hunger will prevent or destroy effective collaboration needed to maximize the resources in our communities.

Reckoning with Racism

The reality of racism in general, as well as systemic racism, must be acknowledged with all of its economic, educational, medical, legal, gender, and other sociological implications. Systems interacting with churches and other community-based groups must be prepared to reckon with the recesses of racism.

Reckoning with Trust and Control

When issues of control emerge, questions of shared control, shifts in locus of control, and the history of how and why the present locus of control has evolved must be raised. Those who are accustomed to being in positions of privilege and control—large institutions and the economically advantaged—must contend with the necessity of changing historical patterns. When trust is a concern, history, cultural context, and the possibility of introducing a new paradigm need to be considered.

Reckoning with Cultural Issues

The power of culture cannot be taken for granted. To ignore the natural boundaries that define the culture of any system, or the characteristics integral to that system, is to invite unnecessary confusion in attempting to interact across systems.

Reckoning with Changes in our Systems

As public funds become more limited, local collaboratives must earn the trust of the groups with which they interact by demonstrating respect for issues of race, culture, trust, and control. Federal government is shifting more control to the states.

County and city groups must entrust control of the dollars to neighborhoods and communities in ways that empower the disenfranchised rather than in ways that inflict more violence. This means an integrated effort that includes all participating sectors of a given community. Working at asset mapping can enhance such a process of assuring the participation of churches, groups of churches, natural helpers, and other residents in ways that enhance, empower, and equip people to take full control of their lives.

Involving Everyone in Taking Responsibility

Issues of race, trust, culture, and control are part of a recurring pattern. Constructive, respectful processes for addressing our interconnectedness as human beings, our interrelatedness, and recursive behavior patterns can liberate and strengthen our existence in community with one another and create an expanding continuum of care that enhances the well being of all involved. While in the African-American community the church may play a key role, every system, every group, at every level, shares in this responsibility since the patterns are evident throughout.

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Improving the Quality of Child Care in the Rural South

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A collaborative of six social service agencies and a state university determined that the single most pressing need of families in a 14-county, rural area was child care. The Training Resource Center, developed through a W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant, worked with day care licensing and early childhood professional groups to develop a plan to address the systemic nature of the problem of how to improve the quality of child care. Programs developed included training, mentoring, NAEYC accreditation, and a resource library. After 15 months, some programs show the possibility of sustainability.

Introduction

In January 1996, the sponsoring partners of the Training Resource Center (TRC), a W. K. Kellogg Foundation Family and Neighborhoods, Community/University Partnership project, established a two-year primary focus on improving the quality of child care in the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee. The time was right for such an initiative as the state's welfare reform plan, Families First, mandated a return to work for many mothers who had formerly been sustained on AFDC. There was an estimated need facing the child care community in the Upper Cumberland for 4,000 child care slots and very little funding or organization in place to meet this anticipated need. Based on their

combined experience in serving families in the areas of public health, human services, and education, the partners (see Figure 1) believed that support of young families through the provision of quality child care was a vital element in ensuring the success of Families First. Meeting child care needs would be critical in assisting families to become economically self-sufficient, to be motivated to attain the necessary education and training for employment, and to function as supportive environments for human growth and development.

Child care needs of the Upper Cumberland reflect not only the unique social and economic character of the region but also of the individual counties. All interventions planned had to reflect knowledge of and respect for the particular situations of each county. The region is a 14-county, 5,000 square mile area in east central Tennessee and is considered the western edge of Appalachia. Communities are quite small and often organized around a fundamentalist protestant church. The terrain is rugged, and secondary roads are often gravel. There is no public transportation system. The majority of employment is farming, light manufacturing, and local crafts and trades. Most (78%) of child care in the Upper Cumberland is in-home and often provided by relatives (Farley, 1997). Family day care homes for over five children must be licensed, and there is voluntary registration for family child care with fewer than five children. The more remote counties have no child care centers. Of existing centers, virtually all are state licensed but none had been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) at the time the project began.

Cookeville, the largest city in the Upper Cumberland (population 25,000), is the economic, educational, and social services hub of the region. Tennessee Technological University (TTU) (8,000 students) is one of the State of Tennessee Board of Regents universities and is located in Cookeville. TTU serves the higher education needs of the region through on- and off-campus programming. The TRC is located in Cookeville as are six of the seven sponsoring partners. Coordination of most social service programs takes place in Cookeville with activities then taken out to satellite programs in the counties.

Significance and Goals of the Project

The particular significance of the quality child care project of the TRC is the ongoing development of a model and supporting methodology for creation and delivery of services to improve child care in a rural area. As the model unfolds, support for the project is seen most clearly in three ways. First, and most easily observable, is the energizing effect that frequent, local, and high-quality training is having on child care staff and administrators. Second is the forming of links between groups representing various aspects of child care and early education. Third is the greater public awareness of what constitutes high quality child care and why it is important for children to have high quality care.

This paper will present a description of the programs developed by the TRC to enhance the quality of child care in a rural region. The TRC staff members who created the programs conceived of the entire quality child care project as a systems intervention (Powell & Sigel, 1991), one that must address the problem from multiple points of view and take into account a variety of factors that impact on the situation.

Review of the Literature

Intervention programs in the field of early childhood education and child development have long been characterized as requiring a systems approach to both the development and implementation of the program (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It has been understood that a comprehensive, holistic approach to meeting the needs of children and their families was more likely to produce the desired outcome because of the attention to multiple aspects of the problem. Early intervention programs such as Head Start have made a positive impact on low income families by providing a child support system including nutritional, medical, dental, and social services, as well as preschool education (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1981). The level of education of early childhood teachers and the professionalization of the early childhood workforce have been areas of concern nationally as well as in Tennessee. Research demonstrated that the single most important characteristic in improving quality in early childhood classrooms, either preschool or primary, is the education level

of the teacher (Gestwicki, 1995). In-service training provided by professionals with both appropriate levels of education and classroom experience has been shown to be of value in improving teachers' skills; however, poor quality training had a negative effect on teachers' attitudes toward their jobs (Ayers, 1989). In centers where teams of directors, teachers, and parents work together to achieve accreditation by NAEYC, staff morale was enhanced (NAEYC, 1991).

A critical issue facing child care and all of early childhood education is limited funding from both state and national governments (Kagan, 1989). Child care is still seen as the province of welfare families. This is reflected in the administration of most publicly funded early childhood programs by state and national departments of human services rather than by departments of education. Child care programs funded by public dollars for working families are few and far between. As a result, most of the child care is a small business with all functions tied to what the parents purchasing the service can afford to pay. Most parents cannot afford the complete cost of high-quality child care (General Accounting Office, 1990) and are forced to select child care that is not of high quality. Owners of a child care business are generally not trained in business practices and often are forced to close due to business difficulties. The raising of public awareness of these issues has long been a national focus, but it has been difficult to arrange consistent grassroots support for increased state and federal dollars among child care personnel on the local level.

Project Description

In support of the overall project goal of improving child care in the Upper Cumberland, six types of programming were developed: staff and administrators training, linking child care agencies and professional groups, parent and public awareness of issues surrounding quality care, improved access to resources for child care staff, improved business practices for child care, and NAEYC accreditation. Day care licensing and the Child Care Administrators Association had already generated some activity in these areas prior to the arrival of the TRC. However, the general feeling in the early childhood community was one of resignation.

There were many strong individuals working alone or in small groups who were ready to give in to frustration. Travel times of up to three hours across the region, no training funds, and no central management for training had taken their toll over the years. As one licensing counselor expressed, "It gets to the point where you are embarrassed to ask the same few people to drive across the region and not even be able to pay their mileage."

A critical first move was to identify community child care leaders and support them with mentoring, networking, and an occasional lunch. The perception of the TRC staff was that these directors and licensing counselors would continue to be key personnel for many years and helping them to further develop would have a widespread effect predicted by the systems model. These leaders chose development of a bi-monthly advanced seminar, selection of materials for the library circulation project, and creation of a training calendar committee that would meet quarterly to organize training and develop a calendar to be mailed to all licensed programs as their work. This committee became the central steering committee for quality improvement. Six centers were also involved with the first round of accreditation.

Once the community leadership was in place and familiar with TRC staff and function, the six programming areas were established. Working with directors, day care licensing counselors, and local professional groups, doors opened, and the work began.

Staff and Administrators' Training

Early in the project, training consisted of two-hour topical workshops. Suggestions from the training calendar committee and from workshop participants led to the creation of a variety of formats (see Figure 2). While the TRC staff and other outside professionals continue to present training, some types of training, such as new hire (for new staff) and new director, were presented by center-based staff. Topics for training covered the full range of early childhood interests from prevention of lead poisoning to group games for five- to eight-year olds.

Linking Child Care Agencies and Professional Groups

The original group of child-care leaders who formed the training calendar committee was the first point of outreach for this

initiative. This group and the TRC staff now have representation on most of the boards and committees of all early childhood groups in the region. Other linking activities included sharing responsibility for each other's meetings and mini-conferences and multi-group trips to state and national conferences such as NAEYC, Tennessee Association for the Education of Young Children, and Southern Early Childhood Association.

Parent and Public Awareness of Issues Surrounding Quality Care

Workshops for parents were held at child care centers and elementary schools. Key topics at these meetings were developmentally appropriate practice, center accreditation, and readiness issues. In addition to center-based parent activities, two speakers of national stature, Kim Means and Madelyn Swift, were brought to Cookeville for public addresses and were taped for later broadcast on the local PBS station, WCTE. Three other television programs on topics related to families and/or child care, Jewish Families in the Upper Cumberland, Celebration of the Week of the Young Child, and Introducing the TRC, were produced in conjunction with WCTE.

Improved Access to Resources for Child Care Staff

The isolation of rural communities often means limited awareness of and access to teaching resources. At one of the early TRC workshops, a child care center director was concerned because she did not know where she could purchase a child-size wooden table. The TRC staff gave her a list of toll free numbers for manufacturers of classroom furniture. As a result of this event, a portable catalog file was developed and taken to all trainings.

A second project involved a cooperative arrangement with two regional libraries, day care licensing, and the TRC. Working with the training calendar committee, print and video materials for teachers, directors, and parents, and books and supporting activity materials for children were purchased and placed at the libraries. Special book packs provided parents and day care home providers with a package including a book, learning materials, and lesson plans for activities for preschool and primary school age children. The regional libraries are resources for local, public libraries and bookmobiles. All child care facilities and local libraries will have the full bibliography of this collection and can

call the regional library to have materials delivered to the closest library.

Improved Business Practice for Child Care

Most child care directors have little training in managing a business, yet over half of the child care available in the Upper Cumberland region is proprietary. Day care licensing can assist these directors in fire and safety issues and, to some extent, with programs, but the director must gain business skills on her own. Most learn the hard way. For instance, day care licensing referred a new director to TRC. She had just opened her franchise child care center the previous week. TRC received the call on a Monday. She needed to get a payroll out on Friday and did not know how to do this. At this point TRC began to compile a list of accountants, insurance agents, lawyers, and state and federal regulators who would be willing to work with child care directors. In consultation with directors, TRC has developed training about personnel handbooks, staff management, interviewing, federal labor laws, implications of ADA for child care, and marketing.

NAEYC Accreditation

Over a decade ago, the NAEYC created an assessment tool for child care centers based on developmentally appropriate practice, their term for high quality. The assessment is a self study that is validated by an outside professional with training in validation. All of those materials are then judged by a panel of experts at the NAEYC Headquarters in Washington, D.C. When the TRC began its work in child care, there were no accredited centers in the region and, therefore, no designated models of programmatic excellence. Six centers were part of the first cohort of centers to attempt the self study and apply for accreditation. TRC assisted these centers by providing mentoring to the director, training to the staff, taking the six directors to the national conference for direct exposure to staff from other centers that had achieved accreditation, and paying for the cost of the accreditation.

Outcomes and Discussion

The quality child care program has completed 15 months of work at this writing. We have learned far more than we have taught. We have worked hard, much, and well, but the work yet

to be done is staggering. Some of our work has sustainability and will continue after our two-year project ends, but most cannot.

One center achieved NAEYC accreditation this year. One is in self study. Two are still "looking at it". Two have decided not to proceed with the process at this point. At least three centers in the Cordell Hull Head Start program (part of our region) achieved accreditation. This success is very important not only for the professionalization of child care in the region but also for attracting state and block grant funding, which often requires the presence of accredited centers.

The training calendar committee has always been housed with day care licensing because of the mailing lists. The licensing counselors have a need to seek out and/or provide training that meets state in-service requirements. The committee has been successful in bringing diverse groups together to meet each other's needs.

The group of business and professional community members that has loosely organized to meet the needs of the child care community will continue to be available to the centers and homes. They have discovered that child care businesses are good clients. However, new directors and owners need to know of the availability of these resources.

The library circulation materials will be available as long as they remain current and in good condition. There is no money to replace or repair items.

Over 1,200 directors and staff have been trained in the past 15 months. Training has been held in 10 of 14 counties. After ten months, we averaged 23 people at a training session. TRC staff was told that child care staff would not travel, would not come out late, and would not come out on weekends—this had been the recent experience of other trainers. We charged no fees, we served refreshments, we had nice door prizes, and we presented interesting, appropriate, and relevant training. The day care licensing staff promoted our training, and word-of-mouth was significant. The child care staff came! In fact, some came from as far away as 100 miles.

Some directors and staff have attended as many as five training sessions this year. One director who drives as many as 60 miles to a session with a car full of staff said, "These workshops

are always good. My teachers can take home something to do the next day, and I have things to think about until we come to another one." Another attendance award winner is a Head Start cook who finds that, "What I learn here is important on my job even if I'm not a teacher. I'm around the kids, and I need to talk right to them. I also try everything out on my daughter."

The television programs and speakers the TRC sponsored this year had a potential audience of 150,000 people. During the year people would report seeing us on television, but it was difficult to know if they had heard us as well. One viewer did comment after seeing the segment on Jewish Families in the Upper Cumberland that she had never thought before how difficult it must be to be part of a very small minority.

Sadly, two of our leader/directors left the child care arena for the less stressful, better paying jobs in public school. This is a problem child care faces everywhere as the work pays very poorly, has long hours, has high stress, has virtually no benefits, and offers no extended vacation away from children. As long as child care staff must subsidize the children's parents' salaries by taking a lower salary themselves, the talent drain will continue.

Conclusions

The Upper Cumberland needs the TRC. Every neighborhood needs a TRC as an investment in its children and a support for families. In the Upper Cumberland, the TRC has facilitated the development of several committee structures that have the potential to live beyond TRC support. Groups of people with interests in early childhood education can now dialogue and plan for the betterment of all. Centers were accredited, and teachers were supported. Information was exchanged, discussed, and applied. The TRC staff walked with child care allies, and everyone grew. Perhaps the words of a brand new teacher say it for all of us, "I learned that what I am doing is really important work, and I should be proud of myself."

The lesson learned here is no different from what colleagues nationwide have learned. Substantially more resources must be made available to child care providers to support programs, staff, and administration. Unless that is accomplished, training committees and library resources are only temporary solutions that

build morale for one more day but do not address long standing needs of families and communities. Child care has depended upon the good will of the providers. However, the work funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has been the beginning of long term partnerships among families, communities, and the partners of the TRC to address the long standing child care needs of the Upper Cumberland.

Figure 1

Training Resource Center Sponsoring Partners

<hr/>		Tennessee Technological
University (current host agency)		
Upper Cumberland Community Services Agency (original		
host agency)		
Upper Cumberland Human Resources Agency		
Tennessee Department of Health		
Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth		
Rural Cumberland Resources		
Livingston, Byrdstown, Jamestown, and Cookeville Head		
Start, Inc.		
<hr/>		

Figure 2

Types of Child Care Training Developed

<hr/>		In-service staff
In-service administrators	State funded	
<hr/>		New hire training
New directors training	Tennessee Early Childhood	
	Training Alliance (TECTA)	
Topical workshops	Topical workshops	
Make-n-take workshop	Consultation	
Center-specific training	Accreditation mentoring	
Special topics group		
Mini-conference		
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Partners for Change: Community Residents and Agencies

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Efforts to combine the knowledge and skills of community residents and diverse professionals to bring about community and service delivery change are becoming increasingly popular, yet difficult to achieve. This article details, from the perspective of community residents and agency and university staff, the challenges, strategies, and benefits in developing one community-agency collaborative which has successfully engaged community residents. The program is located in a low-income, culturally-diverse, densely populated urban area. Challenges faced by the partnership included recruiting residents, reducing logistical barriers to resident involvement, joining together residents and agency staff, and aligning community and agency goals. Successful strategies in overcoming these challenges included responding quickly to community concerns, developing more personal recruiting strategies, changing logistics to enhance resident participation, increasing program visibility in the community, creating shared goals and vision, and training. Observed benefits include community residents believe their participation has resulted in personal, agency and neighborhood improvements and increased cross-cultural understanding.

Introduction

The benefits for involving community residents on governing boards of social service programs are many and varied. Resident participation in governance benefits program design, service providers, community residents, and the community. Underlying

the rationale for resident involvement in governance is a democratic philosophy that values self-determination. Legitimate decisions regarding programs must be made by a group that reflects the target community (Chang, Leong, & De La Rosa, 1994; Rothman, Erlich, & Teresa, 1981) so a range of perspectives is available to help design appropriate intervention strategies (Chang, et al., 1994). The presence of community residents increases the likelihood that program design and services will be truly responsive to family needs (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). It also provides a means for ensuring accountability to the community being served (Chang, et al., 1994).

Challenges to Community Involvement in Program Governance

Recruiting community residents for leadership positions can be quite challenging. Board composition should match the ethnic diversity of the target community. Recruitment tactics must be culturally-appropriate so they do not alienate members of a particular group (Chang, et al., 1994). Cultural, class and language differences can be barriers to open and frequent communication which is necessary for effective collaboration (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). Non-English-speaking residents may be particularly difficult to engage if they are intimidated by the process of a large meeting with English as the primary language. Even when interpreters are available, residents may find meetings confusing and overwhelming. They may also have difficulty understanding the collaborative program's mission and service delivery system (Rogers, Berrick, & Barth, 1996).

Barriers to collaborative involvement are experienced by both agency staff and community residents. Agencies face difficulties meeting payroll expenses for meeting times that may not be reimbursed by a funder as part of service delivery. In one study (Rogers, et al., 1996), most professionals were paid for meetings as part of their work time, while community residents were not paid and could not take time off from work. "Those who had less time and material resources in their personal lives were asked to participate at a level that required more of them than the professionals who had more resources at their disposal" (Rogers, et al.,

1996, p.151). Residents often have less resources for child care and transportation than agency staff (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995).

Mutual understanding and trust are essential in any collaborative process (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). Community residents may have difficulty trusting agency staff, particularly if they have had negative experiences with social service providers in the past (Rogers, et al, 1996). Strong leadership is needed to make certain that the group takes the time to build trust and establish ground rules (Chang, et al, 1994). Often there is a distinction between professionals and community residents in their level of education, manner of speaking, and comfort with meeting participation (Rogers, et al., 1996). Residents may question their own expertise when they come to a meeting and do not understand the jargon (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995).

A recent study of collaborative programs found that "The power differential between parents and professionals was obvious to many of the parents and although some collaboratives took pains to establish an atmosphere of equality, positive intentions did not always match parents' perceptions" (Rogers, et al, 1996, p. 150). Another difficulty may be differences in goals between agency representatives and community residents. Collaborative members need to have a clear understanding of one another's organizations and goals. All members must feel invested in both the process and the outcomes of the work (Rogers, et al., 1996).

Strategies to Encourage Community Involvement

Residents need to feel their roles have "real power and substance" (Kaye & Wolff, 1995, p. 101). When residents see actual changes in their community as a result of the collaboration, they are more likely to continue their participation in the process (Rogers, et al., 1996). "Nothing works like results!" (Kaye & Wolff, 1995, p. 101).

Multiple strategies for recruiting residents are necessary. For example, door-to-door outreach may be effective for some ethnic groups. Other recruitment strategies include meeting with community leaders, attending community meetings, holding public meetings, and *community-driven assessments* (Kaye & Wolff, 1995). Once a core group of community residents becomes involved,

they can be highly effective recruiters because they know their community. They are more likely to be trusted by their neighbors than outsiders (Hooper-Briar & Lawson, 1996).

Scheduling meetings after work hours and paying residents for their time are two strategies that may make it more likely residents will attend. Child care and transportation are two essentials that can be provided for residents who may not have these resources (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). Resident involvement also improves when meetings are translated and they are asked their individual opinions about each agenda item to make sure their voices were heard (Rogers, et al., 1996, p. 150–151).

Resident participants need to feel that their opinions are truly valued and that decisions are really based on their input (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). Public recognition through praise and awards can help to retain resident participation. Social activities may also be rewarding for residents. Social activities also provide opportunities for interaction and relationship-building among residents and agency staff (Kaye & Wolff, 1995). Other strategies to help retain community residents include training and orientation meetings (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). Collaborative planning retreats with both agency and community representatives also contribute to the development of relationships, shared power and goals (Kaye & Wolff, 1995).

Establishing a shared vision and agreed-upon goals are essential elements in any collaborative endeavor (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992). "Developing goals or subgoals that are personally meaningful to the community participants is likely to increase their motivation" (Rogers, et al., 1996, p.151–152). Working in small task-related groups also help residents build relationships with other collaborators (Chang, et al., 1994). A subcommittee structure allows for multiple layers of decision making and "has the potential for becoming the bridge needed to involve community residents" (Rogers, et al., 1996, p.167). Small meetings before or after collaborative meetings where residents can comfortably ask questions can be particularly effective (Chang, et al., 1994).

Benefits of Community Involvement in Program Governance

Residents bring many strengths to the governing process including the expertise that comes from knowing the neighborhood intimately. They have a vested interest in the outcomes of

neighborhood programs (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). "There are no greater architects of solutions than those who are experiencing the problem" (Kaye & Wolff, 1995, p. 102). Residents can be visionaries because they are not bound by bureaucratic limitations or restrictive agency policies. "They are committed to excellence, and their energy is unflagging. They bring fresh perspectives, creative solutions, and limitless creativity" (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995, p. 7).

Benefits to residents who serve on boards include developing new skills and increasing their sense of competence. Participation in program governance also gives residents an opportunity to "give back" to their community (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). Participation "endows people with a sense of dignity and charges them with responsibility for solving their own problems. It removes the sense of dependence and passivity that comes from being on the receiving end of assistance" (Chang, et al., 1994, p.79). Participation may also develop linkages among community residents and build a sense of community among residents.

Service providers also benefit from resident participation since it may lead to a greater appreciation of families' strengths, resources and individuality (Jeppson & Thomas, 1995). As they serve alongside community residents, professionals become more familiar with the community they serve and better able to provide responsive services. As residents become involved in governance, they also become more effective recruiters of program participants.

Community Oversight Council Description

The Juvenile Crime Prevention Program (JCPP), a large, long-term, state-funded initiative, is a collaborative endeavor of community residents, 20 community-based organizations, city and county agencies, public schools and a university, all of whom are involved in governance and service delivery. This primary prevention program was funded to reduce juvenile crime in a high-risk neighborhood through a wide variety of mandated direct service programs and by building community bonding and cohesiveness. The Community Oversight Council (COC) was developed as a required component of JCPP as the state required resident and agency involvement in program leadership. The COC

is composed of community residents and agency representatives and serves as the governing body.

The original proposal was developed primarily by university and agency representatives, although some forums were held with community residents during the grant planning phase. Thus, when the project was funded, agency partners were familiar both with the programs and each other. However the participation of community residents at that point was at a minimal level. For example, a resident's only involvement may have been agreeing to serve on the COC board. Only after the project received funding and had gone through two months of start-up did efforts to actively involve community residents begin. This article describes the experiences of our COC to form and institutionalize a working community-agency partnership during its first 14 months. Special emphasis is placed on sharing community residents' perspectives on resident involvement in program governance and oversight.

The project is in a low-income, culturally-diverse, densely populated urban area. Approximately 50% of the residents are Latino, 22% are Asian American, 16% are African American and 11% are European American (Census, 1990). Our neighborhood, like many other urban areas, has high rates of poverty, unemployment, violent crime, child abuse reports, mobility, homicide, and school dropout. However, it is also an area of incredible ethnic and cultural diversity and home to families who have weathered adversity, yet are still committed to the success of their children and the improvement of their community. Many residents have decided that it is time to change their community for the better.

In August of 1995, the COC had 36 members of which 33% (N = 12) were community residents. By December 1996, the COC had 39 members of which 59% (N = 23) were community residents. In March 1997, a slate of community residents was formally elected as COC officers. This marked a turning from agency representatives as leaders to community residents as leaders of the governance structure of the JCPP. The partnership has been extremely successful in recruiting and retaining community residents and creating a working community-agency collaborative. The next sections describe some of the challenges, strategies, and benefits of our community-agency partnership including quoted observations of resident COC members.

Challenges to Community Involvement

Recruiting Residents. We struggled, particularly in the beginning, to recruit community residents. Our original members were recruited primarily through agency referral. However, since many of our residents had seen agencies come and go without listening to resident concerns, the idea that joining a board of a new program would benefit them and really help their community was an "act of faith". Residents were hesitant to be the "only" resident and some felt uncomfortable joining a board of agency "strangers". Residents were initially unclear on the program and their role in its governance. So recruiting meant not only attending numerous neighborhood meetings, visiting apartment buildings, and encouraging involvement by graduates of JCPP programs, but also individual, personal discussions on the meaning of involvement.

Recruiting non-English-speaking residents for the COC took longer, in part, because they had experienced translation frustrations both for themselves and for English speakers. There might also have been more trust issues to overcome since some residents were from cultures where social services were foreign concepts and governments were not trusted.

Once residents agreed to join the COC, retention became an issue. Few residents who agreed to serve on the COC in the grant proposal stayed involved during the first six months of the program. In addition to the inherent difficulties in retaining volunteers, many of the residents we recruited were faced with the multiple stresses that come with living in a low-income, high crime area. As one resident said:

You're sitting here (listening about programs). You begin to think it's a waste of time because you're not really dealing with the key issues in the community . . . people gathering on property, consuming alcoholic beverages, selling drugs, gang banging, poverty and graffiti.

Balancing the work and time demands of the COC with neighborhood stresses, children, and their often multiple jobs sometimes resulted in low attendance or dropout. Residents may not have believed that their efforts on the COC were meaningful or that agencies were really listening.

We've got to be worthwhile. We have to see that what we're doing is important. We have to see that we're able to make a difference. We have to see that our problems are relevant to all the agencies and that they are willing to listen.

Some residents also worried they did not have the knowledge or skills to lead this program.

Joining Together Residents and Agency Staff. Our community residents did not always understand the "jargon" or language used by agency staff. Some residents have had difficulty in seeing themselves as "experts" in social services and may have felt intimidated about sharing their opinions with agency staff.

Most of the COC members (residents) are not educated in social work. The terms to us are psycho-babble. I've got accustomed to some of them but I think others feel like me—we're overpowered . . . I feel my own inadequacies . . . sometimes its just totally over my head and the COC is made up of people like me.

Compounding this sense of separateness is that some residents believed that agency staff, who do not live in the area, could not really understand what their lives and neighborhoods were like.

You people (agency staff) are the ones making decisions on what's best for me. Well, life in 9——(area zip code) is a lot different in a 9——(another zip code) or wherever. Life is a lot different and our concerns are a lot different, and our problems are definitely different.

This sense of uneasiness was exacerbated since community residents were not invited to COC meetings until funding was secured, programs were in place, and agency COC members had established relationships. In addition, for a number of months, agency and COC meetings continued to be held separately, suggesting differences between agencies and residents.

We haven't been able to sit down as one collective body, members and agencies alike, except for one meeting. So you couldn't establish equality as far as what is being done, whose opinions are (sic) at the forefront, whose interests are being acted upon or blown aside.

These things combined to create an atmosphere that made it challenging to create a cohesive community-agency partnership.

I can't say that I feel as though we're equal with the agencies because there's been very little interaction between the COC members and the agencies . . . we haven't been able to sit down, all as one collective body . . . Don't wait a year and a half before you establish a working relationship between agency and community members, because then the community members will become alienated, they'll feel as though their opinions don't matter . . . just have a rapport of agency and community members saying we're equal and here for the same purpose

Shared Vision and Goals. This project was designed in response to a RFP so project goals and programs were primarily established by the funder. While agencies were providing services to prevent involvement in juvenile crime to young children and families, residents were focused on stopping the current adult crime and violence in their neighborhood. Our challenge was to address the immediate and pressing concerns of residents, while not abandoning the program focus on prevention.

You really can't determine (goals) that until you get both groups together and you put down in writing what are some of the objectives, what are some of the ways to approach, what are some of the ways to empower and make the community better, until you get these items from both groups at the same time.

Logistics of Involving Residents. Several logistical challenges needed to be addressed for residents and agency staff. Residents often lack adequate child care and transportation. Scheduling meetings has continued to be problematic. Some agency staff have not attended evening meetings which may take them away from their families and other responsibilities. Many community residents are unable to attend meetings during the day due to their jobs.

It's very difficult for a working person to take off a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday to attend an important COC seminar where information is being provided . . . it's very difficult for members to at the drop of a hat to attend certain functions that are scheduled . . . in the evenings it isn't so bad.

Finding ways to ensure that information and communication go across cultures were also challenges faced by our inclusive partnership. In our culturally-diverse area, people who do not speak English may typically be excluded from program governance. Some residents are unable to read English or their native language which makes traditional written communication ineffective.

Strategies for Developing Community-Agency Partnerships

Although any one of these challenges could discourage agencies from including residents in program governance, our partnership was committed to the idea of strong resident involvement so we implemented a number of community involvement strategies. Multiple, comprehensive strategies that cut across challenges were needed.

Responding Quickly to Community Concerns. In order to retain residents, establish agency credibility and close the gap between resident and agency goals, efforts were made to address resident concerns rather than merely focusing on program issues. For example, at one of our first resident-agency training retreats, residents shared their overriding concerns about neighborhood crime. A meeting between community residents and the Chief of Police was scheduled by an agency COC member. This resulted in the Chief designating an officer to attend COC meetings. This has provided a safe and direct way for residents to share criminal activities with police and get immediate officer response.

My opinion counts because I told about the problems in my neighborhood and now police come. The police never used to come and now they come every 10 or 15 minutes and it's a lot better.

Basically, the COC uses its power and we persuade people to come in and listen to some of the complaints . . . the police come during the COC meeting itself and interact with residents, listen to some of their concerns, take information on some of the hot spots and then they go back and react, they act on this information and that's what's important.

As the neighborhood became a little safer and police relationships improved, residents gave the COC credit for these changes.

As one resident said, "COC on the move". Residents became more interested in prevention programming once their immediate concerns were addressed and they were convinced that working with agencies could lead to community change.

Recruiting through Relationships. Once residents saw their participation was worthwhile, they began recruiting others through "word-of-mouth". The positive "word-of-mouth" not only helped to establish credibility and bring in new members, it also reduced the sense of resident isolation since relationships were established before they were asked to join. "I heard about it from a friend"—makes people feel more comfortable since they know someone who will also be at meetings.

The best way to recruit anybody is word of mouth . . . I know they have been recruiting those who have responded to programs at the FRC. That's good. If you just go out into the community and look for people, I'm not sure that would be good because you have not real knowledge of what kind of person you're recruiting. While you might get some good ones that way, you might also get some that would not be faithful in attending and would not have the right motivation. So I suppose it could be done by the COC members who know the community and who know members who would be effective.

Three Spanish-speaking COC members have also gone door-to-door with project staff to tell other residents about the program. They believe they are the best recruiters since they have experience with the project that they can share with others "since we have been here".

Making the Program Visible. Keeping the program visible at neighborhood meetings and organizations enhances recruiting efforts. Continuous staff outreach is done at schools and community organizations.

They (JCPP staff) need to be present with information on what they're about, what types of services that they are providing . . . They need to make periodic presentations at some of the local meetings.

Put tidbits in there (other organizations newsletters) about what the COC is trying to do within the community.

Residents have also suggested that the COC work closely with other organizations in the community, such as churches and schools. Due to their intimate knowledge of the neighborhood, our COC residents have come up with creative ways to link the program with other grassroots efforts that agency staff have overlooked. Their efforts have also increased program visibility.

I met the people who are directing the “—” (a local community outreach program). I came right over from my meeting over there and talked to N. and he immediately saw the possibility of collaboration and they thanked me publicly, they thanked me privately, for giving them this information . . . So I know that they listened to me, I know they paid attention to me and the suggestions I’ve made.

In addition to quickly responding to this resident’s linkage suggestion, it was also important that staff publicly and privately thanked her for this important contribution to the partnership. While the efforts of staff, due to the nature of their positions, may be very visible, the work of community residents may be more “behind the scenes”. Thus, it is important to take the time to applaud the work of residents and create opportunities for them to be visible.

Creating Shared Goals. Time was invested in linking community and project goals. To ensure shared goals, the COC worked for three months to establish their own goals and priorities which were separate from program goals. COC members brainstormed about their vision for the community, then identified and prioritized the ways to achieve the vision. Work was then done to blend residents’ desires with project goals and resources to create a shared purpose and an overarching vision.

I think we should be able to establish a formal dialogue to really come up with a feasible plan of attack on the way to address some of the problems . . . What needs to happen is that the agencies need to utilize the resources of the COC members.

These goals were finalized and then shared with all agency staff at a day-long retreat in January, 1997. It is hoped that developing these shared and specific goals will increase residents’ feelings of shared ownership.

What keeps me involved is I think that today there is a consensus that we need change and people are real hot for change for one or two or three meetings and then after awhile people dwindle off. So there's a support and community involvement. I stay involved in the COC because I have a vested interest in my community. I want to see some of the ambitions and goals of this project really take off. . . . I realize that this isn't going to be something that is going to happen overnight. We're looking at three to four years.

Changing Logistics to Enhance Participation. One logistical barrier we have yet to fully overcome is finding a meeting time that is satisfactory for both residents and agency staff. Although all COC meetings now include both parties (previously agencies also met separately or prior to the COC meeting), agency attendance is often low. A compromise time of 5:00 p.m. was set; however, some agency staff still do not come or leave early since the time is outside their standard working day. While changing the time has improved some resident-community relationships, a true partnership will not develop among all participants unless residents and agency staff are able to meet together consistently.

We need to establish one cohesive body, one platform and one agenda on the way to address problems, and that can only be done between unity of the agencies who have the power to enact certain programs, and the members who can give suggestions of bigger and better ways of doing things.

Dinner is scheduled an hour into the meeting so that residents and agency staff can socialize. To alleviate some of the financial burdens associated with day-time meeting attendance, the COC allocated money for resident stipends to attend day-long meetings and retreats.

Quality child care and transportation are essential to resident participation. Child care means not only trusted adult supervision but structured activities, snacks, toys, adequate space for numerous children, accessibility to parents, and the ability to provide care for infants to adolescents. Providing on-site child care is costly and time consuming; however, it allows residents to fully participate without worry or interruption. Agency attendance might increase if staff feel comfortable in bringing their own children to the meetings. Transportation both to and from

meetings has also enhanced resident attendance. Transportation is provided to residents with taxi vouchers or bus tokens to attend meetings.

Since we wanted the COC to reflect the community, we also recruited residents who did not speak English. Adding these members meant we needed to translate COC materials and meetings to Spanish and Khmer (Cambodian language). Headphones and equipment with simultaneous and multiple language capabilities allowed non-English-speaking members to participate on a "real time basis" without lengthy pauses for translation. Residents have expressed appreciation for the verbal and written translation. They have said that they feel respected because they are listened to even though they do not speak English. It is costly to translate materials and it is often difficult to find people with the skills to do good verbal and written translations. However, the sense of respect and equality it conveys is well worth the cost. In addition to providing translation, the Executive Director of the program also meets with non-English-speaking residents prior to the meeting to review the agenda and answer questions.

Resident COC members have frequently asked for information (census reports, crime statistics) about their community, which is sometimes difficult to access. This information is crucial if residents are to make informed decisions, contribute equally to the COC, and bridge the gap between their knowledge and agency knowledge. Having access to statistics and numbers is often seen by residents as power.

Yeah, I see a change in myself because my initial mind set was just to deal with my immediate problem, and since I came on board, I've been given information, demographics information, census reports, the types of programs about the area which I live in and . . . I realized the COC has given me a forum where I can bring some of the concerns that I have that my fellow residents and community members have and be the spokesman for them.

Training

Ongoing and varied training has been needed for community residents and agency staff to better understand each other and work together successfully. All of our training is designed to reinforce and enhance the strengths and skills both residents

and agency staff bring to the program. Residents and staff are encouraged to attend all trainings even when the topic is something more agency-related, like case management. Training has underscored the expertise residents have of the neighborhood and provided another means for them to contribute to agencies. For example, at a two-day retreat, residents and agency staff planned the schedule and training topics together. Residents also organized a culturally-diverse panel presentation on the neighborhood and led workshops on assertiveness training for youth. A large number of agency staff said they learned important things about the lives of people in the neighborhood from the presentation. Participants wrote, "All associated with the program should have heard this piece. I wish it was longer for questions and answers" and "... have a better understanding of the people's neighborhood and how they are dealing with criminal problems".

In response to COC requests, training has focused on cultural diversity, juvenile crime prevention, collaboration, conflict resolution, advocacy for your child at school, communication and the structure and procedures of the COC. A day-long retreat was held to present COC goals, set procedures, and problem-solve communication issues with residents and staff. After participating in a cultural diversity training, one Spanish-speaking COC member wrote:

This program has really helped because we have learned to recognize that all cultures are good. They want the same things we do its just that the language sometimes acts as a barrier for us in expressing what we want.

Benefits of Community-Agency Partnerships

COC residents have said that they have personally benefited from their involvement in the program. These benefits are described below in the words of COC members.

It's helped me personally because now I talk more. I used to think that other people would solve my problems and I just let them. Now I'm the one doing it.

I made good friends, I can say that. I made good friends here.

I was there with myself and four or five Hispanics and we talked openly, we disagreed, and that was good for me. That helped me to

improve. Trying to understand where they were coming from, what they were saying and why they felt that way . . . if I understand where they are coming from I can understand more what they're saying and why they're saying it.

Some residents shared that their participation has benefited the larger community. The opportunity to help others is viewed positively by community residents, who see that their contribution connects them with their neighbors and helps the community.

I'm trying to have a positive effect on my community. I pick up bread at my church once a week and give it away, so now the people who just pass by, they always speak to me, they always smile and I think it's because I reached out in a way that could help them.

I see a change in myself because my initial mind set was just to deal with my immediate problem, and since I came on board . . . now it's broadened into the street that I live on. I'm looking at the total community because I think that I can't survive in this community alone. It takes more than me to initiate change and total community involvement brings about total community change.

We want to get involved and help improve life for others in the community . . . [to] help . . . not only with the family but with humanity which seems to be very lost right now.

Benefits to Agency Programs

Agencies have benefited from community participation because the residents provide periscopes not only into the community but also into interagency dynamics. Although residents perceive that it is a change for agencies to work together, they also have recognized the agencies work and improvement in collaborating with one another.

I think they're (agencies) are a little more agreeable to listen to another agencies' opinion and needs and their needs to cooperate. I think they've seen that collaboration is a difficult thing because they have not been accustomed to it.

Community residents also have special insight into their blocks or cultures that help agencies to better understand and recruit members from the area they are trying to serve. For example, one community resident said although door-to-door recruitment

might be successful with Latinos, African Americans residents might not want agency staff coming to their home.

What needs to happen is that the agencies need to utilize the resources of its members, of its COC members. The COC members are the ones who reside in this community. They're the one's who actually know the concerns. If you're having problems with recruiting . . . members who live in the community give you another way of approaching people in the area.

As residents have become more involved in the COC, they have expanded their volunteer efforts to contribute even more to agency programs. These resident efforts have increased the number of program participants, improved the quality of current programs and have led to the creation of new programs. One COC resident cooks regularly for 98 people who are involved in one of our program components. Another COC resident had trained program participants on nutrition. Others have recruited program participants.

I've recommended "Mothers and Sons" to one women who took her two boys and they like it. They said that "We love that club". I've recommended ESL and parenting classes to another . . . I know she came over and checked it out.

After a COC youth expressed safety concerns about walking home after school, the COC began exploring the possibility of creating a neighborhood "safe" block program. Building the skills of community residents to provide programming has been particularly successful and will be crucial for agencies since funding is likely to tighten in the future. All programs have some service gaps and our residents have helped fill them in creative ways.

Benefits to the Community

Residents have reported that their community has also changed as a result of this community-agency partnership.

I had problems with vacant building that it took us six months to deal with but now it is boarded up. The street looks entirely different, you know, people come by at night and there's no gang bangers hanging out. They're not selling drugs anymore. I mean it has really

been a massive turn around and it makes you feel good that you know you had a part of this.

Although residents have noticed some changes in the community, it is impossible to change an entire community in a short time. More residents involvement is needed. The partnership still has a way to go in order to ensure our neighborhoods are safer and improved.

The police department has helped me (since joining the COC) but they were helping before, just not as much. They're helping me now but I tell them it's like a low spot on the pavement that collects the water. You can sweep it out but the water runs right back in the low spot. So they sweep out the people who are buying drugs occasionally but they come right back because the drug sellers are still here.

Conclusions

Although in this partnership, agencies are charged with the responsibility for implementing services, the guidance of community residents ensures that these services are accessible, meaningful to the community and consistent with the cultures being served. Unless agencies understand the ways in which resident involvement can lead to service improvements, their efforts to successfully engage low-income communities will be greatly hindered. At the same time, agencies and their funders must take care not to structure programs to an "inflexible" degree so that resident input is seen as unimportant or useless. Genuine collaboration between agencies and communities is reflected primarily by changes in the ways that programs are focused or delivered. Agencies and funders should recognize that the goals of their programs or initiatives might be reached more effectively if they modify their means or strategies to reflect community desires or norms.

Clearly, residents have made significant contributions to our community-agency partnership. However, these contributions would not have been possible if agency staff had not had a strong commitment to meaningful resident involvement. Developing and maintaining positive community-agency partnerships requires constant and ongoing efforts. Implementing the community involvement strategies outlined here require dedicated time

and fiscal resources. Communities wishing to develop governance structures such as our COC, will need to build these costs into their operating budgets.

Partnerships between agencies and communities residents need to understand that these challenges and stages of development are part of the natural process of such endeavors so they will not become easily discouraged. It is likely that all of these partnerships will go through ups and downs; however, with the long-range potential for community change so great, the short-term disappointments, inconveniences, and mistakes are more easily weathered.

This is a real key to the success of the program, if they would put all their resources together and work together, that it would help all of the neighborhood. I've found out that much money is being thrown at 9—and I think that until there's some collaboration, they're going to be pulling in different directions and the money is not going to be as effective as it would be if they and we were together.

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Welfare "Reform": Com'in' Up On the Rough Side of the Mountain

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Through the lens of an innovative community-university partnership in the Greater Boston region, the authors analyze how welfare reform organizing overtook a resident-driven empowerment project. Since a major goal of the Chelsea/Dudley Partnership in MA is to support residents in exerting greater power over the practices and policies of community agencies, projects have been initiated in the city of Chelsea and the Dudley neighborhood of Boston to organize, and to strengthen, low income women by training them as welfare advocates. This paper examines how the efforts evolved, and how the community and the university partners are playing a key role in making connections and developing skills. Urgency of now factors are discussed and the call is made for greater recognition of the strength of recipient organizing. Recommendations are offered for human service providers.

In addition to the traditional concept of true commitment that means you are willing to die for what you think is right, make equal space for the womanly concept of commitment that means you are willing to live for what you believe.

—June Jordan

Introduction and Context

We begin with words of possibility. How succinctly this contemporary U.S. poet/analyst captures the importance of taking a strong, principled stand against the abdication of federal responsibility for the poor! In these confused times of retrenchment, the authors take heart from June Jordan's words. They are words, too, from our grandmothers. In the struggle is the hope.

The world is increasingly polarized economically, both among and within countries. Official U.S. government statistics portray a rosy economic picture—a steady GNP, job growth, low inflation. Yet povertization is increasing within families and communities already in economic straits; and this increase is occurring as a seismic shift in U.S. social policies is implemented. The much touted “security net” has been legally dismantled by enactment of the punitive Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

The war on poverty, announced in the 1960s and sparsely implemented for a brief period, has been transformed through a rancorous politicized debate into the war on poor people. There is a particular “open season” attack on welfare moms. Punitive requirements result at both the federal and state levels. The social welfare system, which had been evolving since the 1930s, is shattered. Where is the struggle, and where is the hope? Who is responding and how?

This article is refracted through the lens of a community-university partnership located in the Greater Boston region. The state of Massachusetts received a waiver from the Clinton Administration in 1995 and instituted a punitive system of temporary assistance. In the midst of harsh systemic changes, however, something refreshing springs forth: the increased visibility and influence of recipients stepping up to the plate to bat for their basic human rights.

We examine the recipient's hope and the human service provider's responses. We take an asset-approach at examining strengths. Who is in the struggle and how? Recipients/constituents are organizing and increasing numbers of providers and educators are working along side them as allies. We look at some of the “warts-and-all” of getting to where we are today as a

community-university partnership committed to learning with and from those who are the veterans of poverty. Thus we raise questions about the evolution of reform.

The Chelsea/Dudley Partnership for
Families & Neighborhoods (C/DP)

The authors of this joint-written article are affiliated with the C/DP. One is a graduate student, another a community resident, another the project manager of the C/DP, funded by a three-year grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. We are in the third year of what was conceived as a resident-driven power-redistribution project. The partnership is exploring an asset-based approach where community residents are at the forefront of altering the imbalance of professional/resident power already operating in two distressed communities: the Dudley neighborhood inside Boston, and the City of Chelsea, next-door to Boston, yet by patterns of interaction, far away. An overarching goal has been developing structures and processes that change the power relations between community members and human service providers.

Cultural Context

Among liberals and helping professionals, one finds a feeling of nostalgia about reform efforts often because of their association with the achievements of the African American-led freedom movement. There also is much denial of the significant inroads made by conservative ideology and rhetoric such as the coined words "quota" and "reverse discrimination," and the multi-layered infrastructure in which they are articulated. By the end of the 1960s, the freedom movement's forward progress was being blunted by the racialized reaction to integration.

To be sure, new social movements did emerge mid-20th century, articulating important political and cultural themes. The civil rights movement, and the social movements it spawned, were based upon a hope and belief that justice and harmonious pluralism could, and would, be a future reality. Leaders were able to mobilize people via oratory, metaphorical images of a better America. The non-violent demonstrations that were a feature of the freedom movement sparked the Chicano power movement,

Red Power, the original welfare rights movement, student power, the anti-Vietnam war movement, the women's movement, the anti-nuclear peace movement, gay and lesbian rights movement and more; as well as new collective identities, new modalities of expression, new conceptual space for ideas, new possibilities of reform, and new avenues of mobility.

At the same time, however, those who did not want to change the way power is distributed moved even more swiftly to block equal partnership from emerging. Well-intentioned helping professionals, while proud of their tolerance (note the judgment implied in this word) of diversity, often remained silent about the absence of redistribution of meaningful power and resources.

Implications of the Politicizing of Resentment

The world of work in general has changed significantly over the last 50 years. The loss of higher paying, stable manufacturing jobs has exacerbated decline in older cities, particularly in the northeast and midwest. So despite a brief period of advancement, the changing nature of the economy has worked against the empowerment of peoples of color, and increased poverty conditions, particularly among women and children.

This has implications for the practice of social work. Within the last three decades the moral fervor of the mid-twentieth century freedom movements has been eclipsed by those with narrow political views who intentionally frame social issues as the dysfunctional behavior of lazy people making bad choices. Rationally one can cite facts to the contrary such as falling wages, particularly among the non-college educated population, that have kept poverty rates historically high throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Between 1979 and 1995, poverty rates grew for both whites and Latinos and have fallen for African Americans. But why do we continue to think of this as a rational debate? It is a fight by some to retain power as is (Gans, 1995).¹

The Mood of Meanness

How did the mood of meanness come so to pervade the U.S.? Ideas, articulated within a conservative ideological framework,

began to surface. By the end of the 1960s, forward movement was blunted by the racialized white reaction. The political right took advantage of, and increased, public cynicism.

The social movements of the 60s did challenge existing power relations, but they failed to consolidate a new radical democratic politics. They failed to mobilize popular support for a fair economic system. Hence as wealth became even more concentrated in the 80's under Reaganomics and the working class and lower class lost ground, the political soil was fertile for a white backlash against people of color. This has ridden on a crest of racism (and sexism) and socio-cultural issues but it is driven by economic insecurities.

Ironically, what the social movements of the 60s did do was create the space where the right-wing could incubate an intentional strategy of making illegitimate the stated dreams and goals of people of color. Demagogic politicians have fanned the flames and right-wing academic ideologues have provided theoretical underpinning. The stereotypical welfare recipient—unwed, Black, drug using, lazy, uppity—has become a handy scapegoat.

The backlash appropriated and reinterpreted as invalid the earlier dreams for a pluralist power-sharing society. Code-words and symbols shaped, and continue to shape, the public discourse. For example, the cry of "reverse discrimination" appropriates the early demand for equal opportunity and rearticulates it in new conservative garb of individual merit. Another example: the new distinction between a "legal" or "illegal" immigrant created to amplify the sentiment among some that immigrants, along with the poor, are freeloaders not willing to pull their weight.²

In the past decade there have been attacks and cutbacks on basic human and civil rights in the U.S. This can be seen in the spate of racially-motivated violence by police, the white supremacist mainstream talk on radioshow, ³ the attacks on immigrants, the effective demonizing of welfare recipients. One must also note the effective use of the World Wide Web by hate groups such as the National Socialist Movement, whose "home page" carries the visage of Adolph Hitler and the 21-point demands. Available to anyone with a modem, then, are the arguments for the "end of

the parasitical welfare system," the elimination of "the lying Jew" control of the media, and for mandating racial separation.

This is occurring at the same time that immigration from Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean is increasing. Long term residents have become more vocally hostile to these newer arrivals, particularly those with darker skin colors. 'We made it—why can't they?'

Right wing efforts offer simple scapegoats, and disciplined and simplified, step-by-step answers to complex issues. The intent is to block parity and power-sharing with Blacks, Latinos, white women, gays, and the like.

The politicizing of "welfare reform"

Racial hostility is in! One flashpoint is the greater visibility of larger numbers of people of color, and more diversity among them. This has generated anxiety over a sharing of resources. A politics of resentment emerged as some whites organized effective resistance to sharing power with a multipolar racial mix.

This can be seen in a variety of situations: California Proposition 209, constricting the rights of people of color to educational and economic opportunity. The misleadingly titled "California Civil Rights Initiative" has accelerated affirmative action being dismantled. We can see the tactic of referenda in California as a means to imposing one's ideology on a populace. In the late 1970s there were tax revolts. Then Proposition 187 passed (so far, implementation is blocked by the courts) which would deny schooling and public services to "illegal" immigrants.

The use of the referendum to register discontent, anger, and alienation is troubling. Masked in the media-dominated discourse is a fiction of immigrants as a fiscal burden. Success in California galvanizes the movement across the country. Yet as Derrick Bell writes in *Faces At the Bottom of the Well* (1995):

Because of an irrational but easily roused fear that any social reform will unjustly benefit blacks, whites fail to support the programs this country desperately needs to address: the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor, both black and white (p.4).

The Right has been able to use racism to divide and conquer and keep the focus on socio-cultural issues rather than on the

economic assault on the poor, the working class, and even the middle class. Popular culture focuses on murders, drugs, family breakdown, and petty political scandals, further diverting attention from a robbery in process by the rich. Meanwhile, insecure whites lash out at people of color. Their insecurity is justified—the targets, however, are wrong. But it is important to recognize the validity of the insecurity.

The movement of African Americans for freedom generated questioning among some whites of their own competencies. Few acknowledge white set-asides in jobs, positions, privileges. Affirmative action was crafted to generate opportunities to recover the initiative and talents stifled and crushed by white male set-asides. The myth of reverse discrimination emerged in the 1970s just as affirmative action was beginning to work. In fact, we posit that success as the reason why the myth emerged. Some whites feared seeing persons of color, in particular, and women, moving into the decision-making circles.

Most whites, including women, themselves a beneficiary of affirmative action, are in denial about the depths of racism in the U.S. National poll after poll (Gallop, 1996; Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 1997, etc.) show that whites tend to believe there is more equality in the workplace and general society than ever before, despite the statistics. Most whites have learned to tolerate working with Blacks, but have not necessarily accepted that Blacks are fully capable of functioning in that workplace, and, certainly, not as their equal. Difference, historically and culturally defined by human beings with power, does make a difference. Despite its lofty image, the United States is built upon conquest, and upon difference being labeled as dangerous.

Whites in the U.S. tend to live separately from people of color: different neighborhoods, different schools, different churches. Whites in particular know very little about the social realities for people of color, and tend to have insufficient knowledge of cultural nuances in a Latino, Cambodian, Pakistani or Samoan culture. Climbing out of poverty is particularly difficult for persons of color. Yet they are projected in the media as parasites or criminals. Lucy Williams, Northeastern Law School, insightfully charts how the wide-Right has gone about building these images into public discourse (Williams, 1996).

Massachusetts and Welfare/Temporary Assistance

In April 1997, there were 78,022 families in the state receiving some form of cash, food stamp or Medicaid assistance. The average monthly grant is \$481. Seventy-one percent of all recipients are children. Ninety-four percent of the heads of household receiving AFDC were women. The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) states that its case load is as follows: 48% white; 28% Hispanic; 18% Black; 5% Asian or Other.

This New England state has a reputation for innovative policies. In the 1980s under Governor Michael Dukakis, the MA Employment Training (ET) Choices program was considered a national model for ways to transition recipients to the labor force. (California's GAIN program was similarly lauded.) Indeed, Dukakis made this program a centerpiece in his successful attempt to capture the Democratic Party's nomination for President. In reality, participants in the program experienced little employment and/or financial gain. The national Family Support Act of 1988 created grants to states which were to be matched by state funds. There was little progress here, too. Now the state has instituted Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Multiple forms of temporary assistance are now operating using differing names, such as WAGES in Florida: Work and Gain Economic Self-Sufficiency (Robinson, 1997).

Massachusetts, like the majority of other states, obtained a federal waiver allowing it to accept some, and adjust other components of the proposed welfare reform: block grants, work requirements, time limits. Supporters saw the state as gaining greater control via the block grant system. They succeeded, for example, in adding a family cap eliminating increased benefits when another child is born to a family on welfare. Most MA Recipients can receive only 2 years of assistance within a 5-year period, but they won't face the federal 5-year lifetime limit. The work requirement in the state for all able-bodied recipients with school-age children is that they find jobs or perform community service within 60 days at 20 hours per week, even though the federal law would increase this to 30 hours by the year 2000. Teenage recipients must live with adult relatives or in structured group homes.

Governor William Weld received official acceptance from the Clinton Administration for the overhaul which was initiated and implemented 18 months before the federal legislation ending welfare entitlement was passed.

Clim'in' Up On the Rough Side of the Mountain

The hymn by this name from the African American church tradition tells it straight: one cannot climb up the smooth side of a mountain. We live life in the face of difficulties. The rough side provides the necessary footholds to grasp and stand upon as one moves along the path.

The welfare "reform" that has been instituted does not support increasing recipients' levels of educational attainment, a known predictor of economic advancement. Similarly, with mandatory workfare, the amount of time mothers can spend with their children decreases. Quality of life and living become more elusive.

Yet at the same time, organized resistance is building to the punitive approaches. While some human services workers and academics have long been engaged in public policy legislative battles, and some recipient and low-income people's groups have ebbed and flowed over the years, increasingly in Massachusetts one finds broader social movements led by recipients. This leadership within alliances is refreshing.

In Massachusetts, recipients are meeting together to gain accurate information, and in the process are moving beyond personal pain to public purpose. They are designing protest literature, guerrilla theater, educational and advocacy venues. In February 1997, recipients and their allies staged two days of lobbying and demonstrations at the State Capital in Boston. The second day demonstrated the unity and mounting political strength of immigrants and refugees and their 60+ collaborating organizations.⁴ Hundreds converged, including busloads of elderly and disabled persons of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Massachusetts' larger immigrant communities of Lowell, Lynn, Springfield, Fall River, and Chelsea were well represented. The major forum in the State House Auditorium was translated into six languages. For some participants who had fled persecution in Cambodia, Vietnam, the former Soviet Union, and Central

America, this was their first experience with legislative action. They advocated a five-part Compact To Protect Massachusetts Immigrants calling upon the state to provide a basic level of support to legal immigrants and refugees.

Something revolutionary has sprouted out of the abandonment of the most vulnerable amongst us: constituents as assets. The question arises, then: how best might human service workers tap these valuable resources to continue the fight for economic and social development in distressed communities?

An asset-based approach, as delineated by Kretzman and McKnight (1993), involves community members as meaningful participants in the decision and planning stages of community or agency work. In Massachusetts, we have seen recipients formulate committees, small working groups and task forces to examine the nuances of impact of the new system and practices. The constituents themselves have taken the lead in constructing, or challenging to reconstruct, the agendas for those working for what was earlier called welfare rights.

Has this been a smooth evolution? No.

A Case in Point: The Campaign for Real Welfare Reform —→ Don't Panic Campaign —→ "What's Going On: Conference on The Effects of Welfare Reform in Boston & Strategies for the Future " (WGO)

The Campaign for Real Welfare Reform: Promoting Programs that Value Families began in 1992 with much promise. It was conceived as a way to get ahead of the rising public sentiment for punishment of those on welfare. The initiative would be proactive, advocating proposals that would improve in meaningful ways the quality of life for low-income families. At its base were clearly articulated principles. To assist all parents to secure the means to provide for their children and themselves, all families need:

- access to a floor of adequate income and other supports based solely on need.
- access to affordable training and education to prepare both parents for jobs that will provide adequate wages, benefits and working conditions.

- public supports when jobs do not yield enough income and benefits to meet family needs.
- jobs that provide wages adequate to cover basic living costs, including child care and decent health care benefits, and with working conditions flexible enough for parents to care for their children.

The campaign won some skirmishes and lost the war.

Individuals within the Chelsea/Dudley Partnership were involved, at first wearing "other hats." The Agency Collaborative in Dudley, one partner, was invited to actively participate. With its stated aims of nurturing and maintaining a resident-driven community policy, the AC seemed a natural starting point for organizing the CFRWR. That was not the case initially, and the Collaborative lost an important opportunity for hosting community debate for what was on everyone's mind.

Some individuals and organizations within the AC and C/DP did organize however. In the Roxbury-Dorchester area of Boston, we cite two attempts to activate the recipient community and service providers. One of these was Project Hope, a local homeless women's shelter program. The other was the Moreland Apartments Family Self Sufficiency Program. Both fed into the People of Color Welfare Task Force, a joint initiative. Both have participated actively in the struggle to define more accurately the meaning of real community-based organizing. The focus on principles, however, became diluted as reaching service providers and organizations within the communities likely to be affected by the so-called reform became the operating goal.

In effect, service providers took their roles literally, limiting themselves in the community to passing along up-to-date information rather than, for example, promoting grassroots discussion on the merits, or lack thereof, of welfare recipients performing community service when unable to find employment. The chance for the low-income community to advocate alternatives was minimized as the next campaign message narrowed the focus: "Don't Panic."

The need for current information was real. The Governor's workfare-centered package was moving swiftly through channels. *The Boston Globe* chose to sensationalize the story of one multi-generation welfare family. "Media attention to the case . . . was key . The public furor lent conservatives the steam to push

forward previously stalemated reforms." writes Ryan (1996, p. 30) The legislature came up with an even more punitive plan. The "Don't Panic" initiative attempted to meet the increasing outrage and the requests for facts. It was a time of massive confusion. Informational packets were developed by agencies at the same time that people on the welfare rolls began to "disappear", moving along somewhere before the reform impacted their households. Thus, "Don't Panic" was an attempt to bring some focus for the uphill battle against the dismantling of the security blanket.

While testimony by providers and advocates continued in an attempt to head off the workfare-centered reform, the momentum for real welfare reform in MA as defined by grassroots people had degenerated. In fact, some of the advocacy work with legislators and the media played into anti-welfare sentiment.⁵ Tensions between recipients and allies became more visible in the Campaign which by then had grown from a handful of organizations to 500+ in 1995. A controversial flyer led with the headline: "The Welfare System Stinks!" There was grumbling within the ranks of advocates over this tactical approach but not open debate. Similar discontent festered over confrontational vs. "white-glove" politeness in tactics. The campaign suffered. Withorn (1997) describes one unsuccessful effort to block imposition of stringent "community service" requirements for recipients:

The Campaign called upon its . . . member organizations to refuse to take any workfare placements. The effort was well organized but not successful in stopping the program, which was small enough that many organizations were never asked to participate, but many had signed on as potential sites when asked to do so by the Department of Public Welfare. Indeed, some were convinced that the Campaign's failure to stop even some of its members from agreeing to take the first wave of workfare recipients may well have convinced administrators that a full workfare plan could be carried out in Massachusetts (p. 11).

Confusions abounded over how and for what to fight. Should a strategy be shaping the implementation in a "kinder, gentler" manner? Agency staff were torn as recipients came asking for a community-based placement with them as an alternative to placement in a massive bureaucracy doing menial labor. Withorn writes:

It seemed less and less possible to refuse to take people in community service roles, yet agency staff didn't want to go back on commitments to oppose workfare, and even on the written pledges they had made a year earlier not to participate . . . [I]t was hard for providers to share resistance strategies (p.14).

The forces on the side of slashing a major piece of the working people's safety net had, in fact, won.

The "What's Going On" conference, held in the fall of 1996, attempted to reverse this sad state of affairs. Withorn, C/DP Steering Committee member and a leader of the Academic Working Group on Poverty, invited several from C/DP (including one of the authors) into the late stages co-planning with a large bureaucratic remnant of the anti-poverty days of community organizing.

The planned format at that point was fairly standard for service provider conferences produced in Boston. It was put together at the administrative levels of that sector with the help of consultant specialists, in this case, the academic wing of the human-social service wing. The original plan was to bring in recipients who would make statements confirming the academic/service provider statements preceding them. The recipient would talk only about how welfare reform would affect her ability to attain economic and/or personal stability.

This was unacceptable to grassroots activists who insisted that the format be opened up for fresh approaches by the constituency most affected. This allowed those pursuing a more proactive community-based strategy to be involved in shaping the conference. Work on real resident-driven organizing began to take place at this late stage.

One of the first struggles was over the purpose of the conference. Was it simply an airing place for hardluck stories, or was it to be an opportunity for holding community discussions analyzing the motivation behind welfare reform and the strategies countering the worst aspects of the welfare overhaul? The role of recipients could not be simply "oh, woe is me."

In the conference planning meetings, much time was spent establishing that community residents really were interested in the debate. The initial organizing plan, like the work leading up to the "Don't Panic" campaign, tended to ignore what was

already taking place in the communities. The C/DP participants did succeed in moving the conference away from limited and prescribed involvement by the veterans of poverty.

The conference drew 300-plus participants on a fall Saturday. The vibrancy of the people's fight back was manifest. Political theater and poetry accompanied various points of view as to the why's behind the overhaul of welfare. Issues of race, class, and gender were touched upon through panels, multi-sector working groups, audience response. Class Acts, from Share The Wealth/United For a Fair Economy, an organization against corporate greed, involved the participants in an insightful theatre piece examining who is guilty: the poor, the middle class, or the rich. Residents of traditionally marginalized communities were well represented on the scheduled program and beyond. Suezanne Bruce Williams, a C/DP Community Fellow, addressed the plenary on ways service providers could re-think their roles in community struggles. The Moreland Street Players Acting Out, a group composed of welfare recipients and activists, presented a satiric look at welfare called "The Newt Gingrich Fashion Show." The WGO conference was a success as a multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Working groups formed from WGO are key movers attempting to blunt the worst aspects of the new system. They strongly, yet unsuccessfully, advocate permitting welfare recipients to count schooling towards their community service requirement. Coalitional efforts, too, advocate waivers for those who are victimized by family violence. The coalition struggles on with a monthly *What's Next Newsletter* offering "News You Can Use" on the effects of welfare reform in the state.

The good and the bad

Its an up-hill battle, particularly as the media newly distinguishes the good and the bad among those affected by the change in entitlements. The media continues its traditional portrayal of the welfare recipient as Black, uneducated, five-time mother. Alongside this, we now have portraits of the noble immigrant trying to survive by doing the work real Americans refuse to do. Those who descend from turn-of-the-century immigrant families appear able to identify more with the immigrant who flees his or her country for social, economic, and political justice reasons

than with the descendants of chattel slaves. Elderly immigrants are portrayed as particularly vulnerable. Because of positive media portrayal here, the general public is reconsidering the ominous fate awaiting them—with the "them" defined as the worthy immigrant, not the native born woman with young children. This nation still has not dealt with its hate-filled history, nor acknowledged the contributions of Africans and those of African descent.

On the one hand, new energy has been brought to the struggles for change. Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Alliance (MIRA), a long standing advocacy group, has mobilized its constituencies around welfare reform. Their entry is leading to greater attention to diversity and equity.

[T]he presence of people who had spent years trying to develop ways to organize that were culturally sensitive to newcomers groups helped to open up new styles of approaching change. As one member of the Immigrant Leadership group at UMass Boston said, 'Just having to speak slowly and carefully enough to be translated changes the tone of a meeting.' (Withorn, 1997, p. 16)

On the other hand, dynamic tensions swirl as one group effected by the new implementation is separated off as more deserving than another. Some believe that the immigrant fight is more winnable, and thus must have priority. Others feel that the impact on immigrants must be handled simultaneously with the devastating impact on all who are affected. One needy population is not more deserving of resources and voice than another.

Multi-stake Organizing

In various area organizations, multiple stakeholders are designing welfare strategies and making the decisions on how to move up the rough side of the mountain. Too often, as demonstrated, a subtly prejudiced assumption underestimates the capacity of poor people to participate in the debate on alternatives.

There are exceptions. For example, the Women's State-Wide Legislative Network, once rather staid, now acknowledges the voice of welfare constituencies, realizing that there is no better way for America to come to understand today's realities than through the voices of those experiencing poverty first hand.

Popular education modes are being used to initiate deeper discussions about the welfare overhaul. The Moreland Street Players, for example, have developed skits to point to the flawed, deficit approaches. They have received rave reviews, not because of their acting capabilities (which are excellent) but because of their ability to name the contradictions in language comprehensive to all. They showcase the exemplary work constituents are capable of doing if only given the opportunity.

What's Needed

More academic and agency support for constituent-led organizing, and an asset approach in general, is needed in Massachusetts and throughout the United States. Women of different cultures, religions, socioeconomic and age groups are working together and demanding a different form of involvement for the professionals as allies. As Sen Rinku writes concerning women of color (1995):

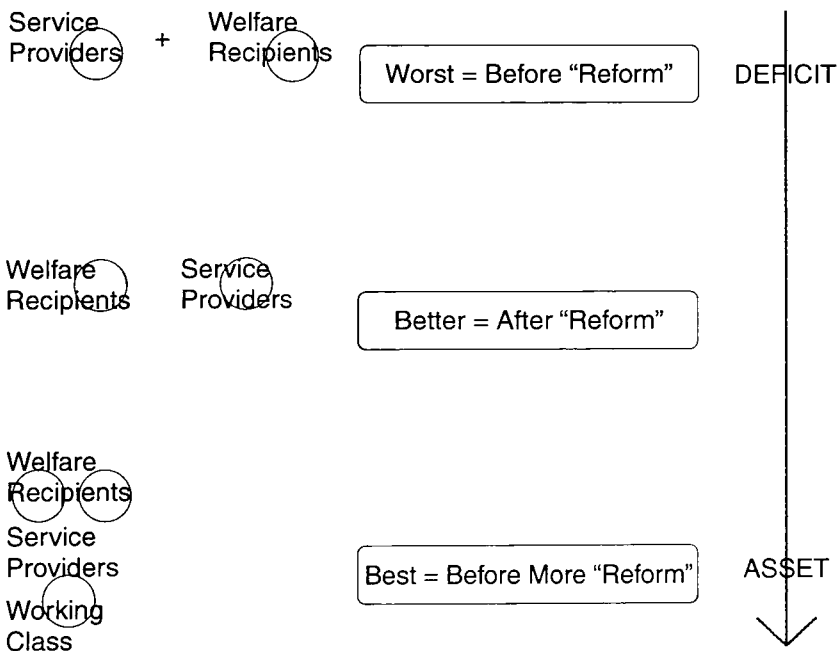
Rather than surrendering to the manipulations of dominant economic and governmental structures, we have vowed to organize our people to build a new culture, and to institutionalize the values of justice, security, connection and dignity for all (p.9).

The role of the provider and of the academic advocate is different: skill building of the constituents so that they become increasingly more competent in modelling and advocating equitable ways to build an income security floor. No longer is the professional seen as "father/mother knows best." The low-income welfare advocate has educated herself to a point where she works alongside a professional, demanding equal partnership and respect in the fight for social justice.

Again, we do not claim that we have reached nirvana. Yet a significant number of human service agencies and staffpersons are approaching recipients in an altered, more respectful fashion. Both the Dudley Agency Collaborative and the Chelsea Human Services Collaborative come to mind as networks of providers and recipients acknowledging the potential of those recipients stepping forward who desire to strengthen their own capacity and share with others.

We honor the welfare rights movement that preceded the wide-Right take-back, and that which continued on in spite of the Right. We think here of the National Welfare Rights Union and its many activist chapters, as well as other pockets of resistance and possibility: Survivors Inc., Coalition of CA. Welfare Rights Organizations, Warriors for Real Welfare Reform, JEDI Women, and the like.

We are seeing a domino effect when it comes to the dissemination of information on the changed welfare rules. Recipients and professionals are going to task force meetings together, and returning to agencies where together they hold informationals to educate others, and snowball the information and campaign strategies. The changed approach of equal partners at the table is illustrated in Figure 1.



Welfare recipients possess the assets to lead the fight for a just change. Women receiving benefits are not weak women, but

strong women in difficult situations. Welfare is a symptom of poverty, not its cause. Too many accept the embellished and demonized welfare recipient as presented by the media and increasingly by politicians. In reality, it takes an organized, determined and knowledgeable woman to survive with the meager benefits received in today's society.

The C/DP's learning regarding the strength perspective

Vision's great but the real world continues to turn . . .

The Partnership vision is of movement away from local communities filled with "clients" of social service agencies. Instead, we envision communities harnessing and directing the caring vitality and power of the residents. As John McKnight (1995) has argued, care is the consenting commitment of citizens to one another, a manifestation of community. Too often, he says, the service society has replaced community with management, and care with commodities. We believe that residents can shape both informal and formal helping mechanisms.

In organizing around this vision, this partnership romanticized the "we" of the partners, and what we jointly could and would do. Insufficient participation of residents in the conceptualization of the response to the Kellogg Foundation RFP is one example of this. Countering the deficiency approach so often "certified" by universities requires more than personal good will on the part of the university-based and/or agency-based representatives.

The C/DP planned an evolutionary model of discernment. Through dialogue around a shared table, we believed residents in the two communities would step forward to embrace discernment of the meaning of resident power. There was underwhelming interest from those living in the two communities. No disdain, even some interest; but little passion and little organizing draw. In part this had to do with old issues about universities as *voyeurs*. In part it had to do with the social services framing of the intent.

Door knocking surveys in Chelsea uncovered little faith in social services as a vehicle to more community self-determination. In Chelsea and in Dudley social service agencies are perceived by a large public as by nature "power over" structures that diminish,

not enhance, a family's connectedness. As the Executive Director of one of the partners, Chelsea Human Services Collaborative Ed Marakovitz, says when community people talk about strengthening families and neighborhoods, they are more likely to talk about safe neighborhoods, parks, jobs, or ESL rather than about social service delivery.

No one disagreed that well-organized, helping/caring services are social necessities, even though they may be utilized differentially by various populations. In Chelsea, survey findings documented that many Latino and Asian people typically do not go to agencies until they have exhausted their family and friends networks.

In this time of economic crunch, the concern was over the relative importance, or lack thereof, of advocating greater community control over social services in the community. Would changes in agency practice improve the range and quality of life opportunities for women and men residing in distressed and marginalized communities? The Steering Committee, which consists of six representatives from the two communities and two university professors, wrestled with this question, as did the entire Partnership.

"Resident powered" fails to delineate which resident/s and why

Further complicating that task was the determination of who is, and who is not, "the community?" Whose realities get voiced and get attention? Whose realities matter? How does one act concretely? All are questions about power.

Having the power to drive a car or bus does not necessarily mean one actually can. One must know how to drive. Near the end of the second year, Rick Vail, BUSSW alum, proposed thinking about the evolving goal as "resident-powered" rather than "resident-driven." Others engaged with this (Withorn, 1997b, p. 3):

Resident powered means we—residents, professionals, agency staff, university colleagues, friends—are all on the bus, but the residents are driving, no matter what. The question is, are the residents driving to get us to a community that will celebrate all its diversities, or to a defended community that cannot face change once again? . . . We're part of this big movement so maybe we're on the caravan of

buses together. We can't leave anyone out. We need to begin making connections at the bus stop; finding out about the bus, about the route, about the schedule. . . . Even as some are now allowed to drive, we need to ask about who is still being told that they can't get on the bus: what about so-called "illegals"—how do we insure that those voices are heard? . . . [M]aybe our conception of vehicles to drive is too confining: it forces us to ask who should be driving. . . . What is the broader context for changing the power so that we can use our creative minds to imagine ourselves and go where we need to go?

These questions continue to permeate the C/DP.

All neighborhoods have distinctive qualities that confound easy collaboration.

The composition of the partnership was complex. The two communities were not contiguous. In the first year, one agency staff person new around the table asked naively:

Is this a partnership or a marriage of convenience? I can see partnership between BU and the University of Massachusetts, but how are we in this [geographic] community partners with them in that community?

Media-created and distorted images of each neighborhood have led to impressions of little commonality, and thus little interaction, between the people who live in Chelsea (across a bridge from Boston) and those who live in Dudley, a neighborhood in Boston which achieved national visibility during the years when court-order school busing was instituted. Both communities are comprised of majority populations of color. Both are experiencing demographic change. The Chelsea majority population now is Latino. Whites comprise 35% of the population, the remainder being African American (7%) and of various Asian descents. Forty percent of the Dudley population is African American, with Puerto Rican and Dominican Latinos comprising another 30%, and Cape Verdeans another 24%. The remaining population (6%) is white, often elderly Irish whose parents were once the majority population.

Cross-racial settings are challenging and pregnant with possibility. Relationships qualitatively different than those previously

encountered with a racially dissimilar other are slowly emerging. At the same time, organizers of color are more often these days insisting on placing a priority on "*organizing our communities to change the economic and social structures that govern our lives*" (Rinku, 1996, p. 8). This is not surprising.

Along with the racial and ethnic diversity factor, then, is also the difficulty in our culture in sustaining identification of the general public/s with people who are poor. This extends to helping professionals as well.

While we move forward, we strive to respect community autonomy as well as differentiate partners' needs. Respectful reciprocity balanced with autonomy is a difficult-to-reach ideal.

Partnership does not mean that everyone is on the same page at the same time.

The C/DP is grounded in the belief in the importance of helping people solve problems for themselves rather than imposing solutions. Fundamental, too, has been recognition over the months that we must interact more intentionally at levels deeper than social pleasantries. Negotiating the Partnership pathways has been a challenge.

The multi-dimensions of power are a factor here: 1) power to make decisions does not necessarily overlap with 2) power to set the agenda of policy and public debate; and, most importantly, 3) the power to shape the way people define things through the control of social myths, language and symbols. In a time of the politics of resentment, "resident-driven" may be an abstract luxury.

An imperative has a distinctive priority over academic discussion of paradigm shifts.

Social workers talk about the construction of social problems. While we do, the public (better understood as "the publics") develops its own views of social problems. We have come to realize at deeper levels that strengthening families and communities involves both social and economic development. And it means responsiveness to immediate imperatives.

The urgency of now became clear to the C/DP in our second year. This has led to Partnership-wide uphill work to counter the

demonization of welfare moms. The state changes became the common "enemy". These, combined with the federal changes in welfare assistance, proved to be a galvanizing draw. The new welfare law took effect on November 1, 1995, and has had ripple affects on, at minimum, 1) those who were cut off of AFDC, 2) those now receiving Transitional Assistance to Needy Families, 3) their landlords and neighbors; 4) the schools their children attend, 5) small businesses in the community, 6) community health centers, 7) community churches, 8) service providers, and 9) communities at large.

Nero fiddled while Rome burned; are helping professionals following his example?

For decades, the professorial class has seen its role as being analytical; even better, being the class capable of rendering objective data from which policy can be formed. Times have changed. We live in an era where evidence does not count for much in political arenas.

Some academics have fought the good fight, opposing "workfare" when it was supposedly just a social experiment twenty years ago. And some foundations have funded experiments such as ours, and the other nine partnerships in the Kellogg Cluster. W.K. Kellogg Foundation is funding the Urban Institute \$30 million dollar project, "Assessing the New Federalism." The three year project is measuring the consequences of devolution upon the poor and other aid recipients in 12 states. Among the methods to be used in this non-partisan study is door-knocking of 50,000 households in both 1997 and 1999 (Black, 1997). But will its findings be of use in enhancing that which improves the quality of women's and children's lives? We doubt it. Not because of any lack of good intention by the researchers, but because the way the "game" is played has been changed. Post WWII faith in science is not as broadly shared as it once was.

A *Wall Street Journal* article (Harwood, 1997) argues that both liberals and conservatives are positioning themselves already to counteract the findings of any studies around welfare, saying that all studies are about politics, and thus not objective. "Pseudo-academic research" is already a code word in this climate of "ideological suspicion".

And then there is David Ellwood, once the "guru" of the blue-ribbon Ford Foundation panel on Social Welfare & The American Future, then the architect of the Clinton Administration approach to changing welfare. Now a Kennedy School academician, he speaks of the corruption of his idea that cash assistance to poor women and their children should come with time limits. He acknowledges that this conceptualization assumed universal health care, access to job training, and other supports.

The 1989 panel of experts after extensive study criticized today's splintered social welfare system as pitting one group against another. *The Common Good Final Report*, (Ellwood et. al., 1989) states:

The current social welfare system appears oriented to picking up pieces rather than preventing the original breakage. . . . [It is] essential that we improve economic opportunities and strengthen social protections for our most vulnerable citizens.

The Report called for new forms of social support to help reduce the insecurities that occur in every stage of life. How long has it been since we heard this analysis? And what did it lead to? It failed to counter the politicized scapegoating which has led to setting aside the abundant research findings that contradict the direction taken by the welfare overhaul.

Having Said All That, The Challenge is Before Us

Genuine solidarity involves not mere subjective identification with oppressed people but concrete answerability to them
(Harrison, 1985, p. 244).

What can human service providers do which enhances—fully utilizes and expands—the human capital strengths within communities?

Providers must be more accepting and responsive to the resident-articulated needs and alternatives. This requires increased interaction among and between residents and agency staff as co-learners. It recognizes that the agency person has connections and information to share which need to be brought to the table so that all around the table are fully informed.

Thus, the agency staff must be willing to share knowledge and resources they have with the residents, in order to further develop the capacity of and for residents to become effective leaders in community change. This can be accomplished by agencies providing ongoing training and capacity-building sessions pertinent to their context and the articulated needs. How can this be done?

Human service providers must be willing to change their infrastructure to accentuate the benefits of a strengths perspective throughout their agency. This can be done by analyzing the current level and substantive, rather than symbolic, content of resident participation. Resident leadership on staff and within committees and boards can be productive.

Agencies must be willing to evaluate their current efforts in developing community leaders and promoting residents within their agencies. A working strengths perspective is only substantial if agencies learn what is working and what needs to be changed.

If agencies serious about enhancing the capabilities of residents would collaborate, positive attention would be drawn towards community transformation. Collaborative efforts help politicians visualize public problems more clearly, and are particularly suited for education and advocacy at state levels. Surely, community participation in political processes goes a lot further than agency staff participation. Certainly, it is a lot more valuable.

Concluding Remarks

These changes, however, are only part of answer. We face a steep climb up the rough side of the mountain. In a recent article on activism (Kaufman, 1995), Cynthia Kauffman poses a question of relevance for us:

Why do so few people I know even talk about doing anticapitalist work any more? Why does it seem almost embarrassing to say that one is interested in getting rid of capitalism. Surely part of the answer lies in the fact that we are living in a time when we are losing many battles, both small and large. . . . What I crave in my own anticapitalist activism is a sense of hope and accomplishment. I want to feel like what I do matters in some way. Without a sense

of a meaningful project, high levels of social activism are hard to sustain (p. 66).

It doesn't have to be this way. We must stop thinking of capitalism "as an all-encompassing and all-creating monster." We must block "the ability of those with capital to act in ways that are destructive to our lives." We must support a variety of initiatives chipping away at the economic inequality and social injustices that are so ever present.

So what will it take to build a movement advocating and defending income support for the most vulnerable? June Jordan names it: commitment, the commitment of people willing to work across difference creatively. One innovation our Partnership tried was popular education training, building upon cultural components that residents can use in designing educational skits for performance in various settings. In Roxbury, Caribbean popular educator, Ras Mo, helped several groups develop performance pieces which have been featured at town meetings, city-conferences and neighborhood gatherings.

As long time advocates for the rights of the "veterans of poverty", Ann Withorn and Diane Dujon have written (1996, pp. 3, 5):

As the U.S. economy and family structures have become less secure, somehow we have been bamboozled into reducing, not increasing, the only trust fund that most of us have—public programs. . . . it seems to us only a short time before those who now think they will be secure when 'welfare cheats are forced to work,' will find themselves needing the very assistance that has been taken away. . . . only when 'the veterans of poverty' take leadership will successful strategies for change be adopted.

The challenge is before us—will we meet it? In Chelsea and Dudley, collaboratives have responded to the imperative. Both the Chelsea Human Services Collaborative, and the Agency Collaborative in Dudley, active partners in the C/DP, have working groups and projects advocating for meaningful change that are participating in coalitional campaigns. A priority has been placed on training for those experiencing the devastation most directly. We must develop effective responses to structural povertization: overturning the learnfare requirement, including high school and

college attendance as meeting the work force requirement, and more jobs with family-supporting wages and childcare. We believe that the "veterans of poverty" are the strongest advocates for change in this state and beyond. We call for a more accountable national system of income support. The real issue is an economy of impoverishment, not welfare use. We advocate a more fully accountable national economic security system, and the reversal of the federal devolution to the states on basic human rights issues: food, shelter, access to safe water and health care, and the like. We do so in collaboration with colleagues.⁶

Notes

1. See Gans, (1995) for extensive discussion on how and why the labeling of the poor as inferior diverts attention from real structural causes. "By making scapegoats of the poor for fundamental problems they have not caused nor can change, Americans can also postpone politically difficult and divisive solutions to the country's economic ills" (p. 7).
2. For further discussion of this point, see the October 21, 1996 issue of *Monday*, the bi-weekly newsletter of Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Program, NCCUSA.
3. Bob Grant, a New York City talk show host, is an example. He routinely refers to African Americans as "savages." When Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown's plane crashed in Bosnia in 1996, Grant commented on air that Brown might be the lone survivor "because I'm a pessimist."
4. Among them are the Vietnamese American Civic Association, Jewish Community Relations Council, Sicilian Society, Cambodian Community of Greater Fall River, Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly, Chinese Progressive Association, Chelsea Human Services Collaborative, Dudley Agency Collaborative. The Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition coordinated this action. This was the second of two days of focus around the change in welfare practices.
5. A rally the day before President Clinton signed the overhaul legislation clearly demonstrated this. Held at Boston's Federal Building Plaza, there were no more than 50 persons present. A further indicator: the first speaker, a welfare recipient, set the tone for those who followed by repeatedly offering her credentials as a member of the "deserving poor," unlike so many.
6. Among the colleagues: Academic Working Group on Poverty; Action for Boston Community Development, Inc.; Boston College Media Research Action Project; Cooperative Economics for Women; Northeastern Law School; NASW MA chapter; ARMS (Advocacy for Resources for Modern Survival); MA. Human Services Coalition; MA Law Reform Institute; Women's State Wide Legislative Network; Political Research Associates; and more.

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Book Reviews

James Midgley, *Social Welfare in Global Context*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 1997, \$ 52.00 hardcover, \$ 24.95 paper-cover.

James Midgley fills another gap in the International Social Welfare literature with his newest work, *Social Welfare in Global Context*. Clearly addressing the North American market, this work places social welfare in a broader perspective than most North American Social Welfare texts. This work transcends political positioning and provides readers with a range of viewpoints, without obscuring the author's personal outlook. This is unique in a field where the writings are most often laden with ideological rhetoric. The academic breadth of presentation is part of what makes this work so potentially useful as a text.

Midgley's Introduction and Part 1, International Social Welfare and the Global System, most particularly "The Notion of Social Welfare" should be required reading for everyone engaged in the delivery of Social Services. These two pages contextualize social welfare; they remove the image of 'the dole', poverty, and the stigmatization that has hounded welfare since the 50's. They force the reader to think and rethink, to address his or her own value-laden reference regarding welfare, and to expand and refine the use of concept. These two pages set the tone and frame the scope of the work.

Midgley tells the reader, in his preface, that the work is intended as a text for international social welfare. This is far too limiting a prospect. There are portions throughout the book that address issues for everyone in Social Science and Human Service disciplines. Remaining within Part I, International Social Welfare and the Global System, Chapter 2, the Global World System provides an excellent overview of the political and economic development of Nation States. In this Chapter the overall effects of physical or economic conquest, imperialism and ideological missionaries are identified and addressed. Both the process and the ideology of globalization are reviewed; the Chapter ends with the exceptional sentence, "The promotion of international values in social welfare is commendable, but it must be subsumed under

a wider commitment to promote the welfare of people throughout the world". Midgley does not allow the reader to sink back into familiar ideological, North American focused thinking, the global context remains!

Among the five Chapters comprising Part II, the Analysis of International Social Welfare, Chapter 5, Theories of State Welfare, is outstanding. This is the best treatment of the subject available today (including some of Midgley's earlier works). The treatment is comprehensive, coherent, and provides an useful framework. Again, the reader's view is expanded. The earlier Chapters in Part II, Social Conditions in the Global Context and Social Welfare Around the World provide factual overviews, data, and literature summaries that are useful in contextualizing the Theories; but it is the Theories Chapter that captures the reader. The Chapter on the Impact of State Welfare indeed provides an overview, however this topic requires a book of its own. Perhaps Midgley plans to address these critical issues in his next work. The subsequent Chapter regarding the Future sets the stage for the final Part of the book, providing some indications of where the work is going. Midgley leads gently to the future, when perhaps he should have given a more powerful push.

Part III, Applied International Social Welfare is framed within fields of service. Social Work in the International Context comprises education, the profession and the variety of forms within which practice takes place. Midgley refrains from his earlier allegation of the Professional Imperialism of Social Work, but again reminds the reader of the potential for North American imperialism. Midgley's treatment of International Social Development (Chapter 9) addresses Social Development from the traditional macro perspective. It is an excellent overview, but remains at the policy level. The sections involving Strategies for Social Development remain at the conceptual level, and reflect the policy framework of Social Welfare and Social Administration. Another challenge for Midgley's future work could be a more in-depth treatment of implementation strategies for Social Development policies. Midgley's statement "While it is true that efforts to implement social development strategies are faced with formidable difficulties, the desperate conditions of poverty and social deprivation that characterize the lives of hundreds of millions of

people through the world cannot be ignored. Social development is not a magical solution to the world's problems, but it does provide a comprehensive, pragmatic, and workable approach to social welfare that deserves to be more widely adopted." would be echoed by most individuals committed to Social Development.

The final chapter of the work "International Collaboration in Social Welfare" attempts to weave a thread amongst the variety of issues and identify potential fora for collaboration. Midgley limits this portion of his work by framing it within the traditional associations and exchanges. Gently cautioning against unidirectional collaboration, a stronger approach to what can be learned by North Americans and Europeans from our colleagues throughout the world would have been welcome.

This text has many strengths, it is well written, coherent, and does not allow the reader to remain within a narrow, culture bound environment. It is to be recommended to everyone interested in opening his or her vision to Social Welfare in Global Context.

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Gail Radford, *Modern Housing for America: Policy Struggles in the New Deal Era*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
\$ 45.00 hardcover, \$ 17.95 papercover

As conventional wisdom bids farewell to the "era of big government" it is vitally important to have accounts of how such programs actually worked and what they accomplished. The prevailing assumptions are that these programs were 1) directed largely at poor and unfortunate people, 2) conducted by bloated and centralized bureaucracies out of touch with local communities, and 3) resounding failures. Much of the evidence is to the contrary. Gail Radford's study of New Deal housing policy is a major contribution to this historical record.

Radford begins by noting that impetus for government intervention in the housing market came not from New Deal liberals but from bankers and businessmen during the Hoover administration and earlier. What produced this climate was an affordability squeeze wherein the market was able to produce high quality

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dwellings for upper income buyers but could not manage decent housing for urban, working people. Precedent for government action existed in the 1913 legislation making home interest payments and taxes deductible from income, in the 1916 Farm Loan Bank which made government capital available to farmers, and the 1918 programs to provide public housing for defense workers. Hoover added to this the Federal Home Loan Bank bill and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in 1932. His Secretary of Commerce, the conservative Robert Lamont, conceded that "our individualistic theory of housing" was not working for many citizens (89).

Hoover's efforts were too little and too late to aid the depression-racked economy. Enter Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. With agreement across the political spectrum that government must act, there were still many different forms that action might take. One argument came from the advocates of "modern housing" led by the remarkable Catherine Bauer and popularized in her magazine articles and in her 1934 book *Modern Housing*. This group admired the spare, geometric aesthetic and industrial materials of the European Modernists, but, more importantly, championed their planning principals. Their models were "superblock" apartment complexes being built in Vienna, Germany, and Holland that offered small but well-lit and ventilated units in a context of neighborhood services like schools, day-care centers, clinics, laundries, recreational facilities, and shops.

The National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of 1932 created the Public Works Administration (PWA) and made part of its responsibility the task of building low-cost housing. While PWA was, for the most part, welcomed across the country, its Housing Division had a constant fight. Nonetheless, in four years it saw to completion 25,000 units in 58 sites that were probably "the finest urban housing in America (108)." Where properly maintained, they are still serviceable over six decades later. Two such examples I have visited recently are University Homes in Atlanta and Cedar Springs Place in Dallas. Radford devotes two chapters to rich case studies of PWA projects.

Radford argues that PWA Administrator Harold Ickes was bent on centralization. But the Housing Division presented special problems. In the "non-federal" projects, the bulk of PWA's

work, he created a useful blend of public and private, central and local organization. Projects were carefully scrutinized for financial and engineering soundness, but were initiated by local communities, designed by local architects, and built by local contractors. Even in housing, some of Ickes' tactics, like emphasis on slum clearance, were responses to local initiative and against the philosophy of his planners.

Social workers played an important role in bringing housing to the New Deal agenda through research and advocacy. Settlement worker Robert Hunter began documenting urban living conditions in 1900. Edith Abbott supervised extensive neighborhood surveys for two decades. Mary Simkhovitch, another settlement worker, persuaded Sen. Robert Wagner to add housing to the NIRA.

New Deal housing policy was also at work on other fronts. The National Home Owners Loan Corp. saved many middle class homes from foreclosure. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) provided insurance for private mortgage lenders. Thus, many were able to keep and rehabilitate their homes while many others were able to become owners.

A fateful corner was turned with the 1937 Wagner U.S. Housing Act. It attempted to make PWA's housing initiative permanent but ended as a gutted shell of its original intent. It was stripped of all experimental potential and its base in nonprofit entities and confined to the cheapest construction possible for only the poorest citizens. "The bleak, alienating architecture of housing built under the Wagner Act, often blamed on the influence of modernism, was to a large extent the result of very low budgets (191)." Thus was created the two-tier policy that continues to haunt us: indirect and unnoticed financial support for the middle and upper-income groups and obvious "poor-people's housing" for the poor.

As in other areas of policy, choosing means-tested over universal programs has its price. "While using scarce resources only for the most needy might seem fair and logical," Radford concludes, "programs limited to only the poorest turn out to have debilitating long-range problems. Their narrow constituency makes them more susceptible to budget cuts, and participants are often stigmatized (108)."

New Deal housing policy was a resounding success for some people (mostly the non-poor) and could have been a success for others had the political winds blown differently. And, even as "big government" appears to recede, most of it is still in place.

One of Bauer's conclusions, seconded by Radford, is that true housing reform will only happen when it is demanded by organized groups who need it. We have today an affordability squeeze similar to that of the 1920's. We also have a variety of community groups wrestling with the shortage of low-cost housing. The private market does not meet this need and never has. A non-profit initiative like the PWA Housing Division would be useful and, perhaps, there is a new constituency to support it.

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Eric R. Kingson and James H. Schulz (Eds.), *Social Security in the 21st Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. \$60.00 hardcover, \$24.95 papercover.

For some skeptics, the title *Social Security in the 21st Century* may be an oxymoron. Many of these critics see Social Security as a system doomed to self-destruct in the early part of the 21st century. Kingson and Schulz note that its harshest critics see it as a "Ponzi scheme" or a "chain letter" that injects economic distortions into society that include savings and work disincentives. Argumentatively, Social Security is no longer a self-financing program and its spending should therefore be based on the federal government's yearly budgetary process. Still other critics argue that it should not be universal and some benefits should be denied to those with high incomes.

Supporters argue that there are indeed fiscal strains on Social Security because of current demographic and economic changes. However, they point to the fact that in the past Social Security has overcome similar obstacles by incorporating modest changes including benefit changes/reductions and/or tax increases. They believe that the younger generation of workers will manage to reform the system without instituting drastic changes. Other supporters argue that Social Security is clearly overextended and the

New Deal housing policy was a resounding success for some people (mostly the non-poor) and could have been a success for others had the political winds blown differently. And, even as "big government" appears to recede, most of it is still in place.

One of Bauer's conclusions, seconded by Radford, is that true housing reform will only happen when it is demanded by organized groups who need it. We have today an affordability squeeze similar to that of the 1920's. We also have a variety of community groups wrestling with the shortage of low-cost housing. The private market does not meet this need and never has. A non-profit initiative like the PWA Housing Division would be useful and, perhaps, there is a new constituency to support it.

Robert D. Leighninger, Jr.
Louisiana State University

Eric R. Kingson and James H. Schulz (Eds.), *Social Security in the 21st Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. \$60.00 hardcover, \$24.95 papercover.

For some skeptics, the title *Social Security in the 21st Century* may be an oxymoron. Many of these critics see Social Security as a system doomed to self-destruct in the early part of the 21st century. Kingson and Schulz note that its harshest critics see it as a "Ponzi scheme" or a "chain letter" that injects economic distortions into society that include savings and work disincentives. Argumentatively, Social Security is no longer a self-financing program and its spending should therefore be based on the federal government's yearly budgetary process. Still other critics argue that it should not be universal and some benefits should be denied to those with high incomes.

Supporters argue that there are indeed fiscal strains on Social Security because of current demographic and economic changes. However, they point to the fact that in the past Social Security has overcome similar obstacles by incorporating modest changes including benefit changes/reductions and/or tax increases. They believe that the younger generation of workers will manage to reform the system without instituting drastic changes. Other supporters argue that Social Security is clearly overextended and the

aging of the baby-boomers will require a major overhaul of the program.

While opinion polls consistently show strong support for Social Security, the public is confused. These same polls also show that younger workers are concerned that they will not receive the level of benefits promised. Others believe that the retirement benefits they receive will be inadequate to maintain a decent standard of living. Still others believe that because of their age, race or sex they will be treated unfairly under the program's guidelines. Finally, some younger workers fear that the program will not even be in existence when they retire.

Despite these arguments, Social Security remains the most important social program in the nation. From its beginning in the late 1930s until 1994 some \$4.6 trillion was paid into the system. In 1995, 43 million people received \$333 billion in benefits. In 1992, 63% of all aged families received 50% or more of their income from Social Security.

Social Security in the 21st Century emerged from the National Academy of Social Insurance, an organization made up of social insurance experts from a wide variety of disciplines and professions. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive and current book on Social Security, the Academy's board selected Eric Kingson and James Schulz to edit the volume. *Social Security in the 21st Century* focuses on providing basic facts and an understanding of the complex nature of America's Social Security system. The authors have attempted to create a balanced book, one grounded in fact while at the same time covering the wide-range of opinions and controversies surrounding the Social Security system. This book addresses questions about the operation of the Social Security system and its impact on individuals and the American economy.

To accomplish this ambitious task, Kingson and Schulz have assembled some of the most renowned names in field of social insurance. Contributors include experts on social insurance such as Robert Ball, Edward Berkowitz, Edward Gramlich, Yung-Ping Chen, Robert Friedland, Theodore Marmor, Jerry Mashaw, Jill Quadagno, Stanford G. Ross and Lawrence Thompson, among others. Since the contributors represent a mixture of academicians, senior policy analysts and governmental appointees and

civil servants, their broad range helps ground the book in the real world issues of Social Security.

Social Security in the 21st Century contains a wide variety of essays that range from an overview of social insurance to a discussion on institutional and administrative issues. Divided into four parts, the essays in Part I provide an overview of Social Security, including its historical development in the United States. Essays in Part II (the bulk of the book) focus on specific issues such as whether Social security should be means-tested, whether benefits are too high or too low, whether returns on Social Security payroll taxes are fair, whether the system adequately addresses the economic security of women, whether Social Security deals fairly with issues surrounding disability, whether it discourages work, the effects of Social Security on the economy, the economic role for Social Security trust funds, the contradiction between the public's strong support yet low confidence in the Social Security system, the generational conflicts encouraged by Social Security, and the future viability of the system. Essays in Part II provide additional views on issues such as adequacy and equity, financing and work and institutional and administrative concerns. The final section addresses the future of Social Security and includes essays on Social Security in the 21st century and the case for traditional Social Security.

While the system clearly has problems that the book addresses, the decision of the authors to focus solely on the OASDI part of Social Security rules out looking at the important problems in the Medicare part of Social Security. In fact, Medicare may be even a knottier problem than OASDI since its trust funds are expected to be exhausted before the year 2000. In addition, the book suffers from a problem common to most edited books; namely, it does not integrate the material, content and focus in the same way as a single or dual-authored book. As such, the theme and thrust of this book is vaguer than would be expected in a non-edited book.

Books or reports on Social Security are often too technical and/or statistical to be of interest to the majority of readers. Or, they are so opinionated as to be a polemic. To the authors credit, *Social Security in the 21st Century* is a readable treatise on Social Security that examines its strengths, weaknesses and its future

possibilities. It is well-written, easily understood by most readers including undergraduate and graduate students in social work and very timely. Social Security is a topic that should be of interest to all human service professionals. If this book is not required in a course on social policy, at least some of its chapters should be put on reserve. *Social Security in the 21st Century* is an important book, one that is worth reading and studying.

Howard Jacob Karger
University of Houston

Michael Reisch and Eileen Gambrill, *Social Work in the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1997. \$29.95 papercover.

Like a whirlwind, the Millennium is coming. Capitalism has won the Cold War, hands down, and we don't know what's next. MIT economist Lester Thurow heralds five forces of change shaping the future of the world: (1) the end of Communism, (2) the advent and growth of human brainpower industries, (3) a human demography characterized by dislocation, diversity, aging, and growth; (4) the subordination of national interests for shares in the global economy, and (5) the emergence of a multipolar world without a dominant power.

The forecast for the United States is hard—losing our position as the world's dominant economic, political, and military power. Although official estimates of unemployment hover around 5–6 percent, Thurow estimates that true unemployment in the United States is roughly 18 percent of the population, with an additional 14 percent underemployment, marginalizing nearly one-sixth of the nation. As we enter the post-modern era, will we become more like Europe, Africa, or Asia?

The Millennium will bring the second century of the social work profession. As we approach our second century, we are changing too. The Occupational Outlook Quarterly predicts better-than-average growth in social work jobs for the foreseeable future. But government at all levels is downsizing, privatizing human services. Social workers have left public service in droves for the private sector, to be squeezed in the constricting coils of managed care. Forty-four percent of the profession now practice

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with a baccalaureate degree, but baccalaureate social work membership is only five percent of NASW. With the resignation and retirement of our elders, our profession is growing younger as the nation ages.

What's around the corner? Forty-two of our finest minds take up those questions in *Social Work in the 21st Century*, divining the future under five important headings: (1) The External Environment, (2) Policy Issues, (3) Practice Issues, (4) Theory, Knowledge, and Values, and (5) The Social Work Profession. The only consensus is change.

Population growth and the globalization of national and regional economies will change the external environment of social work practice. By 2050, The United States will have a population of 392 million persons. In only fifty years, nearly half of the nation will be Hispanic, black, Asian, or American Indian, and white children will lose their majority-group status as early as 2030. The proportion of persons aged 65 and over will grow by nearly 70 percent, and the proportion of children will shrink to below one-quarter of the population. The dependency ratio—that is, the ratio of children (0 to 17) and the elderly (65 and older) to the working-age population (18 to 64)—will increase in fifty years by 22 percent. In 2050, there will be 78.1 children and elderly per 100 persons of working age. Proportionally, we will have fewer people supporting more dependents. As our nation accepts a lower standard of living for our vulnerable citizens in order to increase our market share in the global economy, our children are competing with the elderly for scarce resources, and our children are losing. Mark Stern argues that “the poor themselves have made a set of postmodern’ choices about their lifestyle and domestic situation that have increased their risk of poverty—a startling shift from the cultural patterns of earlier in the century.” Clearly, poor children are an exception to the post-modern rule.

Stern goes on to say that “Americans have collectively made a set of choices to allow certain social groupings to remain in poverty,” anticipating “the declining significance of a purely materialistic conception of poverty” in the post-industrial world. Reframing what it means to be poor may have a corollary in child welfare.. Duncan Lindsey and Julia Henly project that reports of child abuse will continue to grow by about 250,000 per year,

reaching four million reports of abuse by the Millennium. If the trend of the past 20 years continue, child abuse will need to be reframed as well. In fact, the evidence on family preservation suggests that child welfare was reframed some time ago. If we reframe poverty, should we reframe child welfare too?

David Stoesz believes that the end of social work is near. Perhaps he's right, but the conventional wisdom of *Social Work in the 21st Century* is that opportunities for social work practice will continue to grow in gerontology, health care, and the work place. However, the essential tension in our future is a reflection of a pluralistic profession in a complex society, a value-based profession in a market-place society. Are we here to fight for social justice, or make a living? Is adaptation a virtue, or a sin? Do we know any thing, or not? *Social Work in the 21st Century* is unsettling, and a brilliant portrait of a profession on the ropes. But we have much to be proud of, and this book is highly recommended as a sampling of our best.

Daniel Harkness
Boise State University

Paolo Freire, *Letters to Christina: Reflections on my Life and Work*.

London: Routledge, 1996. \$ 16.95 paperback.

For both those readers who have known and revered the unique contributions of Paolo Freire to an international literature on personal, community and political empowerment, and for those to whom this text is the first encounter with that brilliant educator, this book is a gift and a legacy. Paulo Friere died at the end of April, 1997. In this work published a year before his death, Freire responded to a request from his niece Christina: "I would like," she said, "for you to write me letters about your life, your childhood, and, little by little, about the trajectory that led you to become the educator you are now."¹ Freire's reflections, in response to Christina, reveal the depth of consciousness that can be achieved through the methods of self critical questioning to promote self awareness and world transformation which Freire developed, practiced and then taught:

The more I return to my distant childhood, the more I realize that there is always something there worth knowing . . . For me to return

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The more I return to my distant childhood, the more I realize that there is always something there worth knowing . . . For me to return

to my distant childhood is a necessary act of curiosity. In doing so, in stepping back from it, I become more objective while looking for the reasons I involved myself and those reasons' relationship to the social reality in which I participated. It is in this sense that the continuity between the child of yesterday and the man of today is clarified. The man of today reflects in order to understand how the child of yesterday lived and what his relationships were within the family structure, in the schools and on the streets . . . My lived experiences as a child and as a man took place socially within the history of a dependent society in whose terrible dramatic nature I participated early on. I should highlight that it was this terrible nature of society that fostered my increasing radicality.²

Freire early rejected the structure of "class-based society, which is necessarily a violent society, "³ in his view. He recalls, "even in my very early years I had begun to think that the world needed to be changed; that something wrong with the world could not and should not continue."⁴ It was clear to Freire that it was not conflicts within his immediate family, but the impact of poverty and hunger in a class-based society that were the aspects of the world which needed to be corrected:

I never doubted my parents' affection for me or their love for each other and my brothers and sisters. The security of the love in our family helped us to confront the real problem that afflicted us during the greater part of my childhood: the problem of hunger. It was a real and concrete hunger that had no specific date of departure . . .⁵

The implications of these early experiences for his perspectives as an educator are evident:

Some years later, as the director for the Department of Education of a private school in Recife, it became easier for me to understand how difficult it was for sons and daughters of poor families to achieve satisfactory educational results. They were vulnerable to a greater and more systematic hunger than I had experienced . . . I did not need to consult scientific studies to determine the relationship between a lack of nutrition and learning difficulties. I had a first hand, existential experience of this relationship. I could see myself in the children's stunted frames, their big and sometimes sad eyes, their elongated arms. . .⁶

Paolo Freire, who cited Franz Fanon and Albert Memmi on this point in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, understood that subjugated persons are at risk to internalize the attitudes and responses of their oppressors, and thereby to betray their own class interests and self respect: "Deep down, the oppressed internalizes the oppressor, who then begins to live within him or her. This is the ambiguity of the oppressed, who grows the oppressor within him or her."⁷

Freire was a liberator, through his methods of education in poor and oppressed communities:

I do not think that such conditions create in students a nature that is incompatible with the ability to learn in school. What has been happening, however, is that the elitist, authoritarian schools do not take into account, in their curricular organization and their treatment of program content, the knowledge that is generated by social classes that are subjugated and exploited. I am convinced that educational difficulties would diminish if the schools took into consideration the culture of the oppressed, their language, their efficient way of doing math, their knowledge of the world.⁸

Through learning to observe his surroundings, to analyze events in his natural world and to communicate with siblings and friends, as a child, Freire learned to overcome personal fears, and to become a truth teller in regard to inequality and injustice. His educational methods promoted forthright, critical analysis of educational methods and institutional practices. In Brazil he tested his concepts in practice, with stunning success. Following a military coup d'état in Brazil in 1964, Freire was forced to flee from Brazil to exile, first in Chile, and later in Geneva, Switzerland. Freire understood that telling the truth about reality, no matter how grotesque, is the path to human liberation: "I am convinced that men and women who lived through the tragic experience of losing their freedom . . . should constantly tell the youth of today, many of whom were not yet born, that these things are true. That all these things, and much, much more, happened."⁹

Freire was the founder of conscientización as a method of social transformation. His innovative, participatory methods of education have been adopted by grassroots communities in

El Salvador and throughout Latin America, and repressed by military regimes in Brazil, Chile and Argentina. This final work, written a year before his death, reveals Freire's educational and political vision.

Arline Prigoff
California State University, Sacramento

Notes

1. p. 11.
2. pp. 13-14.
3. p. 14.
4. p. 11.
5. p. 15.
6. p. 16.
7. p. 161.
8. p. 16.
9. p. 7.

Book Notes

Pete Alcock, *Social Policy in Britain: Themes and Issues*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. \$ 49.95 hardcover.

Textbooks on social policy in Britain tend to follow a standard format. After discussing the nature of social policy as a field of endeavor, they usually launch into a detailed descriptive account of the social services that comprise the British welfare state. These books invariably provide detailed descriptions of social security, health care, housing, education and the personal social services (as they are known in the United Kingdom). While books that document and describe the social services are obviously needed, it is refreshing to find a text that does not use this approach. The most exciting thing about social policy is the complex issues it raises. And this is what Pete Alcock's book is all about.

Like many other books on social policy in Britain, Alcock also begins with a discussion of the nature of social policy as a field of academic and practical endeavor but this is presented in a lively way which presages the content of the rest of the book. From here on the book courses through issue-focused topic after topic. There is an interesting account of the role of the state in social policy which is contrasted with the other institutionalized approaches for enhancing social well-being such as the market, voluntary activities and the informal sector. A discussion of the role of ideology in social welfare is accompanied by an analysis of how gender, class, race and other divisions are related to social policy. One of the most useful chapters in the book deals with social welfare and economic development although here, more reference to the emerging 'social development' approach could have been made. One chapter attempts to link developments in Britain with international trends, but this discussion is confined to an account of events in Europe.

Alcock's book will not provide the international reader with a detailed description of the British social services but it will offer a lively analysis of the issues and themes in British social policy today. It will also stimulate reflection on how these issues affect other countries. Despite its focus on Britain, this is a book that

should be widely read by anyone interested in issues of social policy.

Kathleen Mullan Harris, *Teen Mothers and the Revolving Welfare Door*. Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1997. \$ 39.95 hardcover.

It is refreshing to read a book by a sociologist that not only reveals the author's ability to engage in sophisticated empirical work, but shows how this research can be applied to address critical issues of social welfare. By tackling a topic which is widely regarded as the purview of social workers, Harris demonstrates just how effective good sociological research can be in informing social welfare policy making.

The book is concerned with the topical issue of teen welfare mothers—a group of welfare recipients who are widely regarded to be the most likely to abuse public social programs, and the most difficult to rehabilitate. It is based on an analysis of a longitudinal study of about 300 women in Baltimore who first applied for income support in the late 1960s. Using this data set, Harris followed the recipients through to the late 1980s, and collected a substantial amount of useful information on their behavior, life styles, income, work habits and adjustments.

The study is broad ranging and examines many issues of welfare. Its analysis of the work behavior of welfare recipients is not only the most interesting aspect of the study but of most relevance to current concerns about time-limits and employment. The study confounds many myths and confirms scientifically what many social workers already know, namely that the vast majority of welfare recipients are economically active and that they use income support programs as a safety net as they cycle on and off welfare. A small proportion of the research subjects who were better educated and who had children at a comparatively late age only experienced one spell on welfare. The others, who were poorly educated and only able to find low paying jobs, cycled on and off. The study confirms that this group of women will be most seriously affected by the new welfare legislation. Given their low education and skills, lack of availability of remunerative jobs, and numerous barriers to employment and mobility, these

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women and their children will undoubtedly experience serious hardships as the new time limits are imposed.

Reviewing past attempts to assist welfare recipients to obtain the educational and other skills they need to be employable, Harris is not optimistic about the future, especially since the new legislation is accompanied by reductions in budgetary allocations. On the basis of her study she concludes that substantial investments will be needed for the new system to work. The fact that more than ninety per cent of her subjects were economically active reveals that welfare recipients not only want to work but actually engage in work. The fact that they cycle on and off welfare suggests that much more needs to be done to provide them with the skills and opportunities they need to become permanently self-sufficient and productive citizens. Hopefully the lessons of this important study will be heeded.

Patricia L. Ewalt, Edith M. Freeman, Stuart A. Kirk and Dennis L. Poole (Eds.), *Social Policy: Reform, Research and Practice*. Washington, DC: NASW Press, 1997. \$ 38.95 papercover.

The dramatic changes which were introduced in 1996 to the federal government's income support program (AFDC) has again brought social policy to the forefront of national attention. While the federal government has not relinquished control over income support, many observers believe that the substantial devolution of programmatic and budgetary authority for the program to the states, heralds the beginning of the break-up of the New Deal welfare state. The question of whether further federal withdrawal from social policy is likely is an important one. While it is difficult to discern the future, those concerned with social policy need to understand recent events and anticipate the future directions if the well-being of the country's citizens is to be maintained.

This book makes an important contribution to the emerging discussion on the nature of social policy in an era of diminishing federal responsibility for social welfare. Although the book is not specifically written to examine this question, its diverse chapters touch on many aspects of this issue. The book is comprised of more than forty articles which were previously published in the journal *Social Work* and they deal with change taking place in the major fields of social service endeavor including income support,

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Dona Cooper Hamilton and Charles V. Hamilton, *The Dual Agenda: The African-American Struggle for Civil and Economic Equality*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997. \$ 24.95 hardcover.

Until recently, social policy research paid scant attention to issues of color, racism and discrimination. Reflecting its historical roots in class, labor and urban industrial politics, social policy has not until recently factored in the ethnic dimension. A major contribution was Jill Quadagno's *Color of Welfare* (1994) which demonstrated the critical role that race has played in American social policy. Hamilton and Hamilton take the subject further, making a powerful statement which should be heeded not only by academics but by policy makers as well.

Drawing on an extensive body of historical research, the authors contend that the civil rights struggle has been widely misinterpreted as a struggle to abolish racial segregation and discrimination. The role of civil rights organizations in campaigning both for social policy reform and for economic development has not only been ignored but regarded as beyond the legitimate scope of these organizations. Over the last sixty years, their attempts to promote an inclusive progressive agenda have been consistently thwarted by the widespread belief that theirs is a race-specific agenda concerned appropriately with on the abolition of discrimination.

Demonstrating the fallaciousness of this belief, the book documents in rich and fascinating detail the efforts of civil rights organizations to promote a universalistic approach to social policy and, above all, to focus on the need for economic development strategies which will create employment, raise incomes and enhance participation in the productive economy. This agenda, the authors insist, has not been race specific. Campaigns on welfare

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Demonstrating the fallaciousness of this belief, the book documents in rich and fascinating detail the efforts of civil rights organizations to promote a universalistic approach to social policy and, above all, to focus on the need for economic development strategies which will create employment, raise incomes and enhance participation in the productive economy. This agenda, the authors insist, has not been race specific. Campaigns on welfare

and economic issues have sought to be inclusive, promoting the idea that social and economic development is needed to enhance the well-being of all.

The Hamiltons note that the dismissal of these efforts as race specific has caused enormous harm. For example, attempts to enhance social programs and create jobs in inner-cities are widely regarded by politicians and the public in general as sectional patronage. Consequently, efforts to promote social investment and employment creation are undermined and poverty, crime and despair remain endemic. While the task ahead is daunting, civil rights organizations need to transcend race, redouble their efforts and create coalitions with organizations that can promote these goals in a truly universal way. Perhaps the *Fairness Agenda* which is being promoted by the Democratic Party's Progressive Caucus can lead the way. This excellent book provides the historical and conceptual ammunition for a truly inclusive campaign of this kind.

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Reviewing normally takes 120 days.

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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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