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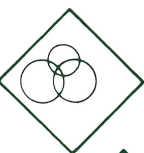
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Volume XXXVII June, 2010 Number 2

- LIMINAL LIVING AT AN EXTENDED STAY HOTEL:
FEELING "STUCK" IN A HOUSING SOLUTION
Terri Wingate-Lewinson, June Gary Hopps, and Patricia Reeves 9
- FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS, PUBLIC PROGRAM
PARTICIPATION, & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
Richard K. Caputo 35
- RECONSTRUCTING CITIZENSHIP IN A GLOBAL
ECONOMY: HOW RESTRICTING IMMIGRANTS FROM
WELFARE UNDERMINES SOCIAL RIGHTS FOR U.S.
CITIZENS
Rupaleem Bhuyan 63
- WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT THE THREATENED
MIDDLE CLASS
Jill Littrell, Fred Brooks, Jan Ivery, and Mary L. Ohmer 87
- SKEW SELECTION THEORY APPLIED TO THE
WEALTH AND WELFARE OF NATIONS
Susan F. Allen and Deby L. Cassill 115
- WOMEN'S RIGHTS=HUMAN RIGHTS: PAKISTANI
WOMEN AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE
Filomena M. Critelli 135
- PREVENTING VIOLENCE IN LOW-INCOME
COMMUNITIES: FACILITATING RESIDENTS' ABILITY
TO INTERVENE IN NEIGHBORHOOD PROBLEMS
Mary L. Ohmer, Barbara D. Warner, and Elizabeth Beck 161

BOOK REVIEWS

Both Sides Now: The Story of School Desegregation's Graduates. Amy Stuart Wells, Jennifer Jellison Holme, Anita Revilla, and Awo Korantemaa Ayamda.
Reviewed by Kala Chakradher. 183

Towards Positive Youth Development: Transforming Schools and Community Programs. Marybeth Shinn and Hirokazu Yoshikawa (Eds.). Reviewed by Amy D. Benton. 185

Indigenous Social Work Around the World: Towards Culturally Relevant Education and Practice. Mel Gray, John Coates, and Michael Yellowbird (Eds.).
Reviewed by Jon K. Matsuoka. 187

The Politics of Exclusion: The Failure of Race-Neutral Policies in Urban America. Leland T. Saito.
Reviewed by Jaehee Yi. 189

Our Bodies, Our Crimes: The Policing of Women's Reproduction in America. Jeanne Flavin.
Reviewed by Debra Durham. 192

Women's Health and Social Change. Ellen Annandale.
Reviewed by Marcia Russell. 194

Homelessness in America (3 volumes). Robert Hartman McNamara. Reviewed by John Q. Hodges. 196

Children Families and Social Exclusion: New Approaches to Prevention. Kate Morris, Marian Barnes, and Paul Mason.
Reviewed by James Midgley. 197

Childhood, Youth and Social Work in Transformation: Implications for Policy and Practice. Lynne M. Nebell, Jeffrey J. Shook, and Janet L. Finn.
Reviewed by Ann Reyes Robbins. 199

The Delinquent Girl. Margaret A. Zahn (Ed.).
Reviewed by Cara Pohle. 201

The Legacy of Edward W. Said. William Spanos.
Reviewed by James Midgley. 202

Liminal Living at an Extended Stay Hotel: Feeling “Stuck” in a Housing Solution

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As a result of unaffordable housing, many of America's working poor are forced to seek shelter in hotels to avoid homelessness. The concept of liminality has been used in discussions of place to describe the subjective experience of feeling in-between two states of being. Research is scant on the liminal experiences of low-income hotel residents, who are culturally invisible in society. This paper draws from data qualitatively collected via semi-structured interviews from ten low-income residents living in an extended-stay hotel. Descriptions of these residential experiences are presented along with recommendations for social workers practicing with families in this liminal situation.

Key words: affordable housing, extended-stay hotel, liminality, social work

Daily struggle for housing is an unfortunate reality in American culture. Some families are unable to live in houses or apartments because of the lack of accessible or affordable housing (Clampet-Lundquist, 2003). People working for
Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare, June 2010, Volume XXXVII, Number 2

minimum wage cannot afford housing at the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Fair Market Rent (Coalition, 2003). According to HUD research, there were 5.18 million unassisted renters who earn less than 50% of the local area median income (AMI), pay more than half of their income in housing costs, and live in substandard housing conditions (Research, 2003). This number increased significantly to nearly 6 million people in 2005—meaning, over 800,000 people dropped into this category in only two years (Research, 2005). Even more frightening is the fact that this increase does not include Hurricanes Katrina and Rita victims because the data extraction occurred before the latter part of 2005. Of this population, 77% were extremely low-income households earning less than 30% of the AMI. Over 2 million of these unassisted renters were families with children and over 1 million were older adults. Families with children experienced the highest increase in worst case housing, a reported increase of 475,000 households (Research, 2005). The purpose of this manuscript is to shed light on the personal struggles experienced by low-income families in an extended-stay hotel who are desperately trying to find a permanent housing solution.

Sadly, for a great number of low-income people in the United States, housing is simply out of reach financially (Coalition, 2004). Housing prices have risen and fallen since the 20th century (Shiller, 2006) and there have been continuous forecasts of the U.S. housing industry's move from an economic boom to an expected bust. Unfortunately, the modest decrease in housing costs caused by the current declining market will not affect the lower-income families (Stern, 2007). The recent housing crisis around mass foreclosures in America has victimized many of these families. As rental units are being foreclosed on, tenants are facing forced evictions (Smith, 2008). More than 2,000 foreclosures were reported nationally in 2007, a 75% increase from 2006, with the same projections expected for 2008 and 2009 (Erlenbusch, O'Connor, Downing, & Phillips, 2008). One third of American homeowners are expected to face foreclosure in the next two years (Urahn & Hearne, 2008). As a result of this crisis, renting families turn to extended family and friends, shelters, hotels, or face homelessness on the streets. In fact, in a recent survey 61-78% of 142 housing counselors were

aware of families who doubled-up with relatives or friends and 51-52% of these counselors knew of families moving into homeless shelters or hotels (Erlenbusch et al., 2008; Wardrip & Pelletiere, 2008).

Complicating housing availability for these families are increasing rental rates (Research, 2006), further troubled by the demand for units during the foreclosure crisis (Studies, 2008). Such increases are an economic strain on several areas of family functioning, because although it may be possible to adjust the amount of food or clothing bought to accommodate inflating prices, one cannot as easily choose to buy half as much housing to adjust for increases in cost. Therefore, with an unchanged income, an individual must make adjustments in non-housing expenses (Stone, 1993).

Other causes contributing to unaffordable and inaccessible housing are decreases in the public housing stock, low income wages, larger home designs, higher land costs, gentrification, slow growth regulations, and the resistance of community residents to building affordable housing in their own communities (Colton, 2003; Stone, 2006; Tanner, 2001). Low-income families with limited financial resources have turned to the American government for housing needs. Governmental response to the affordability problem has been addressed by the HUD through shelter programs, rental subsidy vouchers (Section 8), and local community building projects. Although these programs have had some successes, the magnitude of the problem undercuts the effectiveness of these solutions (Anderson et al., 2003). Therefore, even with governmental interventions some individuals still fall short of housing stability.

Housing in hotels and motels has been an ad hoc solution for low and middle-income families since the post-Depression period in an effort to avoid becoming homeless and to remain sheltered (Cromley, 1990; Groth, 1994). News coverage of motels often reports tough living conditions, including descriptions of the places as dangerous, filthy, odorous, and infested with crime, bugs, and drugs (Bostram, 2005; Brown & Sanchez, 2005; Greenberg, 2001; Gutierrez, 2005; Peterson, 2005; Schuetz, 2004). Despite the negative reports, however, a benefit to families considering this type of lodging as a housing option is not having to accumulate a lump sum of money for a

security deposit or down payment, as would be required to get into an apartment or house (Bergsman, 1999).

Most residents in this current study paid over \$800 per month for their hotel room and its conveniences, although other residential hotel fees could be found as low as \$500 - \$600 monthly depending on the location and degree of maintenance. The hotel chosen for this study had the lowest advertised price in the suburban county at the time of site selection. Due to the ability to bundle living expenses (rent, utilities, furniture) and services (cleaning, repairs) in a daily, weekly, or monthly payment, respondents concluded that hotel living was actually less costly than living in an apartment or house. To maintain these same necessities and conveniences in an apartment would require them to manage other bills that would exceed \$1,000 per month.

Residents in this study were fully responsible for paying all of their hotel fees, unlike many displaced residents in welfare hotels who might receive public assistance subsidies to assist with the cost (Arrigo, 1994). Another difference between the hotel where these residents resided and welfare hotels or single-room occupancy (SRO) accommodations is that the extended-stay facility is a completely private, commercial property without a mission to provide permanent affordable housing for low-income families, like SRO programs (Arrigo, 1994). Instead, it provides longer-term accommodations for anyone willing to pay the weekly rental fee, typically business men and women, travelers, vacationers with children, and long-term contract workers in town for an extended time. Therefore, there is no intake process to determine eligibility to stay and consistent daily traffic of short-term guests throughout the hotel is common.

The one-room snug accommodation contained one or two beds; a nightstand with a lamp, telephone, and alarm clock; a corner dining area with a table, two chairs, and a television; an open closet with one rack; a full bathroom with a sink, mirror, commode, and shower stall or bathtub; and a kitchenette. The small kitchenette housed a dorm-sized refrigerator/freezer, two cabinets, a sink, a coffee pot, dishes and silverware for two, a microwave, two-burner stove with a vent, and an air conditioning/heating unit. A single, heavily-draped window

overlooked outside parking lots. In addition, double-locked doors in each hotel room emptied into a carpeted interior corridor. These corridors often carried the sounds of in-room conversations and high-volume television programs, as well as smells of cigarette smoke and intermingled cooking. Additional amenities for guests were snack and ice machines, along with one laundry and one conference room. There was no pool or congregate areas on the property for guests. However, since the hotel was situated in a bustling, high-traffic business and shopping area, potential recreational and employment opportunities were within walking distance for residents without cars or other transportation; hence allowing the surrounding community to be both "marketplace and home" (Arrigo, 1994, p. 96).

Although hotels have been labeled "non-homes" by some researchers (Douglas, 1993; Sixsmith, 1986; Smith, 1994), others have described how the feeling of home is created within these nonpermanent shelters. Leanne Rivlin, an environmental psychologist, asserts "Whether they are squatters, people in shelters or in temporary, limited quarters, people do make attempts to create homes for themselves and their families..." (Israel, 2003, p. 230). In a discussion of the mobilization of homeless people, Wright (1997) agreed with this assertion that people will create a place for home as necessary when she wrote:

As active agents it is clear that poor people, like all people, attempt to reassert their "place" in society, to establish a "homeplace" in the midst of deprivation, humiliation, and degradation. The contesting of what constitutes a legitimate "place," both socially and physically, is often what social struggles are about. (p. 5)

Even in substandard living conditions, the tendency is to try and create a feeling of being at home.

Liminality

The concept of liminality is helpful in understanding the "social struggle" alluded to by Wright (1997) in the quest to find a place in society to call home. Originally an

anthropological term coined by van Gennep (1960) and further developed by Turner (1967) in the study of transformative rites of passage, the concept of liminality has since been used across disciplines to refer to the state of being in-between; a place “where the old world has been left behind but we have not yet arrived at what is to come” (Franks & Meteyard, 2007, p. 215). As a state, liminality connotes being in-between the thresholds of two entities, as is the case for people finding themselves without the comfort of a stable and permanent home yet who are seeking one (Huey & Kemple, 2007). During this transitional phase, a person is separated from one social category and becomes suspended in an intermediate status before crossing over into another category. One author captured the essence of this transition period well when she described that she felt as though she was a “migrant between cultures” (Josephs, 2008, p. 252).

People residing in a hotel long-term are situated between the categories of being housed and being not housed, as well as between having a home and being homeless. They are neither fully housed at a hotel nor un-housed and homeless, hence the ambiguity and paradoxical position of being in this middle phase. Removal from a familiar and secure context (being displaced) and thrust into an existence of uncertainty (temporary hotel housing) creates an anxiety-producing discomfort (Molzahn, Bruce, & Shields, 2008; Warner & Gabe, 2004) for residents.

The struggle inherent in being in this liminal “season” (Franks & Meteyard, 2007, p. 217) is characterized as a transformative experience. There is a shift or change within the individual, during which people report experiencing paradoxical feelings. For example, in a study of people being treated for chronic kidney disease, patients described simultaneously feeling as though they were living and not living, alone yet connected, worse off and better off, dependent as well as independent, and restricted but also free (Molzahn et al., 2008). Similarly, people who are terminally ill balance the hope for a cure while reconciling the possibility of death (Anderson, 2007). In essence, they are actually “caught in the middle” (Warner & Gabe, p. 388) of life and death.

These feelings can often elicit strong and confusing

emotions. While recalling her journey in the development of her spiritual self, one pastoral care coordinator reported experiencing relief and enlightenment while “wandering in a wilderness,” as well as intense anguish and grief (Franks & Meteyard, 2007, p. 216). This same emotional paradox was experienced by respondents of this study. Families at the extended-stay hotel described living there as an “in-between” in their housing history. The plan was to stay only as long as it took to sort things out and move on. It was a temporary home. Therefore, although they felt relieved and thankful to be able to live in the accommodations of the hotel after being displaced (since having no shelter would be a worse), they also experienced an unrelenting emotional struggle with their inability to get out of this temporary housing solution. Within this manuscript, the emotional struggle experienced by low-income residents at the extended-stay hotel is presented in the hopes that illumination of this liminal state will encourage further thinking about how families “caught in the middle” (Warner & Gabe, 2004, p. 388) of precarious shelter can be assisted in pushing past the threshold into more stable housing.

Methodology

A basic qualitative research methodology was conducted to understand the relationships existing between residents and their extended-stay hotel dwelling place through descriptions of home. Participants were recruited as key informants with flyers placed in the hotel lobby and by referrals from front desk staff. Further recruitment was enhanced by snowball sampling as respondents made referrals to other families at the hotel during the interview process. Since qualitative research seeks to explore unique experiences, sample size may range from one case study to “as many as the researcher needs” (Padgett, 1998, p. 52), depending on the purpose of the inquiry and when data collection reaches saturation, when no new information emerges. In this study, saturation was reached at seven participants; however, an additional three participants were interviewed for confirmation of emergent themes.

All participants reported net incomes of no more than \$33,360 annually for the household. This level of income

was considered necessary to afford a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rental (FMR) rate (an amount considered fair for a landlord to ask for in rent) in Gwinnett County and Metropolitan Atlanta in 2004; the FMR was set at \$834 in 2006. Therefore, families with incomes below \$33,360 annually were more likely to be those who had few, if any, housing choices other than an extended-stay hotel. Interviews were completed over a seven week period with seven women and three men. Each respondent was paid \$25.00 for interviews conducted using a semi-structured interview guide which ranged in time from 52 to 120 minutes. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. All of the names in the article are pseudonyms chosen by participants.

Transcribed interview notes were analyzed using the constant comparative method. This process began with open-coding the collected data by the "examination of minute sections of text made up of individual words, phrases, and sentences" (Creswell, 1998, p. 302). From this process, preliminary categories were identified. Linkages between these categories and their subcategories were also noted (Creswell, ; Merriam, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As new categories were formed, in vivo labels describing the contained data were applied to the categories, such as "feeling boxed in" and "wanting to leave but cannot." These labels included the language of participants but also the creative ideas of the researcher.

Within the interviews, the concept of liminality was explored with participants. In particular, they were asked: (1) how they described their dwelling as home, and (2) the aspects of the extended-living hotel that contributed to or detracted from achieving a sense of home. Based upon their answers, two themes were identified which are provided in the following section.

Findings

Respondents

Families in this study varied in age, gender, ethnicity, household composition, and employment (See Table 1). Most of the respondents were married with children and had lived at the hotel for about four months. One exception was a family who

had been there over a year. Many of the participants worked in blue collar fields, bringing in household incomes ranging from \$11,200 to \$32,000 annually. Of the four unemployed respondents, two described themselves as homemakers and one was a student. One unemployed respondent considered herself a “blackballed” nurse in an unsuccessful search for work.

Table 1. Respondent Demographic Data

Resident name and work type	Age	Ethnicity	Gender	Marital Status	# of Children at Hotel	Annual Household Income (\$)	# of Months in Hotel	# of Beds in Room*
Ashay Licensed Nurse**	49	AA	F	M	0	31,000	12	1
Dell Carpenter	47	CA	M	S	0	30,000	4	1
Bobby Irrigation Installer	31	AA	M	M	2	18,000	4	1
Barbara Ann Student	51	AA	F	W	3	11,220	1	2
Dee Preschool Teacher	51	AA	F	S	1	12,000	1	2
Jennifer Homemaker	37	LA	F	M	2	12,000	1	2
Kevin Warehouse Worker	28	AA	M	M	0	22,000	6	1
Jessica Homemaker	19	CA	F	S	0	25,000	2	2
Harley Homemaker	47	CA	F	M	1	22,000	6	1
Mary Auditor	34	AA	F	M	2	32,000	1	1

Notes: Ethnicity: AA=African American, CA=Caucasian American, LA=Latino American; Gender: F=female, M=male; Marital Status: M=married, S=single, W=widowed *Room size = 330-340 Sq. Ft.; **unemployed.

For all of these families, reasons for moving into the hotel involved the inability to afford another place to live. Prior to living at the extended-stay hotel, most respondents had either

rented or owned their own homes, but they were displaced by eviction, foreclosure, or financial instability (See Table 2). A few respondents lived in other extended-stay hotels prior to the one in which they resided during the study; they reported that moving to the newer location was an upgrade to their housing situation. One person moved into the hotel after living secretly in an office building.

Table 2. Resident Housing Displacement History

Ashay <i>Financial Strain</i>	Ashay's loss of employment created the need to sell her home. During the inability to secure a new position, the family has exhausted all savings and is unable to purchase another home or pay the security/deposit on an apartment.
Barbara Ann <i>Financial Strain</i>	After the death of her husband, Barbara Ann exhausted all her savings while grieving. She has no income and seeks social security..
Bobby <i>Evicted</i>	Bobby followed his employer to GA for a work project but was subsequently laid off when the contract fell through. Bobby has no savings and poor credit. He is currently saving to afford the security deposit for an apartment and a second chance from an apartment complex willing to overlook his credit history.
Dee <i>Evicted</i>	Dee's husband only sporadically contributes income and is often unemployed. Dee has been evicted from several apartments due to the inability to afford expenses on her single income.
Dell <i>Foreclosure</i>	Dell lost his home due to inability to pay the mortgage while he unsuccessfully tried to help a friend avoid foreclosure.
Harley <i>Evicted</i>	Harley withheld her rent payments because the landlord did not make agreed upon repairs. She was evicted for non-payment. She sued her landlord for property mismanagement and wrongful eviction, but she lost her case.
Jennifer <i>Family Conflict</i>	Jennifer cannot afford an apartment at this time, but she is saving money. As a young adult, she left her family home due to her parents' abusive relationship and her older brothers' drug use.
Jessica <i>Financial Strain</i>	Jessica's husband worked in New York and lost his job when the company was destroyed during the September 11th terrorist attack. Her husband is seeking new employment.
Kevin <i>Financial Strain</i>	Kevin's wife broke her leg and was unable to work and contribute to the family income.
Mary <i>Financial Strain</i>	Mary has had a poor history of living with roommates but cannot afford housing on her own. A friend of hers allowed her to secretly sleep overnight in a professional office, as long as she could stay out of sight. Mary was able to live at the hotel because her son accepted a position at the same hotel. However, he quit after a month and moved in with another friend. Mary is uncertain where she will continue to live as she is unable to afford the extended-stay hotel.

Themes

As stated, the interview data were condensed into two overall themes. The first theme captured the difficulty of moving out of the extended-stay hotel, hence the feelings of entrapment and lack of progress during a liminal living arrangement. This theme was titled: *"You have a hard time getting out."* Data supporting this theme includes residents' expectations of leaving the temporary housing situation and plans for moving on to more permanent shelter. However, situations beyond their control locked them in a liminal state of waiting to get out of the hotel. The second theme captured the stress and emotional turmoil of living in this transitional state. This theme was labeled: *"Mentally it's just too much."* Comments from residents that support this theme involve the feelings and perceptions of living in an extended stay hotel, for themselves and their family members.

Theme One: "You have a hard time getting out." After displacement from housing, it was important for respondents in this study to have a place to call home. The temporary solution was the extended-stay hotel. However, all of the respondents were thinking of a place of permanency and had hopes for moving from the hotel into a different type of housing. Bobby, husband and father of two young children, seemed to sum up the sentiment of all respondents when he stated that the hotel as home was "not so much [of] a bad place, but it's just an in-between."

While respondents hoped their stay at the hotel would be short-term and temporary, they waited for some financial, employment, health or other situation to change before they could leave. For many, the next housing type was an apartment, if only they were able to save the down payment or find a job paying enough to afford the expenses. For now, they were just waiting.

Ashay, an unemployed nurse, waited for a nursing job so she could increase her household income, afford a deposit on an apartment, and pay rent. Dee, who used to sleep secretly in an office building, waited to find out if her son would return to live with her and help her out of a current financial bind. If he decided not to return, Dee planned to ask her brother, upon his anticipated arrival to town in a few weeks, about helping

her get into an apartment by co-signing the lease. Bobby's brother would not help him, so he was passing time at the hotel until his credit improved and/or a creditor decided to give him another chance so he could move into an apartment. His pending income tax return check might also help him with an apartment deposit.

Originally coming from a very large home, Jessica only wanted a small apartment big enough for her and her boyfriend to live in alone, if only they could save the money now that he was out of jail. Unlike Jessica, Harley, a stay-at-home stepmom and wife, was adamant that she never wanted to live in an apartment again because of all the problems she had with landlords. Instead, she worked on saving up money in hopes of owning a house someday where she could garden. Kevin and his wife were on the verge of moving out of the hotel. However, he had to wait for their townhouse to get its finishing touches and for his wife's injured leg to heal so she could return to work.

Many residents expressed the need to wait for things to happen that were out of their control, especially Barbara Ann and Mary. As a grandmother helping to raise her three grandchildren, Barbara Ann waited to see if she would be granted disability benefits. Mary waited for "peace." She hoped for God to straighten things out. Even when she had stable housing in the past, there was so much chaos in residing with an abusive and non-working husband, along with her terminally diagnosed Lupus condition, that she was just not at peace. Mary believed God would fix the situation for them by giving her husband his workman's compensation check so that he could afford to live on his own while she and her kids moved on without him. Mary rationalized why it was necessary for her to wait when she stated:

...the Lord is doing this for a particular reason...He's trying to sort some things out...So, I'm just being patient because there's a lot of things in the air that needs to be cleared up. And I think that's what He's trying to do is make sure those things are cleared up. So that's when my children and I move on and get our place, and He blesses us with our new place...we will be at peace.

Even Mary's son begged his older sister to be patient when he explained to her, "at least we're not on the streets, so mommy not gonna have us here too long...we have to wait."

Other residents understood this need to wait on God before leaving the hotel. For example, even though his wife had lost hope, Bobby urged her strongly to keep her faith because "with the help of God...hopefully we'll figure...a way out of here one day." Also, frustrated at feeling trapped at the hotel, Ashay prayed, "God help me get out of here...." Harley also accepted the stay at the hotel when she rationalized, "if we were supposed to be doing something else, God would have us doing something else, but this is exactly what God wants us to do right now, because we're doing it."

Residents believed that when the situations they were waiting for came to pass, they would be able to move on to something perceived as better. Therefore, the longer they had to wait, the more they felt inhibited or trapped from moving on. Further, the absence of progress in this regard was perceived as a failure of plans. For most residents, the obstacles to progress were at the hand of someone else or some other system, and these stumbling blocks were frustrating. It is "as though I've been black-balled," said Ashay, who found it difficult to believe there were not any nursing jobs out there for her. Jennifer also believed work opportunities were restricted for her husband because "they wouldn't hire him."

Residents alluded to the hotel as a trap through their descriptions of the rooms as "secluded," "crowded," "closed in," and "confining." The idea of a lengthy stay in this "box" was troubling for those who had been in the hotel longer than expected. Ashay pointedly stated, "I feel like I am trapped. Yeah, I feel like I am trapped in this place...it seems as though I can't get out of this situation..."

Theme Two: "Mentally, it's just too much." The inability to leave the hotel caused significant emotional strain for these families since they all wanted to leave as soon as possible. Staying too long at the hotel was simply unacceptable. Feeling "stuck" at the hotel made residents suffer guilt, depression, and shame. These emotions further reinforced the urgency to leave and the unacceptability of living at the hotel long-term. Ashay summed it up when she remarked, "About living in this

place here? It's OK, but again, it's for someone who is passing through."

Jennifer wanted to leave the hotel in the next couple of weeks because "to stay here, like for three, four or five months...would be too much. I think we would just pull our hairs out, but since it's going to be just for a short time..." the situation was livable. She had heard of people staying for years and that was okay if they lived alone, but with a husband and children "it would be totally unhealthy." Harley had made good friends and she was fond of living at the hotel, but even she would not stay long, "because I wouldn't want to just live in that little room forever." Most respondents rejected the possibility of staying at the hotel as a permanent housing solution. Reasons for the rejection centered on the need for more space, having a place of their own, finding privacy, and living in a place without restrictions.

Whereas some participants worried about becoming uncomfortable living at the hotel for a long period, a few worried about getting too comfortable while living there. Getting too comfortable, for these respondents, meant not making progress. For Kevin, a quiet warehouse worker, "it's just time to go. It's nowhere that you want to get too comfortable and, like I said, try to live for a year or...longer." To avoid getting too comfortable Kevin refused to decorate his room:

I chose not to do it really because I did not want to have myself get too comfortable just being in one spot. And I'm afraid that's what some other people might do and then that's how they get so comfortable and then maybe it's so long before they move out of an extended stay.

The same was true for Dee. She did not put out any pictures at the hotel because "right now I'm just kind of packed up still because it's temporary and I didn't want to get too comfortable because the goal was to move on, you know, as soon as possible." Bobby used the same tactic and prevented his wife from settling in too much because he always wanted to be ready to go. This aggravated his wife, who remained in a constant state of unease because she needed to get comfortable. However, he would not allow it. For Bobby, settling in would be giving in to

failure. He explained,

...for me to decorate or for me...to put something up, or even to hang something up...would be my kind of resolving to the fact that I think I'll be here for...even longer than what...I will be. I think for me to do that... would be resolving to that and...I just wouldn't feel comfortable doing that...No, don't get too comfortable. Leave those bags like that, 'cause we gonna be going... so...sometimes that frustrates her.

Ashay agreed that staying too long might distract a person from getting ahead. She stated, "I think if a person lives in these types of facilities too long, they become too institutionalized..." For Ashay, people who became comfortable living at that hotel were just satisfied with their living situation. However, she was not satisfied because "being here is just like I'm stuck and I'm not making any progress."

Bobby demonstrated the weight of his negative emotional experience by his tone, slouched shoulders, and melancholic expression when he explained how he felt he had failed to provide for his family like his father had provided for them. He blamed himself for his family's misfortune. While comparing himself to his father, Bobby sadly commented:

I feel especially responsible just because...I mean, in my household, my father was the...he made more money than my mother made. He was just pretty much, you know, he took care of everyone and he was the head of the house and where he would lead us, we pretty much would follow and he never let us down. That I can recall. He never led us in the wrong direction. Or if he did, then we didn't feel it or we didn't know it. You know? And I feel responsible because I am...I married her. And, you know, I took responsibility for her. And then we had children. And...and I do feel like it's my responsibility to lead us out of here...And to get us to, you know...stability.

Bobby's guilt appeared unrelenting as he explained how badly he felt about times when his daughter Brandi created

drawings in school of a pretend bedroom and party sleepovers that she does not and cannot have in their current housing situation. With his head bowed in shame he described, "I want to cry out but...I'll look at her and I won't let her see me...[but] that just bothers me to no end." The inability of her daughter to handle living at the hotel also bothered Mary. She described this difficulty when she stated, "My daughter hasn't adjusted. [She] spends very little time here. She's always with my girlfriend and her daughter, or she's at one of her girlfriend's house. She's 14 and can't handle it. Mentally, it's just too much for her."

Respondents also reported the psychological discomfort experienced by their spouses. Along with managing his own emotions, Bobby had to consider his wife's psychological state as a result of staying at the hotel. Bobby believed she "is sometimes losing her mind and I pray for her and I talk to her. That may work for that day, but then the very next day she is feeling the same thing over again." The stay at the hotel had also been difficult for Kevin's wife. Kevin explained that for the last month or so, "it's been like really aggravating her. She was saying, 'Oh, I can't wait to get out of here!'" Ashay, who worried about how her husband was faring at the hotel, also expressed this concern. Her husband needed more space and did not have it. Ashay observed, "It is just like mentally I think it has even begun to show on him, you know?" She further explained, "I don't know. It just seems like if a person is boxed in long enough their mind just...I don't know. They begin to crack or something. It is like 'just gotta get out!'"

As a result of not being able to "get out," Ashay reported experiencing severe depression, even suicidal thoughts, since being at the hotel. Depression was also experienced by Harley and her stepdaughter because they initially could not bring themselves to accept the idea of living in a single room. During the interview, Harley recalled,

...Got so depressed in this room, I did. I really got depressed to where I wouldn't come out of the room. And I just got up one morning and I looked around, and I was like (big sigh). It's because this is theirs and I don't feel like I got a home...

Harley's husband was also depressed about being at the hotel. Like Bobby, his depression emanated from feeling as though he had failed to provide for his family. Harley stated, "I think it depresses him because he feels...that he let us down."

In addition to guilt and depression, people seemed to be embarrassed about living at the hotel. In fact, Bobby found that people were sometimes dishonest about why they lived there. He believed they masked the real reasons for being there to avoid talking about it and to protect the privacy of the situation. When he asked guests why they were at the hotel, instead of being honest they would say, "we're waitin' on a house to be built or, you know, my apartment got flooded or...just different things like that but...then, you still see them next month." Unlike Bobby, Dee did not ask people why they were at the hotel. She might have known that the guests were long-term and maybe even the reason why. However, Dee resisted invading their privacy. She explained:

I don't get into their business with asking them questions. I feel everyone deserves a little privacy. And sometimes your situation *is* your privacy especially when the face of it is evident of what it is. But let you keep your life as private as you possibly can.

Researchers (Lecci, Karoly, Briggs, & Kuhn, 1994; Salmela-Aro, 1992; Wallenius, 1999) have linked depression and other psychological problems to the low outcome expectancy of meeting personal projects. The psychological impact of not being able to achieve stable housing outside of the hotel for residents seemed unrelenting. Residents perceived that the only aspect of hotel living that met personal goals was the ability to avoid doubling-up or becoming shelterless. The possibility existed for many of the respondents to go and live with other family members or friends. However, to maintain family independence and avoid imposing on others, these families found the extended-stay hotel to be their temporary refuge. For them, there were certain inconveniences and embarrassments associated with doubling up with others. Therefore, they believed the hotel to be their only real choice. This sentiment was conveyed by most, but stated no stronger than in Jennifer's declaration that "it's either here or under a bridge."

Discussion

Hotels have been described as being spatially liminal in other studies (Pritchard & Morgan, 2006; Seymour, 2007), referring to an accommodation that one journeys through after leaving home and before reaching a planned destination. However, for the displaced participants in this study, home and hotel have become one and the same, for longer than expected and with no certain exit plan in mind. Caught in this liminal housing phase, the psychological well-being of these residents has been compromised. They feel trapped, boxed-in, and unable to escape the realities of their financial situations. Although hopeful, these residents were all waiting on something to happen that was out of their control. Therefore, they were left feeling frustrated, depressed, and guilty. Max (1997) described this mental anguish of feeling trapped in residence at a hotel when she noted:

The animal trapped by the foot will chew off the foot to escape. What about the one who is trapped by the mind? The mind in a trap can't create; it can only stumble around trying to find a way out. And on freeing oneself from one trap, one may find oneself in another, larger trap. Freedom is relative. The bars of the cage may become harder to define. May [even] become impossible to define. (p. 32)

There are three major concerns apparent in the experiences of the families at the extended-stay hotel. The first is the ease of falling into near homelessness due to financial instability, the second is the difficulty of families getting out of a liminal housing situation, and the third is the need for a more collective social work voice in the housing policy arena. Creating solutions in these three realms on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels through education and prevention, building community programs, and advocating for responsible housing policy are appropriate steps for social workers assisting families who are overwhelmed with housing issues. Specifically, practitioners can provide consumer economic education and assist individuals and families in locating financially feasible housing, thereby avoiding displacement. In addition, community

organizers can develop and promote visible and accessible community support programs to help empower families to participate in progressive housing solutions. Finally, collective social work advocacy can promote more funding of effective housing initiatives.

Avoiding the Liminal Housing Trap

Preventative strategies are needed to educate families about the true costs of housing to avoid a housing crisis. The precarious nature of the modern U.S. economy and housing market often forces many families into a liminal state of instability. More specifically, housing eruptions are caused by simple and unexpected life events that take a toll on the family's financial reserves, if any are even in place. This country is at an all-time high in mortgage foreclosures, which only promises to get worse, due to the inability of overextended high-risk families to repay subprime loans. It is estimated that in two years 33% of families will be in foreclosure and Georgia has been identified as one of the hardest hit states in the past year (Urahn & Hearne, 2008).

Families must be aware of the hidden costs of managing sheltered households since most of the respondents' ideas of "stability" focused on obtaining a single-family dwelling, the "dream home" of American society. However, as Stone (1993) pointed out in his discussion of shelter poverty, owning a home comes with a new set of responsibilities along with the typical concerns and pressures of financially maintaining a mortgage. These worries include mortgage insurance, property maintenance, and a host of other hidden fees and regulations that come along with being a homeowner, perhaps the larger "traps" (Max, 1997, p. 32) alluded to regarding relative freedom. These responsibilities often are not considered by families seeking to own homes, even when budgets are already stretched without these additional expenses. What can be afforded must be determined after taking into consideration household size; as the numbers of members in a family vary so will non-housing expenses. For example, if Dell and Jennifer's households had identical incomes and housing expenses, Dell's accommodations would still be considered more affordable because his non-housing expenses

(depending on lifestyle) would probably be smaller than Jennifer's expenses. Grocery, healthcare, and leisure expenses would be greater for Jennifer's family of four, than for Dell's family of two.

Helping Families "Pass Through" Transitional Housing

A second intervention step for social workers will be helping families move on to more stable housing. For respondents in this study, becoming free from the entrapment of the hotel meant "making it" to a point of owning a single-family detached home, even if living in an apartment or townhouse was the next step. Several respondents expressed difficulty in saving enough money to get out of the situation because of the continued need to pay rental fees and other expenses. Immobile, liminal—they felt despondent and believed they were personal failures because they could not move out into their own homes. It is clear that there is a need for programs that bridge families from the extended-stay facility to apartments or other housing options. Such programs should include education on money management, credit repair, and rental or homeownership responsibilities. Currently, the Impact! Resource Center in Gwinnett County (www.theimpactgroup.org) offers transitional housing services that help families regain financial footing and stable housing. More supportive programs like this organization should be created for people on the brink of losing shelter. Most importantly, these programs need to be visible, accessible, and known to the communities they assist.

Arrigo (1997) outlined an eight-step model to help disenfranchised residents move from alienation and powerlessness to engagement and re-communalization. Such steps may be used by mental health professionals to assist families with the psychological and social struggles that are aligned with housing (Arrigo & Takahashi, 2006). In particular, it may be necessary to challenge families' notions of success as being equivalent to achieving the American Dream types of housing and instead recognize the worth in remaining housed and off the street in alternative and suitable shelter. In addition, support groups can help families become empowered to assist each other in finding appropriate housing solutions. In addition, Arrigo (1994) proposes that social work intervention should be strength-based;

thereby recognizing and using the “untapped skills” of disenfranchised people (p. 110). For example, these families may work together to create cooperative meal-planning or child-care strategies as a possibility for reducing household costs. Another resource from such groups may be the identification of roommates or cost-sharing arrangements for housing.

Advocating for Strategic Housing Initiatives

Collective planning, organizing, and empowerment of low-income families experiencing housing problems is essential. Interventions must be created with the recognition that not all families are chronically homeless. Some families are in a pre-homeless state, living paycheck to paycheck, but still able to juggle expenses and avoid displacement. Many families like these eventually fall into foreclosure or eviction, such as the families in this study—unseen and unknown, yet stuck, depressed, and pleading for help to avoid becoming unsheltered. Other families may experience a traumatic life altering event like illness, job loss, or natural disaster that forces them into transitional homelessness. Still others are chronically homeless and struggling with remaining sheltered over an extended time. Given this understanding, assistance must be graduated by need across the continuum of care for families stuck in pre-homeless to chronic homeless conditions. Therefore, it is essential for social workers to advocate for continued funding and policy to support rental and mortgage assistance programs, as well as new transitional housing initiatives to help families move from temporary hotel accommodations to more stable and permanent solutions. Specifically, these housing programs might provide short-term financial assistance for families needing to pay apartment application fees, security deposits, and other start up costs as they try to move out of hotel housing. Further, these transitional housing initiatives might also provide the option of bundled payments for a variety of services for low-income residents moving from an extended-stay hotel.

Conclusion

In this study, low-income residents described home at the hotel as a liminal experience. They were in an “in-between” phase, “trapped” on a continuum between the housing they had in the past and housing they hoped to obtain in the future. These families relayed their emotional struggles of having to wait while trying to get out of a housing situation intended to be temporary. This stagnating liminality, being stuck in a make-shift housing solution, caused psychological distress for its inhabitants and should be an alarming concern that implores social workers, as change agents, to act. The fact that people on the brink of homelessness are reporting that they feel trapped in a situation described as “mentally, too much” begs for the urgency of social workers to counsel these individuals to feel more empowered, to create accessible community assistance, and to advocate for more effective housing programs.

To set the stage for such interventions, it is necessary for social work practitioners, community organizers, and policy makers to understand, first and foremost, how families are faring inside their homes, since these are the primary environments where individual and social development takes place. However, despite recognition of the setting as a critical component of the person-in-environment approach of social work practice, it is often the most neglected area of pedagogy in schools of social work. Therefore, to promote responsible and comprehensive practice at all levels of social work intervention requires educators to begin integrating topics relevant to housing (economics, credit management, defensible space, restorative environments, etc.) in many of the courses that prepare students for work in the community. It is incomplete social work practice to address bio-physiological, social, and psychological domains of well-being without consideration of the physical environment in which it is situated. The very strength of this professional field of practice is the ethical understanding that people cannot be understood separate from their cultural context, the environment in which one is expected to thrive (Hopps, Pinderhughes, & Shankar, 1995). In addition, to affect true community change, social workers must be prepared to sit at the table with architects, urban/city

planners, and politicians—and to empower residents to engage in these dialogues about the critical need for more coordinated and effective planning in housing.

A limitation to this study is that only one person represented the ideas of the family unit. In future studies, it would be beneficial to interview many members of a family to determine various views of feeling “stuck” in the hotel situation based on roles and responsibilities in the household. Such research might take a closer look at children’s perceptions, or those of dependent older adults. In addition, this study did not explore the help-seeking strategies used by residents in an effort to become un-stuck. Continued research on residents’ experiences of seeking help for housing stability would help shed further light on internal and external barriers for moving out of the extended-stay hotel.

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Family Characteristics, Public Program Participation, & Civic Engagement

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This study tested for differences on the type and extent of civic engagement between use of visible programs such as Food Stamps and Medicaid and less visible programs such as the Earned Income Tax Credit while accounting for family and sociodemographic characteristics. Policy feedback theory guided the study which used data from the 1979 cohort of the National Longitudinal Surveys. Challenging prior research, means-tested Food Stamps, Medicaid, or EITC program participants were as likely as non-participants to devote time to activities aimed at changing social conditions. What social service agencies can do to enhance civic engagement is discussed.

Key words: activism, families, policy feedback theory, hidden/visible policies, voluntarism

Civic engagement is readily acknowledged as a long-standing main feature of American democracy (Hollinger, 2008; Skocpol, 1999b; Tocqueville, 1835-1840/1969) and social service agencies often rely on volunteers to reach at-risk individuals and families (e.g., Méndez-Negrete, Saldaña, & Vega, 2006; Paris, Gemborys, Kaufman, & Whitehill, 2007). About one-fourth of the adult population of the U.S. engages in some form of civic activity at any one time over a twelve month period (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008). Putnam's (1995a, 1995b, 2000) documentation of the erosion of civic participation in American life in the latter part of the twentieth century,

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however, set off academic and popular debates suggesting transformations in civic life (Skocpol & Fiorina, 1999; Skocpol, 1999a). Relying on policy feedback theory, this study contributes to related discussions by examining how civic engagement broadly construed varies by family characteristics and public program participation.

Families play an important part in the transmission of civic-mindedness: horizontally through interactions with other adults in community and church-related activities which reinforce and help spread civic culture and vertically as parents socialize their children (Caputo, 2009; Kelly, 2006). The modal volunteer is the married parent, especially with school-age children living in the household (Hodgkinson, Gorski, Noga, & Knauff, 1995, as reported in Musick, Wilson, & Bynum, 2000; Also, see Smith, 1994). The role of public program participation in civic engagement, however, is less clear-cut (Sleeper, 2007).

As Mettler (2002) has indicated, policy feedback analysis is part of a larger body of literature that views public policy as an independent variable with consequences for politics (e.g., see Schrad, 2007; Wood, 2006). Pierson (1993) for example, noted that much of policy feedback analysis focused primarily on organized interests or political elites and called for more attention to "mass publics" or citizens or social movements in general. Mettler (2002) extended policy feedback theory to specify how the form of policy (payments, goods or services) affects one's capacity for civic participation, while features of policy design (administrative rules, procedure, eligibility criteria, coverage) affect how people interpret their roles as citizens. Specifically, Mettler (2002; 2007) demonstrated that contrary to common perceptions, participation in broad-based government programs such as the G.I. Bill of Rights increased the prospects of becoming more involved with civic life. Campbell (2002) showed that contrary to the positive relationship between income and civic engagement, lower income senior citizens on Social Security were more likely to participate in age-related civic activities than were more affluent Social Security recipients. In addition to family characteristics, whether and how participation with other types of government programs is associated with civic engagement in general was a focus of this study.

The paper proceeds with a literature review highlighting the extent of civic engagement in the U.S., summarizing sociodemographic factors such as marital status, presence of children, race/ethnicity, and economic status reported to be correlated with civic engagement, and discussing policy feedback effects on civic engagement. The main study questions, methods, findings, and implications for public and private initiatives to increase civic engagement follow.

Literature Review

In every year since 2000 more than one-fourth of the adult population in the U.S. engaged in civic life broadly defined as volunteering or attending public meetings, reaching annual peaks of 28.8 percent in 2003-2005, before falling slightly to 26.7 percent in 2006 and to 26.2 percent in 2007 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008; Corporation for National and Community Service, 2007). In 2007, percentages of civic engagement were highest for those 35-44 years of age (30.5%) and lowest for those 16-24 years of age (20.8%), although median hours increased with age, ranging from a low of 36 for those 25-34 years of age to a high of 96 for those 65+ years of age. Percentages of volunteering were also higher for women (29.3%) than for men (22.9%), although the median average for both was 52 hours. Snyder and Omoto (2008) contended that voluntarism remains a significant form of social action for individuals, communities, and social movements to frame social issues with policy implications.

Family and Sociodemographic Characteristics Associated with Civic Engagement

Married persons were found to volunteer more than unmarried, due primarily to increased opportunities to do so arising from their children's school among other venues (Uslaner, 2002). As noted above, the modal volunteer was found to be the married parent with children, especially of school-age, living in the household (Hodgkinson et al., 1995, as reported in Musick, Wilson, & Bynum, 2000; Also, see Smith, 1994). Education and income, often used as measures of human capital and historically of social status, were also found most consistently to be

positively related to volunteering (Caputo, 1997; Lazerwitz, 1962; Uslaner, 2002). Women volunteered more than men, especially in religious organizations, and homemakers more so than employed women (Uslaner, 2002).

The increased political participation of faith-based organizations in the U.S., with the rise of the Moral Majority since the 1980s through the presidential campaign of 2008 (The Pew Forum, 2007), suggested that activism and volunteering may have become more outwardly directed than the inward turn reported by Putnam (2000, pp. 65-79) and others (e.g., Hodgkinson et al., 1995; Wuthnow, 1999; Green, 2004; Taylor, 2007). As Cavendish (2000) noted, the extra-religious, social action functions of black churches, both Protestant and Catholic, are deeply ingrained. Furthermore as Verba, Scholzman, Brady, and Nie (1993), Harris (1994), and Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995) have demonstrated, and as Caputo (2005) noted, in light of the elevation of social issues in political affairs in general and presidential politics in particular over the past two decades, congregants or parishioners of all racial and ethnic stripes are likely to participate in such civic activities.

Several studies differentiated voluntary activity by type, clearly demarcating activists or those seeking to change social conditions. Relying on the mature women's cohort of the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS), Caputo (1997), for example, reported that 37 percent of female volunteers devoted time to changing social conditions, and that nearly 26 percent of activists also did other volunteer work. Being white decreased the odds of female volunteers also being activists (conversely, being black increased such odds), while education was positively related to the likelihood of female volunteers also being activists. Relying on the 1997 cohort of the NLS, Caputo (2009) showed that education, presence of children, race/ethnicity (being white vs. Hispanic), and parental voluntarism were robust predictors of voluntary activist civic engagement, while education and presence of children were positively related to voluntary non-activist civic engagement.

Public Policy Effects on Civic Engagement

Mead (1986) and Piven and Cloward (1971) contended that means-tested welfare programs, which target narrow

segments of the population based on low income, are associated with less civic engagement. Soss (1999) reaffirmed this contention in a qualitative study of twenty-five welfare clients and twenty-five Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) recipients in a mid-western city: program participation was identified as the main mechanism conducive to civic quietism in the welfare clients. Supplemental findings based on data from the 1992 National Elections Studies (NES) also showed that welfare recipients ($n=82$) were less likely to vote than SSDI recipients ($n=101$) when controlling for sociodemographic characteristics such as age, education, income, race, sex, and urban residence (Soss, 1999). Less information was found in regard to social provisions that target broader segments of the population.

Mettler (2002; 2007) elevated the theoretical contribution about policy effects in a study of the Services Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the G.I. Bill of Rights, which extended numerous social benefits, including higher education and vocational training, to World War II veterans. Drawing on the theoretical works of Pierson (1993) and Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), Mettler (2002) raised the issue of whether participants in less visible forms of social welfare state provisioning such as home mortgage interest deductions, child care deductions, and other "tax expenditures" like the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) experienced these "hand-outs for what they are: generous forms of social provision" (p. 648). The hidden nature of government's role in promoting opportunity, Mettler speculated, might reduce the means of conveying to citizens a sense of public life and common bonds to one another as citizens. Mettler called for more research beyond the highly visible G.I. Bill to determine if there were any empirical bases for such a speculation.

Whether highly or less visible from a governmental accounting perspective (public outlay vs. tax expenditure), less visible non-means-tested programs such as mortgage tax deductions may be associated with higher levels of civic participation in general and/or a different type of civic engagement (non-activist voluntary vs. activist) than participation in highly visible means-tested programs such as Food Stamps. It is the contention here that even more popular and widely used means-tested programs, whether visible such as Food Stamps

or less visible such as EITC (whose eligibility criteria exceed that of the poverty line so that millions of near-poor working families can take advantage of the program), nonetheless fail to convey a positive sense of government "generosity." In effect, they more closely resemble less popular anti-poverty programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Gilens, 1999; Ketsche, Adams, Minyard, & Kellenberg, 2007) and if so, they are more likely to have negative spillover effects in regard to civic engagement (Mead, 1986; Piven & Cloward, 1971; Soss, 1999). The present study was in part designed accordingly to test for differences on the type and extent of civic engagement between participation in visible programs such as Food Stamps and Medicaid, both of which are means-tested, and less visible programs that go through the tax codes, such as the means-tested EITC and the non-means-tested home mortgage deduction, when also accounting for family and other sociodemographic characteristics.

Research questions guiding this study included whether family characteristics such as being married and presence of children corroborated findings of previous studies in regard to the type and extent of civic engagement and whether participation in more visible public programs was associated with higher levels of civic engagement in general or a specific type of civic engagement than participation in less visible public programs. Specifically, this study addressed the following five hypotheses:

H₁: Marriage increases the likelihood of civic engagement, particularly among non-activist volunteers.

H₂: The presence of children increases the likelihood of civic engagement regardless of type.

H₃: Contrary to Mettler (2002) and consistent with Mead (1986) and Piven and Cloward (1971), participation in visible means-tested programs such as Food Stamps and Medicaid will be inversely related to civic engagement regardless of type.

H₄: Contrary to Mettler (2002), participation in "less visible" (tax expenditure) non-means-tested home mortgage interest deductions will be positively related to civic engagement regardless of type.

H₅: Consistent with Mettler (2002) and with Mead

(1986) and Piven and Cloward (1971), participation in the “less visible” (tax expenditure) means-tested Earned Income Tax Credit program will be inversely related civic engagement regardless of type.

In addition, effects of family characteristics and public program participation on time devoted to civic engagement (TCE) among those reporting that they had engaged in civic activity were examined. Results were meant to inform program and policy considerations for increasing civic engagement or enhancing the spirit of voluntarism in the U.S.

Method

Data were obtained from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79), a nationally representative sample of 12,686 young men and women who were 14-22 years old in Round 1 when first surveyed in 1979 (Center for Human Resource Research, 2006). Data were collected yearly from 1979 through 1994 and biennially from 1996 to the present. In Round 22 in 2006, the most recent year of available data at the time of this study, there were 7,654 respondents, an overall un-weighted retention rate of 60.3 percent and a Round 1 weighted retention rate of 70.7 percent. Using plus or minus 10 percent as a threshold, the Round 1 weighted retention rate was found roughly consistent by ethnicity/race and sex. Black females had the highest weighted retention rate of 81.2 percent, while white and other males had the lowest, 65.9 percent and 63.3 percent respectively.

The study sample comprised 4,606 individuals about whom all relevant information was available, comprising 61.6 percent of the Round 22 weighted population sample in survey year 2006. Again using plus or minus 10 percent as a threshold, the proportions of those in the Round 22 survey sample and those eligible for the study sample were reasonably similar by ethnicity/race and sex. White females had the highest proportion of Round 22 participants who were in the study sample (66.0%) and black males had the least (49.5%). Invariably, the representativeness of the study sample was somewhat compromised due to missing values. This limitation was kept in

mind when presenting results and in the discussion.

Civic engagement. Civic engagement status (CES), the nominal-level dependent measure of the study, was obtained from two mutually exclusive “yes-no” survey items asking whether within the past twelve months respondents did unpaid volunteer work and had given time to activities aimed at changing social conditions, such as work with educational, environmental, tenant, consumer, women’s, or minority groups. Following Caputo (1997), for purposes of the present study respondents were grouped into three categories, activists, non-activist volunteers, and neither activists nor non-activist volunteers. Activists and non-activist volunteers were construed as civically engaged, while the neither activists nor volunteer non-activist category was deemed the non-civic minded or civically disengaged group. In the multinomial analysis described below, the non-civic minded group was the referent category. It should be highlighted that this measure of civic engagement was broader than measures of political participation characteristic of some earlier commentaries and studies (e.g., Galston, 2007; Harris, 1994; Verba et al., 1993) and it may have included those whose voluntary activities were either court-ordered or required by one’s religion (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996).

Time devoted to civic engagement (TCE), the interval level dependent measure, was determined from two survey items asking about the number of weeks of voluntarism within the past twelve months and the number of hours volunteered per week. TCE was the multiple of these two items, yielding the number of hours volunteered within the past twelve months.

Family characteristics: Marital status in survey year 2006 comprised three dummy measures: never married, married, and separated, widowed, or divorced. Number of children in the household in survey year 2006 was obtained from a series of household measures asking respondents about the age of each household member. Household members eighteen years of age or younger were summed for each respondent, yielding the number of such children in the household. Respondents reporting at least one child in the household eighteen years of age or younger and thereby signifying the presence of children were coded 1, others were coded 0.

Program Participation: Measures of program participation were obtained from survey items asked of respondents about whether they, their spouses, or, when appropriate, their children, had been recipients of Food Stamps or of Medicaid, filed for the earned income tax credit (EITC), or owned their own homes. Items regarding Food Stamps were asked in every survey year; Medicaid-related questions were begun in 1989; EITC-related questions were begun in survey year 2000; home ownership was obtained in all but survey year 2006. In any given survey year respondents were coded as Medicaid recipients if they reported that their health/hospitalization coverage plan was Medicaid, or if their spouses' coverage was, or if any of their children's coverage was. The years respondents reported that they participated in each program were summed separately, yielding the number of years they participated in Food Stamps, in Medicaid, in EITC, and in home ownership respectively. Separate measures were created for "ever received Food Stamps" (coded 1 = yes, 0 = no), "ever covered by Medicaid," "ever filed for the EITC," and "ever owned a home."

It should be noted that homeownership was used as a proxy for participation in mortgage tax deductions under the assumption that most homeowners take advantage of related tax breaks by declaring such deductions on their Federal income tax forms at some point over their life course. This assumption was deemed reasonable in light of Dietz (2008), who posits that as renters become homeowners over time, most homeowners with mortgages file for deductions (about 94%), and homeowners who have no mortgage deductions at any given point of time (about 32%) in all likelihood previously had them and itemized them at some point in their lifecycle, especially when raising families. Inclusion of this measure was deemed important to test Mettler's (2002) contention that less visible public benefits delivered via tax exemptions vis-à-vis direct expenditures are likely to reduce civic engagement. Direct evidence showing a positive causal relationship between homeownership and citizenship (DiPasquale, 1999) supported this contention. However, given that the tax benefits of homeownership were found to favor upper income individuals and their families (Prante, 2006) and to vary regionally across the U.S. (Brady, Cronin, & Houser, 2001), it was deemed necessary to

control for a variety of background and socioeconomic characteristics as delineated below.

Background and sociodemographic characteristics. Given that prior civic engagement and parental civic engagement were found to influence later adult civic engagement (Caputo, in press; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995) and following Mettler (2002), three family background measures obtained in Round 1 of the NLSY79 were used as proxies for these measures: parents' level of education, family structure, and the family's standard of living. Parents' level of education was a nominal level measure of the father's highest grade completed if available or otherwise of the mother in 1979. It comprised the mutually exclusive categories of "less than high school," "high school graduate," "some college," and "college graduate." Family structure in 1979 was obtained from a survey item asking respondents with whom they lived at the age of 14. Respondents were classified as those living with their mother and father (intact family), with two other adults (two-parent, non-intact family), a single parent, or other. Dummy measures were created for each of the four family types. In the multinomial logistic regression analysis described below, intact families were compared to all others to allow for sufficient separation of the data. Family's standard of living or poverty status in 1979 comprised three dummy measures: poor (\leq the official Federal poverty level of a given family size), near poor ($>$ poor & \leq twice the official Federal poverty level), and affluent ($>$ twice the official Federal poverty level).

The remaining background measures included respondent's age, ethnicity/race, region of residence, sex, socioeconomic status, work effort, urban residence. Age was at the time of the survey in 2006 and coded such that 1 \leq 45 years of age and 0 = 46 years of age and older. Ethnicity/race comprised dummy measures for non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and non-Hispanic others who were overwhelmingly white but also included small percentages of Asians and Native Americans and who served as the reference category in the multivariate analysis described below. Region of residence in 2006 comprised dummy measures for Northeast, North Central, South (the reference category), and West. Sex was coded 1 = female, 0 = male. Socioeconomic statutes in 2006 comprised three

dummy measures: poor (\leq the official Federal poverty level of a given family size), near poor ($>$ poor & \leq twice the official Federal poverty level), and affluent ($>$ twice the official Federal poverty level), which served as the reference category.

Work effort was obtained from a survey item about the number of weeks worked in the preceding calendar year and comprised three dummy measures: full time workers were those reporting that they worked 50-52 weeks; part-time workers, 1-49 weeks; and non-workers, 0 weeks. The reference category was full-time workers. Urban residence in 2006 was coded 1 = yes, 0 = no.

Procedures

Multinomial logistic regression analysis was used to determine the effects of family characteristics and public program participation on civic engagement status (CES): activists, non-activist volunteers, or neither. As noted previously, the neither category was deemed as the non-civic minded group and served as the referent category. Measures were grouped in four categories: parental civic-engagement, background proxy measures (parents' level of education, family structure, and the family's standard of living), family characteristic measures (marital status and presence of children under the age of 18), program participation measures (ever separately participated in Food Stamps, Medicaid, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and home ownership), and background and control measures (age, ethnicity/race, region of residence, sex, socioeconomic status, work effort, and urban residence). All measures were force entered into the multinomial model in that order.

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the effects of family characteristics and public program participation on time devoted to civic engagement (TCE), that is, the number of hours volunteered within the past twelve months. Measures were entered hierarchically, creating four Models, the last three of which had the same measures as those used in the multinomial regression analysis described above and the first, which also included CES, thereby controlling for type of civic engagement, that is, activist or non-activist volunteer. Standardized Beta's (β) were reported.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Zero-order Correlations

Nearly one-fourth (24.5%) of the study sample were non-activist volunteers; 1.8 percent were activists; and 73.7% were neither or civically disengaged. Civically engaged subjects, that is, non-activist volunteers and activists, devoted an average of 116.6 hours to volunteer activities over the preceding twelve months, with a median of 36 hours. Non-activist volunteers spent 120 hours volunteering over the preceding twelve months compared to 58.4 for activists ($t = 4.43, p < .001$). As can be seen in Table 1, all but three measures—age of respondent, work effort and urban residence—were related to the main dependent study measure, civic engagement status (CES), to a statistically significant degree. Most of the largest differences in characteristics were concentrated in the non-activist volunteer and neither (i.e., the civically disengaged) categories, while among activists they were remarkably similar. For example, more than one-fourth of married persons (28.5%) were non-activist volunteers, nearly twice that of persons who were separated, widowed, or divorced (17.4%) and of never-married persons (14.4%). Percentage differences among activists by marital status, however, were much closer: married (1.9%), separated/widowed/divorced (1.8%) and never-married (1.4%) persons. Such greater differences among non-activist volunteers were found for all the statistically significant study sample characteristics that appear in Table 1.

In separate analyses (not shown in table), a similar pattern was found for the number of years of program participation for each program in the study by CES. Use of the statistical procedure ANOVA showed overall differences for the two hidden programs, EITC participation ($F = 27.73, p < .001$) and home ownership ($F = 68.68, p < .001$) and for the two more visible programs, Food Stamp participation ($F = 31.73, p < .001$) and Medicaid participation ($F = 24.85, p < .001$). Post hoc analyses, however, revealed differences only between non-activist volunteers and the civically disengaged, that is, as neither non-activist volunteers nor activists, on each of the four measures of program participation. Non-activist volunteers spent about half as much time as civically disengaged persons

participating in the EITC program (0.25 vs. 0.49 years, $p < .05$) and in Medicaid (4.45 vs. 8.83 years). In addition, they participated in the Food Stamps program for fewer years (1.00 vs. 1.92, $p < .05$) and, to a lesser extent, owned a home for fewer years (4.76 vs. 4.86, $p < .05$).

Chi-square and ANOVA results partially corroborated all five hypotheses, with the largest proportionate differences found among non-activist volunteers by most study measures. Regarding H_1 and H_2 , married persons were more likely than never-married persons or separated/widowed/divorced persons to be non-activist volunteers, as were those with children in the household, but there were little proportionate differences on these measures among activists. Regarding H_3 , participants in the visible means-tested programs Food Stamps and Medicaid were found to be less likely than non-participants to be non-activist volunteers, but there were little proportionate differences on these measures among activists. Regarding H_4 , a higher proportion of home owners, the "less visible" (tax expenditure) non-means-tested program, was found only among non-activist volunteers. Finally, regarding H_5 , a lower proportion of EITC participants, the "less visible" (tax expenditure) means-tested program, was found only among non-activist volunteers.

The Chi-square and ANOVA correlation results suggested that most of the robust study sample characteristics would be found among non-activist volunteers and that few if any robust correlates would be found among activists in the multinomial analysis presented below. That is, more robust study sample characteristics would differentiate non-activist volunteers from civically disengaged persons (i.e., those who were neither non-activist volunteers nor activists), than they would from activists.

Multivariate statistics

Activists vs. civically disengaged. The multinomial regression analysis corroborated the zero-order correlations. As can be seen in Table 2, only the background measures parents' education and sex were robust correlates of activists vis-à-vis the civically disengaged (neither activists nor voluntary non-activists), while the presence of children, program

participation, parents' education, ethnicity/race, region of residence, socioeconomic status, and work effort were robust correlates of non-activist volunteers vis-à-vis the civically disengaged. Having more educated parents increased the likelihood of activist civic engagement vis-à-vis no civic engagement by nearly three times for those whose parents had some college (Odds = 2.6) or had completed college (Odds = 2.9) vis-à-vis those with less than a high school education. Women were 1.7 times more likely than men to devote time to activities aimed at changing social conditions vis-à-vis no civic engagement. No measure of family characteristics or public program participation was found to be a robust predictor of Activists.

Non-activist volunteers vs. civically disengaged. Family characteristics and program participation, however, were found to be robust predictors of non-activist volunteers vis-à-vis the civically disengaged (neither activists nor voluntary non-activists). The presence of children 18 years of age or younger increased the likelihood of non-activist volunteering by 1.7 times vs. those in households without children of comparable age. Ever homeowners were 1.3 times more likely than ever non-homeowners to volunteer, while those in ever Medicaid recipient households were 1.3 times (1/.779) less likely to do so than those in never Medicaid recipient households.

As was the case among activists, the background measures parents' education and sex were robust correlates of participating in non-activist volunteer activities vis-à-vis civic disengagement. Those whose parents completed college were 3.2 times more likely to volunteer than those whose parents had less than a high school education, those whose parents had completed some college were 2.4 times more likely, and those whose parents had completed high school were 1.5 times more likely. Women were 1.4 times more likely than men to volunteer vis-à-vis civic disengagement. In a separate analysis (not shown), a measure testing the interaction effects of sex and presence of children was added to the multinomial regression model and no statistically significant relationship was found on this measure for either activist or non-activist volunteer civic engagement.

Other background and control measures found significant or robust predictors of non-activist volunteer civic

engagement vis-à-vis civic disengagement included ethnicity/race, region of residence, socioeconomic status, and work effort. Compared to non-Hispanic whites, both Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks were approximately 1.4 times less likely to be non-activist volunteers vis-à-vis civically disengaged persons. Compared to those in the South, those in North Central U.S. were 1.3 times more likely to be non-activist volunteers. Compared to those whose income exceeded twice the poverty line, poor persons and near-poor persons were 1.4 times less likely to be non-activist volunteers. Finally, those with no paid labor force attachment were 1.4 times more likely than full-time workers to be non-activist volunteers.

The multivariate results rejected two and partially corroborated three of the five hypotheses. H_1 and H_5 were rejected: marital status and EITC participation failed to predict either type of civic engagement vis-à-vis civic disengagement. H_2 was partially corroborated: presence of children predicted non-activist voluntary civic engagement, but not activist civic engagement, vis-à-vis civic disengagement. H_3 was partially corroborated: only Medicaid participation reduced the likelihood of non-activist voluntary civic engagement vis-à-vis civic disengagement, but neither Medicaid nor Food Stamp participation had any predictive capacity for activist civic engagement. Finally, H_4 was partially corroborated: home ownership, the proxy measure for participation in the "less visible" (tax expenditure) but non-means-tested home mortgage interest deductions, increased the likelihood of non-activist voluntary civic engagement, but had no predictive capacity for activist civic engagement, vis-à-vis civic disengagement.

Time devoted to civic engagement (TCE). Only two measures were found to be robust predictors of time spent volunteering among those who reported civic engagement: parents' education and respondents' socioeconomic status in survey year 2006 (table not shown). When controlling for all other study measures, including civic engagement status in the Full Model ($R^2 = .088$), having parents who completed high school or college was positively related to time spent volunteering vis-à-vis having parents who did not complete high school ($\beta = .130$ and $.136$ respectively, $p < .05$). Being near poor in 2006 was also positively related to time spent volunteering vis-à-vis

being poor ($\beta = .202, p < .01$). These limited findings warranted no further discussion about TCE correlates.

Discussion

The proportion of and time devoted to civic engagement by the study sample (24.5%, a median of 36 hrs.) are slightly lower than persons 45 to 54 years of age in 2007 (30.1%, a median of 55 hrs.) reported for the country as a whole, although they are consistent with the range of fluctuations reported between 2003 and 2007 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2008). These findings suggest that civic engagement is holding steady in the U.S., thereby casting some doubt on the "bowling alone" thesis of Putnam (1995a, 2000). Increasing the overall participation in civic engagement much beyond 25 percent of the adult prime working age population nonetheless remains a challenge, one which the Obama administration is taking up by making public service a part of its agenda (The White House, 2009). The increase in unemployment, up to 8.1% in February 2009 from 4.8% a year earlier (U.S. Department of Labor, 2009), resulting from the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009 may also contribute to higher levels of participation in civic engagement. Increases in the numbers of people seeking to volunteer have already been reported (Bosman, 2009).

Findings in regard to the effects of family characteristics and public program participation on civic engagement are mixed, but they do suggest what might be done to increase the overall civic engagement participation rate among prime working age adults. Of the two measures of family characteristics, presence of children increases the likelihood only of non-activist voluntary civic engagement vis-à-vis civic disengagement when accounting for a variety of other factors, while marital status has no effect. This finding corroborates previous research. It suggests that the presence of children under the age of 18 provides parents, regardless of marital status, with more opportunities to volunteer in all likelihood in school- and/or sports-related activities (Hodgkinson, 1995, as reported in Musick, Wilson, & Bynum, 2000; Smith, 1994). This finding holds and is consistent with the finding in this and other studies showing (e.g., Uslaner, 2002) that women are more likely to be

non-activists volunteers than men. To the extent that the average age of having a first child continues to increase or that younger parents have additional children (Martin, et al., 2007; Mathews & Hamilton, 2002; National Center for Health Statistics, 2003), this finding suggests that prime-age working adults, especially women, will be in a position to be more involved in civic activities by virtue of their children. Knowing this, public and private schools for example, might consider ways of enabling such parents to volunteer, keeping in mind work-family obligations in general. These findings about the presence of children and about women, however, present challenges to find ways or identify mechanisms that increase civic engagement among childless working age adults in general and of men in particular, as well as of Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks.

Table 1. Civic Engagement Status by Study Sample Characteristics

Sample Characteristics	Civic Engagement Status (%)			Chi-square
	Activist N=83	Non- Activist Volunteer N=1130	Neither N=3393	
Family characteristics in 2006				
<i>Marital status</i>				85.48***
Married	01.9	28.5	69.6	
Never Married	01.4	14.4	84.2	
Separated/widowed/divorced	01.8	17.4	80.9	
<i>Children in household</i>				66.83***
No	01.7	17.2	81.1	
Yes	01.9	28.2	70.0	
<i>Program participation — ever</i>				
Hidden				
<i>Earned Income Tax Credit</i>				49.67***
No	01.9	26.9	71.2	
Yes	01.4	16.4	82.1	
<i>Mortgage Deduction (home ownership)</i>				82.03***
No	01.1	12.3	86.5	
Yes	01.9	27.1	71.0	
Visible				
<i>Food Stamps</i>				01.20***
No	01.9	29.5	68.6	
Yes	01.6	15.0	83.4	
<i>Medicaid</i>				01.20***
No	01.8	29.4	68.9	
Yes	01.9	14.6	83.6	

Table 1. Civic Engagement Status by Study Sample Characteristics (%) (continued)

Sample Characteristics	Civic Engagement Status (%)			Chi-square
	Activist N=83	Non- Activist Volunteer N=1130	Neither N=3393	
Background/Control measures				
Family characteristics in 1979				
<i>Parents education</i>				02.30***
Less than high school	01.4	16.8	81.7	
High school graduate	01.3	26.1	72.6	
Some college	03.4	31.7	64.9	
College graduate	03.3	44.8	51.9	
<i>Intact family at age 14</i>				26.90***
No	01.7	19.6	78.7	
Yes	01.8	26.7	71.5	
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>				88.53***
Poor	01.7	17.7	80.6	
Near Poor	01.8	19.7	78.5	
Affluent	01.8	30.6	67.6	
Respondent characteristics in 2006				
<i>Age ≤ 45 years of age</i>				ns
No	01.5	25.8	72.7	
Yes	02.0	23.9	74.2	
<i>Ethnicity/race</i>				1.18***
Black non-Hispanic	02.2	16.8	81.0	
Hispanic	01.3	17.1	81.6	
White non-Hispanic	01.8	30.6	67.6	
<i>Region of residence</i>				33.99***
Northeast	00.7	26.2	73.0	
North Central	01.9	29.6	68.5	
South	02.1	21.2	76.7	
West	01.9	23.6	74.5	
<i>Sex</i>				18.70***
Female	02.1	26.7	71.1	
Male	01.4	22.0	76.6	
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>				1.12***
Poor	01.8	12.6	85.6	
Near Poor	01.3	14.0	84.8	
Affluent	01.9	28.4	69.7	
<i>Work effort</i>				ns
Full-time	01.7	25.6	72.7	
Part-time	02.4	21.1	76.4	
None	01.7	22.6	75.7	
<i>Urban</i>				ns
No	01.9	24.2	74.0	
Yes	01.8	24.7	73.5	

***p<.001

Table 2. Multinomial Statistics

Sample Characteristics	Civic Engagement Status					
	Activists			Non-Activist Volunteers		
	Odds	SE	CI	Odds	SE	CI
<i>Family characteristics in 2006</i>						
<i>Marital status</i>						
Never Married	00.762	0.435	0.325-1.788	0.921	.148	0.689-1.230
Separated/ widowed/divorced	00.866	0.319	0.463-1.618	0.855	.110	0.689-1.060
Children in household (yes)	01.062	0.253	0.647-1.743	1.653***	.086	1.396-1.958
<i>Program participation - ever</i>						
<i>Hidden</i>						
Earned Income Tax Credit (yes)	00.735	0.348	0.371-1.454	1.061	.116	0.846-1.331
Mortgage Deduction (yes)	01.600	0.402	0.728-3.519	1.332*	.134	1.025-1.732
<i>Visible</i>						
Food Stamps (yes)	00.817	0.322	0.434-1.535	0.828	.109	0.669-1.025
Medicaid (yes)	01.469	0.314	0.794-2.718	0.779*	.113	0.624-0.972
<i>Background/Control measures</i>						
<i>Family characteristics in 1979</i>						
<i>Parents' education</i>						
High school graduate	00.994	0.306	0.545-1.811	1.251*	.092	1.045-1.497
Some college	02.585**	0.356	1.285-5.198	1.436**	.134	1.104-1.868
College graduate	02.861**	0.357	1.422-5.756	1.882***	.123	1.479-2.396
Intact family at age 14 (yes)	01.045	0.266	0.620-1.761	1.004	.089	0.844-1.195
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>						
Poor	01.289	0.342	0.659-2.521	1.145	.114	0.915-1.432
Near Poor	01.187	0.289	0.674-2.091	0.910	.095	0.756-1.097
<i>Respondent characteristics in 2006</i>						
Age ≤ 45 years of age (yes)	01.231	0.248	0.758-1.999	0.881	.077	0.758-1.024
<i>Education</i>						
High school graduate	06.768	1.028	0.902-50.756	1.499*	.191	1.031-2.179
Some college	08.201*	1.043	1.061-63.366	2.354***	.197	1.599-3.465
College graduate	10.189*	1.056	1.285-80.766	3.242***	.203	2.177-4.829
<i>Ethnicity/race</i>						
Black non-Hispanic	01.401	0.305	0.770-2.547	0.718**	.109	0.581-0.889
Hispanic	00.923	0.381	0.437-1.948	0.725**	.121	0.572-0.919
<i>Region of residence</i>						
Northeast	00.402	0.490	0.154-1.050	1.168	.114	0.933-1.462
North Central	01.069	0.286	0.610-1.873	1.309**	.096	1.085-1.579
West	01.134	0.311	0.616-2.085	1.116	.107	0.905-1.376
Sex (female)	01.654*	0.245	1.023-2.675	1.357***	.077	1.166-1.580
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>						
Poor	01.240	0.451	0.513-3.000	0.712*	.169	0.511-0.992
Near Poor	00.752	0.426	0.326-1.735	0.689**	.141	0.522-0.908
<i>Work effort</i>						
Part-time	01.377	0.301	0.763-2.485	0.992	.113	0.796-1.237
None	01.017	0.371	0.492-2.102	1.425**	.121	1.125-1.806
Urban (yes)	00.923	0.248	0.567-1.502	1.026	.082	0.874-1.205

Table 2. Multinomial Statistics (continued)

Sample Characteristics	Civic Engagement Status					
	Activists			Non-Activist Volunteers		
	Odds	SE	CI	Odds	SE	CI
<i>Respondent characteristics in 2006</i>						
Age ≤ 45 years of age (yes)	01.231	0.248	0.758-1.999	0.881	.077	0.758-1.024
<i>Education</i>						
High school graduate	06.768	1.028	0.902-50.756	1.499*	.191	1.031-2.179
Some college	08.201*	1.043	1.061-63.366	2.354***	.197	1.599-3.465
College graduate	10.189*	1.056	1.285-80.766	3.242***	.203	2.177-4.829
<i>Ethnicity/race</i>						
Black non-Hispanic	01.401	0.305	0.770-2.547	0.718**	.109	0.581-0.889
Hispanic	00.923	0.381	0.437-1.948	0.725**	.121	0.572-0.919
<i>Region of residence</i>						
Northeast	00.402	0.490	0.154-1.050	1.168	.114	0.933-1.462
North Central	01.069	0.286	0.610-1.873	1.309**	.096	1.085-1.579
West	01.134	0.311	0.616-2.085	1.116	.107	0.905-1.376
Sex (female)	01.654*	0.245	1.023-2.675	1.357***	.077	1.166-1.580
<i>Socioeconomic status</i>						
Poor	01.240	0.451	0.513-3.000	0.712*	.169	0.511-0.992
Near Poor	00.752	0.426	0.326-1.735	0.689**	.141	0.522-0.908
<i>Work effort</i>						
Part-time	01.377	0.301	0.763-2.485	0.992	.113	0.796-1.237
None	01.017	0.371	0.492-2.102	1.425**	.121	1.125-1.806
Urban (yes)	00.923	0.248	0.567-1.502	1.026	.082	0.874-1.205
-2 Log Likelihood			$\chi^2=568.19, p<.001$			
Nagelkerke R ²			0.16			

Note: Reference categories were Neither Activists nor Non-Activist Volunteers for Civic Engagement Status, Less than High School for Parents'/ Respondents' Education, Affluent for Socioeconomic Status in 1979 and in 2006, Married for Marital Status in 2006, White for Ethnicity/Race, South for Region of Residence, and Full Time for Work Effort.

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

Findings in regard to the effects of family characteristics and public program participation on civic engagement are mixed, but they do suggest what might be done to increase the overall civic engagement participation rate among prime working age adults. Of the two measures of family characteristics, presence of children increases the likelihood only of non-activist voluntary civic engagement vis-à-vis civic disengagement when accounting for a variety of other factors, while marital status has no effect. This finding corroborates previous research. It suggests that the presence of children under the age of 18 provides parents, regardless of marital status, with more opportunities to volunteer in all likelihood in school- and/or sports-related

activities (Hodgkinson, 1995, as reported in Musick, Wilson, & Bynum, 2000; Smith, 1994). This finding holds and is consistent with the finding in this and other studies showing (e.g., Uslaner, 2002) that women are more likely to be non-activists volunteers than men. To the extent that the average age of having a first child continues to increase or that younger parents have additional children (Martin, et al., 2007; Mathews & Hamilton, 2002; National Center for Health Statistics, 2003), this finding suggests that prime-age working adults, especially women, will be in a position to be more involved in civic activities by virtue of their children. Knowing this, public and private schools for example, might consider ways of enabling such parents to volunteer, keeping in mind work-family obligations in general. These findings about the presence of children and about women, however, present challenges to find ways or identify mechanisms that increase civic engagement among childless working age adults in general and of men in particular, as well as of Hispanics and non-Hispanic blacks.

In regard to public policy effects theory, findings of this study challenge prior research showing that participation in means-tested welfare programs dampened civic engagement, especially when aimed at changing social conditions or, by extension, achieving social justice (Mead, 1986; Piven & Cloward, 1971; Soss, 1999). Means-tested Food Stamps, Medicaid, or EITC program participants are as likely as non-participants to devote time to activities aimed at changing social conditions when controlling for a variety of other factors. Likewise participation in mortgage tax deductions as indicated in this study by home ownership has no effect on the likelihood of activist civic engagement. It should be noted, however, that the overall level of participation in activities aimed at changing social conditions is relatively low in the study sample and the statistically non-significant findings may be due to the small size of this subset of volunteers.

The level of public program participation is much higher for non-activist voluntary civic engagement than for activist civic engagement, and its effects are more pronounced. Study findings about home ownership in part challenge Mettler (2002, 2007) whose research suggests that participation in less visible (tax expenditure) public programs might decrease civic

engagement by failing to convey to citizens a sense of public life and common bonds to one another as citizens. Results of this study, at least in regard to mortgage tax deductions as measured by homeownership, suggest otherwise. Findings provide indirect evidence that broad-based non-means-tested social provisioning, even if less visible and administered through the tax code, does convey to citizens a sense of public life and common bonds to one another as citizens.

Findings of the study in regard to EITC participation are mixed in regard to Mettler's (2002, 2007) speculation that less visible forms of social welfare might reduce the means of conveying to citizens a sense of public life and common bonds to one another as citizens. Zero-order correlation results indicate that EITC participants are less likely to be non-activist volunteers, giving some support to Mettler, but this effect disappears in the multinomial analysis controlling for background and sociodemographic factors.

Given the inference of support of government "generosity" in the present study, research that examines more directly than was the case here how EITC and Medicaid participants view the role of government social provisioning in general is warranted. In addition, as Mettler (2002, 2007) suggests, other government programs should be examined for their effects on civic engagement, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), housing and school vouchers, State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP), Medicare, and the like. Given limitations of the present study due to reliance on one National Longitudinal Surveys cohort, related studies that rely on more representative samples of the entire adult population of the U.S. are also warranted.

In conclusion, findings of the study suggest two vectors policy makers and others interested in increasing civic engagement can pursue. One is to take advantage of demographic changes in regard to the increasing age at which mothers are having their first child. They can do this by creating ways of engaging these parents who are more likely than not to be involved in their children's lives in formal activities of civic engagement by extending their reach to at-risk individuals and families (e.g., see Paris, et al., 2007). Keeping in mind how parents are likely to balance work-family obligations, schools,

churches, and family service agencies are in a good position to develop and sustain voluntary programs that engage these parents.

The second vector involves public program participants. As Méndez-Negrete, Saldaña, and Vega (2006) and Paris, et al. (2007) show, family and other social service agencies are in a good position to develop volunteer programs that go beyond the efforts of board members. Such agencies can also tap into the energies of their clients and others in the community who may also be beneficiaries of government "beneficence," whether it takes hidden or visible forms. In regard to hidden programs that go through the tax structure, for example, a natural pool of such volunteers would be low-income earners who are EITC participants or EITC-eligible persons who might benefit from such participation. Professionals working with low-income families or agencies located in working class neighborhoods can raise the visibility of the EITC in part by assessing whether their clients or those eligible in the neighborhood are benefiting from the program and if not, encouraging them to do so and/or linking them up with appropriate financial counseling or tax consulting services that would assist them to do so. In regard to more visible program participants, private-sector social service agencies and public employees working for example in Medicaid or Food Stamp offices might co-sponsor voluntary activities and thereby create a culture to offset the negative perceptions the public has about such means-tested programs.

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Reconstructing Citizenship in a Global Economy: How Restricting Immigrants from Welfare Undermines Social Rights for U.S. Citizens

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Scrutiny of immigrants' use of public benefits is a reoccurring theme in U.S. politics. Yet while the tough stance on immigrants taps into popular anti-immigrant sentiment, the consequences of such scrutiny are shared by all welfare recipients. Drawing upon interpretive policy frames, I examine how new requirements to verify citizenship and identity for Medicaid directly impacts social entitlements for both citizen and non-citizen populations. Analysis of state reports and policy studies of citizenship verification requirements for Medicaid illustrate that verification costs may exceed the costs of fraudulent misuse by unqualified immigrants. I argue that devolutionary shifts in welfare and immigration policy from federal to state governments further constrains who can benefit from the full range of rights and entitlements associated with citizenship in the United States.

Key Words: immigration, citizenship, social rights, welfare policy, devolution, globalization

In 1965, the United States created the entitlement program Medicaid as a social assistance program that provides basic health care for individuals who can demonstrate financial need. Medicaid was originally open equally to U.S. citizens and

lawfully permanent residents. However, immigrants' access to Medicaid and other federal welfare programs was significantly curtailed in 1996, leading to substantial drops in use among immigrants, including those who previously relied on federal assistance for health care and supplementary income (Capps, Fix, Henderson, & Reardon-Anderson, 2005). Although the United States stands out among Western and wealthy nations in not providing social health insurance as an entitlement of citizenship—with the exception of older adults and individuals with disabilities who can access Medicare—Medicaid plays a significant role in providing health insurance to low-income adults and children in the U.S. Levels of support are especially high for low-income children (51% of all low-income children in the U.S.), pregnant women and births (37%), and individuals requiring long-term care (60%) (Rudowitz, 2006). Considering that over one third of all births in the U.S. are funded by Medicaid, a large portion of the U.S. citizen population has relied on Medicaid at some point in their lifetime. In 2003, approximately 55 million people were enrolled in Medicaid with expenditures on benefits estimated at \$234 billion. Medicaid is taking center stage in many policy and budget debates due to the escalating costs of health care, efforts to curb the rising federal deficit, and budgetary pressures from a series of economic downturns in the past decade.

In 2005, Congress passed legislation to reduce spending on Medicaid through the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA). This bill includes several strategies to reduce Medicaid spending through new rules and incentives for state agencies to combat fraud, waste, and abuse (Romero, 2007). In this vein, the DRA introduced stringent citizenship documentation requirements for Medicaid with the intent to reduce spending on ineligible immigrants. The DRA is estimated to reduce federal expenditures on entitlement programs by \$39 billion between 2006 and 2010, with \$4.8 billion in savings from Medicaid alone (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2006a). With regard to citizenship eligibility, the DRA requires states to obtain documentary evidence of citizenship and identity when determining eligibility for Medicaid benefits. The additional documentation requirements were introduced with the intent to screen out illegal immigrants using Medicaid, despite reports from the Department

of Health and Human Services which stated that fraud was not an issue (Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 2006). Implementation of the DRA citizenship documentation requirements resulted in dramatic drops in Medicaid caseloads in many states when thousands of citizens were unable to provide documents to verify their citizenship and Medicaid offices experienced significant backlogs due to the additional documentary requirements. Though DRA citizenship documentation requirements were ostensibly passed to reduce the number of immigrants who may fraudulently use public benefits, this measure has greatly impacted native-born U.S. citizens, particularly children living in low-income single parent households (Ross, 2007).

Social welfare benefits as social entitlements are a crucial aspect of citizenship and a contested site of who belongs and is fully endowed with the rights and protections offered by the state. As Western democracies experience high historical levels of immigration, nations have wrestled with whether to provide settled immigrants (legal immigrants who have resided for extended periods in the country) with access to the welfare state at the same levels as citizens (Fix & Laglagaron, 2002). The policy focus of this paper is implementation of The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and reports on how implementation has impacted Medicaid caseloads and administrative costs associated with eligibility screening for Medicaid. This analysis draws from policy reports issued by state governments which have conducted internal audits, studies undertaken by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities and reports from immigration and public policy institutions including the National Immigration Law Center and the National Conference of State Legislatures. I examine how implementation of citizenship verification requirements reconstruct citizenship through the following three modes: (a) building upon the contractual approach to citizenship to transform citizenship claims into a process of identity verification; (b) disciplining citizen subjects who are unable to reproduce norms of productivity and nuclear family structure in their efforts to verify citizenship identity; and (c) localizing the sites where identity management is required in order to claim social rights related to citizenship.

Theoretical Frames

This work is guided by principles of interpretive policy analysis and theories of citizenship and social rights in a global economy to examine the interactions between political institutions, ideological traditions, and social interests. The process of policy development and implementation serves to construct shared meanings and identities, thereby shaping the very meaning of the state and its citizens and subjects (Chavez, 1997; Oktar, 2001; Schmidt, 2000). Analyses of governmentality and technologies of control, as introduced by Foucault (Foucault, 1979, 1980; Rabinow, 1984), serve as the underlying theoretical framework for this paper to determine how multiple interests in public policy affect efforts to regulate immigrants and citizens and their participation in society (Grewal, 2005; Ong, 1996, 2003). Governmentality refers to theory of the mechanisms of governance that extend beyond the state. Foucault surmised that mechanisms of control are dispersed throughout society such that subjects are disciplined, not only from the potential threat of state violence, but through the promise of democratic freedom (Foucault, 1989). In the example of immigration policy, the process of regulating immigrants inevitably invokes an evaluation of what is desirable in an immigrant and potential citizen. The assessment of worthiness in immigrants is based on dominant ideological values for gender, race, and class toward ensuring citizen subjects who will be productive in a market economy and loyal to the state (Katz, 2001).

Social service providers, including Medicaid personnel, take part in the disciplinary practices of governmentality through their actions as street-level bureaucrats who regulate subjects in their everyday interactions. Lipsky's (1980) analysis of street-level bureaucrats illustrates that each encounter a citizen has with a welfare worker or social worker "represents a kind of policy delivery" (p. 3). Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) further claim that in making policy choices in the course of their everyday work, workers' beliefs and prejudices influence their treatment of citizens. Given the high levels of discretion and relative autonomy from authority, street-level bureaucrats in the welfare system play a critical role in deciding who may benefit from citizen entitlements (Lipsky, 1980). A

particular focus of street-level bureaucrats' efforts is the regulation of citizenship. Citizenship defines boundaries of who does and does not belong in a particular country and what civil, political and social rights are accessible through the state (Katz, 2001). Welfare scholars have aptly documented how discourses of citizenship and welfare draw lines between those worthy and unworthy of state support (Abramovitz, 1996; Gilliom, 2001; Piven & Cloward, 1971). The practices that produce lines of inclusion and exclusion include the everyday actions of service providers.

T. H. Marshall's (1992) theorization of "social citizenship" provides another frame for distinguishing between the social rights that emerged in the late 1940s from previous attention to civil and political rights that grew to accompany citizenship in Western democracies. Social rights developed as entitlements to social security in times of sickness, old age or other hardships that led to risk in the face of the capitalist market. Social rights also generate distinctions between citizenship as a preexisting status from birth versus citizenship as achieved status. An individual may be documented as a U.S. citizen, but still be unable to realize the rights and benefits associated with citizenship. In his analysis of citizenship and the welfare state, Katz writes, "[as] an achieved status, citizenship de-emphasizes rights in favor of obligation or merit; it is earned through contributions to society" (2001, p. 344). Munger further concludes that in the U.S., "[full] social citizenship is a benefit derived from fulfillment of a social contract and not from legal status as a citizen" (2003, p. 674).

This analysis of a contractual approach to citizenship refers to social rights in a welfare context, as a means to disrupt the assumption that all citizens have equal access to entitlement programs. The contractual approach to social citizenship was further reinforced in the U.S. with welfare reforms at the end of the 20th century that increased workfare requirements such that welfare recipients were allotted more obligations rather than rights through the U.S. welfare system (Handler, 2002). Rather, social rights are only available to citizens who can successfully demonstrate worthiness to be part of society in accordance with racial, gender and other ideological lines (i.e. productive worker, self-reliant individual, heteronormative in

family formation). For example, Social Security benefits can only be passed to legally married partners and continue to disfavor married or widowed women (Abramovitz, 1996).

For social assistance programs like Medicaid, which are based on demonstration of financial need, potential recipients are required to prove their worthiness of receiving public aid. Katz observes that "the 'undeserving' poor include two groups: imposters—those who supposedly fake dependence—and those who are dependent because of their own bad behavior or moral failing" (2001, p. 341). Abramovitz adds that ideological investments in penalizing unworthy behavior aligns with patriarchal systems of power to regulate women's labor—paid and unpaid—and reproduction (Abramovitz, 1996). Thus, while social assistance is legislatively tied to citizenship, scrutiny of potential beneficiaries leads to uneven access to benefits, and thus differential claims to the rights associated with citizenship. Scrutinizing immigrants as fraudulent users of state resources extends state surveillance of the poor which, as John Gilliom suggests, "[is] designed to augment the hassle, intimidations, and humiliation of applicants with an eye toward the policy goal of deterring all but the most desperate from seeking aid" (2001, p. 40).

There is ongoing debate on how the welfare state and related social rights have been transformed under current pressures of the global economy. Calavita's (2005) transnational scholarship illustrates how states' efforts to regulate immigrants have often been subject to market pressures to accommodate the fluid labor whereby migrant workers are welcome to work, but excluded from full participation in the social contract of the host state. In particular, immigration countries like Australia, Canada and the United States have maintained open access for immigrants to the labor market. However, in the United States, response to new waves of immigrants and prevailing neoliberal policies have fueled the dismantling of Keynesian welfare state systems (Lyons, 2006; Midgley, 2000; Mishra, 1999; Polack, 2004). Following welfare reform in 1996, scholarship has focused on the retrenchment of welfare rights in the context of devolutionary federalism (Abramovitz, 2006; Ladenheim & Kee, 1998), the impact of welfare reform on immigrants' access to and use of public assistance (Estes,

et al., 2006; Fix & Laglagaron, 2002; Fujiwara, 2005; Kandula, Grogan, Rathouz, & Lauderdale, 2004), and state differences in responding to new discretionary responsibility to supplement (or not) federal spending (Fording, Soss, & Schram, 2007; Lawrence, 2007). This paper contributes to this scholarship, by examining how legislation that seeks to exclude immigrants from social rights in turn reconstructs citizenship and social welfare benefits for citizen subjects.

U.S. Classification of Citizens, Immigrants and Social Rights

Throughout U.S. history, the line of inclusion in citizenship has shifted with the political climate and social values of the public. Through social movements and unrest, citizenship has expanded from the original conceptualization of "person," imagined by the authors of the U.S. constitution to pertain only to white men with property, to a status that is theoretically attainable to any man or woman by birth right, through one's parents, or through naturalization. Although the United States is a nation of immigrants in that the majority of the population can trace their heritage to other nations and/or ethnic cultural groups outside of the U.S., certain groups are seen as more immigrant than others. Thus, the term immigrant is often employed unevenly to designate how someone is not fully American, whether an individual or community uses this term to honor their cultural heritage, or because groups are minoritized as outside of the perceived norm of American identity.

Given this backdrop, the United States employs a broad-spectrum classification system from citizen to unauthorized immigrant—more commonly known as undocumented or illegal immigrant—to differentiate a range of rights, protections, and benefits. U.S. citizens, either native-born or naturalized, are currently positioned with the broadest claims to rights and entitlements. U.S. immigration law designates the term *immigrant* for foreign-born persons who are permitted to reside permanently as a lawful permanent resident (LPR). The term *non-immigrant* refers to anyone with constraints on their length and terms of stay in the U.S., including temporary workers, students, company transfers, tourists and business travelers. Some groups of non-immigrants are permitted to apply to adjust their status to lawful permanent resident

(e.g. high skilled workers who hold an H-1B visa) while other groups are prohibited from adjusting their status, and attempts to do so could trigger their detention and deportation (e.g. visitors on business or tourist visas). Refugees and asylees form a special class of immigrants because they are eligible to adjust their status to lawful permanent resident within one year of residing in the U.S. Others, who are in the U.S. without official documentation or whose legal documentation has expired, are considered unauthorized immigrants and are subject to potential detention and deportation from the United States.

For the purposes of this paper, I will use the U.S. legal term *immigrant* to refer solely to lawful permanent residents, since their eligibility for Medicaid is different from foreign-born persons with naturalized U.S. citizenship. I will use the term *non-citizen*, over the more politically charged and othering U.S. legal term "alien," to illustrate comparisons with citizenship when discussing social rights for foreign-born individuals, including those who are lawful permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, non-immigrant visa holders, and unauthorized immigrants.

Shifting Social Rights for Immigrants

Following the series of the Warren Supreme Court decisions in the 1950s and 60s which shored up the social, political and economic rights of all U.S. citizens, (i.e. including African Americans, Indigenous groups, and other minoritized groups), lawful permanent residents have in theory received the same welfare benefits as citizens under the Equal Protection Clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution (Calavita, 1992; Kim, 2001; Varsanyi, 2005). This changed dramatically with the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (PRWORA), which reversed over half a century of welfare entitlements for citizens and immigrants with the stated intention to reduce federal spending on welfare (Chavez, 1997; Fujiwara, 2005). In addition to removing aid to families with children as an entitlement program to families below the poverty line, PRWORA, often referred to as welfare reform, instituted a five-year bar on federal benefits for immigrants who recently adjusted their status to lawful permanent resident. This effectively created two groups of

immigrants in the eyes of the welfare state—qualified and non-qualified immigrants (Tumlin & Zimmermann, 2003).

Fix and Tumlin (1997) characterize the significance in welfare reform as establishing the importance of citizenship, versus residence, in allocating social rights:

By drawing the kind of bright line between legal immigrants and citizens that was formerly drawn between illegal and legal immigrants, welfare reform tightens the circle of full membership within our society. By conditioning access to the safety net on citizenship, welfare reform elevates the importance of citizenship in a nation where its value has been limited largely to exercising political rights, holding some government jobs, and obtaining certain immigration privileges. (p. 1)

By restricting non-qualified immigrants from federal benefits, the federal government expected to reduce welfare spending by 46 billion dollars, or nearly 85 percent of the total 54 billion dollar estimated cost savings for PRWORA overall (Inman & Rubinfeld, 1997). Some federal benefits were later restored (e.g. programs to aid the elderly and disabled, and food assistance) and a handful of states have introduced state-funded programs to supplement federal funding to support groups of unqualified immigrants (Borjas, 2002). Nevertheless, welfare reform of 1996 denied many immigrants who previously had access to federal benefits on the basis of their length of stay in the United States alone.

New restrictions on immigrant eligibility also created a “chilling effect” on welfare use among immigrants overall. The Urban Institute reported that declines in welfare approval and use rates were significantly higher among qualified immigrants as compared to citizens in years following the 1996 reform (Tumlin & Zimmermann, 2003). The drop in food assistance program use among immigrants was particularly dramatic, falling by 72 percent between 1994 and 1998 (Fix & Jeffrey, 2002). These benefit cuts particularly impacted families with children, including mixed status families comprised of citizen children with non-citizen parents or guardians. The restrictive steps implemented in 1996 provide one illustration

of how congressional intent to scrutinize immigrants' access to public benefits can broadly reduce the use of public benefits among both U.S. citizens and qualified groups of immigrants.

Analysis

Since 2001, the federal government has put pressure on states to increase verification standards for citizenship and identity for individuals who apply for a range of public services and benefits, including obtaining a state drivers' license, enrolling in higher education, and applying for welfare-related public assistance (Kalhan, 2008). New documentation requirements for citizens are deceptive in that they maintain current eligibility criteria, while increasing scrutiny over who is and who is not deserving of social rights. The potential impact of identity verification requirements for citizens is currently under debate in several policy areas including routine immigration enforcement by local police (Decker, Lewis, Provine, & Varsanyi, 2008), eligibility standards for state driver's licenses (López, 2004), and identification requirements for voter registration and at voting polls (Urbina, 2008).

In 2005, Congress passed the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) which changed the evidentiary standards by which individuals needed to prove their citizenship and identity when seeking Medicaid coverage. The DRA included several measures to contain spending on Medicaid with particular attention to reducing spending caused by Medicaid fraud. Towards this end, the DRA instructs states to obtain "satisfactory documentary evidence of an applicant's or recipient's citizenship and identity in order to receive Federal financial participation" (Department of Health and Human Services, 2007). While lawful permanent residents were already required to provide legal documentation of their immigrant status (by presenting Form I-551 issued by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services), in most states U.S. citizens previously had the option of providing either a document or a written statement signed under penalty of perjury to prove their citizenship. Prior to the DRA, 47 states had streamlined the application process and allowed applicants to self-declare citizenship status. The DRA changed this course, by dramatically increasing the

citizenship documentation requirements for individuals who receive or apply for Medicaid (Smith et al., 2007). New requirements passed in the DRA apply to all Medicaid applicants and recipients. However, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services reduced the documentation burden on elderly and disabled citizens by exempting citizens enrolled in either Medicare or Supplemental Security Income from fulfilling the new citizenship requirements for Medicaid (Ku, 2006). It is noteworthy that children were not exempted, including those in foster care.

Verifying Citizenship Identity for Medicaid

The DRA localizes the sites where identity management is performed by requiring states to verify citizenship identity. The basic requirements of states to verify citizenship and identity apply to both applicants (i.e. for new applicants) and recipients (i.e. ongoing currently enrolled individuals). The DRA requires that applicants or recipients: (a) establish proof of citizenship; (b) provide original documents; and (c) provide documents in a “timely” manner. The DRA provides states with guidance on the types of documentary evidence that may be accepted and the conditions under which this documentary evidence can be accepted to establish the applicant’s citizenship, however states vary in how they implement the DRA evidentiary standards.

Posters issued by the Center for Medicare & Medicaid describe the basic requirements of documenting citizenship for Medicaid (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid). In addition to documentary evidence, states are also permitted to cross-reference with state vital records to document an individual’s birth record and to verify identity. Not all states have the capacity to make use of cross-referencing across government agencies and states do not have the capacity to cross-reference with vital records from other states. The preferred documents for verifying citizenship are a U.S. Passport, a certificate of naturalization, or a certificate of U.S. citizenship. Secondary documents accepted to verify citizenship include: a birth certificate issued within the United States or U.S. territories, certification of birth abroad to U.S. parents, a valid state-issued driver’s license in states where verification of citizenship is required to obtain the

driver's license, an adoption decree or evidence of U.S. military record.

A survey conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation for the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities found that nearly 11 million native-born adults in the United States, or 5.7 percent of the native-born population, do not have a birth certificate or passport, the two primary documents for verifying citizenship (Ross & Orris, 2008). The survey also found that certain demographic groups were more likely to lack these documents and thus would be disproportionately impacted by new requirements to document citizenship.

The groups include the following:

- People without a high school diploma (9.2 percent lack required documents)
- Rural residents (9.1 percent lack required documents)
- African Americans (8.9 percent lack required documents)
- Households with incomes below \$25,000 (8.1 percent lack required documents)
- Elderly (7.4 percent lack required documents)

The increased documentary requirements reinforce the contractual approach to citizenship, whereby citizens may take up entitlements only after performing requisite duties, in this case the task of managing one's identity through official documents. It is not surprising that people who are already socially and economically disadvantaged are less likely to have identity documents to verify their citizenship. Although the DRA allowed current beneficiaries a "reasonable opportunity" period to obtain benefits, the challenges of locating documents in a timely manner result in a delay in receiving services, if not loss of Medicaid benefits altogether.

Loss of Benefits by Race, Class, and Age

A study conducted by the United States Government Accountability Office found that 22 of 44 states reported declines in Medicaid enrollment due to the requirement to

document citizenship, a majority of whom were attributed to the delay or loss of benefits to U.S. citizens (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007). Though additional research is needed to explore the causes of state variation, analysis of reports from internal state audits and cross-state analysis illustrate that citizenship requirements for Medicaid most severely impacted non-Hispanic white and African-American children. A report by the Commonwealth Fund also found that enrollment among Alaska Native children declined by more than ten percent in the six months following DRA implementation (Summer, 2009). Though all of these Native children are U.S. citizens, the need to present original documents, often times through mail, increased costs and made it harder for applicants and staff to complete eligibility screening in a timely manner.

Declines in enrollment among children were particularly dramatic in Virginia and Kansas, with drops of 11,000 in Virginia and 14,000 in Kansas, as a result of new requirements. Up to 4,000 cases of adults and children were dropped in Kansas solely because they were unable to provide documentation, while the remaining 10,000 were waiting for their cases to be processed due to the backlog created by the new rules (Nielsen & Allison, 2006). In both Kansas and Virginia only one immigrant in each state was identified as ineligible for public benefits through the new screening process (Solomon & Orris, 2007).

Comparative policy analysis conducted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities suggests that Hispanic citizens may be less affected by the new regulations due to historic and ongoing racial profiling that Hispanic families experience and their heightened political consciousness of state surveillance. Hispanic families are often concerned that their identities may be questioned and thus are more likely to maintain their vital records in order to prove citizenship.

According to a study conducted in Colorado, of the top seven factors most frequently identified as barriers to Medicaid enrollment since the implementation of the DRA, five were directly related to new requirements to document citizenship (Colorado Health Institute, 2006): (1) Getting birth certificates from out of state (95%); (2) Not being able to get documents soon enough (85%); (3) Not having money to pay for

documents (79%); (4) Getting birth certificates for children who do not reside with both parents (72%); and (5) Taking time off work to obtain documents (68%).

The disproportionate impact of increasing documentation requirements on segments of the population requires further attention. However, several demographic factors that characterize individuals who turn to Medicaid—low-income, children in single-parent households, children in foster care—are factors that likely decrease ability for an individual or their caregivers to verify citizenship.

The Cost of Localizing Citizenship Identity Management

Despite being promoted as a cost containment strategy, the DRA requirements to document citizenship and identity dramatically increased costs for several states in the first years of implementation. The costs associated with verifying citizenship identity further burdened states, and in some cases resulted in twice the estimated expenditures for Medicaid for eligibility screening alone. A survey conducted by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Underinsured found that two-thirds of states experienced an increase in processing times for Medicaid applications and renewals, from 25% to double the time it previously took to process applicants (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2006b).

The added processing time contributed to an increase in administrative costs, reported by forty-five states. Some states, like Arizona, allocated extra funds to support the implementation of new citizenship documentation requirements. However, despite these resources (\$10.4 million in 2006), less than half of applicants for Arizona's KidsCare program were processed in time (Summer, 2009). In what may be an extreme example, the new identification requirements increased administrative costs in Colorado by an estimated 2 million dollars, calculated by accounting for the additional time needed to complete eligibility screening for each new applicant or renewing recipient (Colorado Center on Law & Policy, 2007). The Colorado Center on Law & Policy found that Colorado would need 2.8 million in additional administrative dollars to keep an estimated 200 people off the Medicaid rolls—170 of whom are children. In this equation, withholding benefits would save Colorado \$170,000,

while the added costs of eligibility screening would generate a 2.6 million dollar deficit for the state.

In addition to federal efforts to contain costs through the DRA, states across the U.S. have implemented Medicaid cost containment measures which succeeded in disenrollment of children, many of whom could not afford to move into a private insurance plan. The reduction in Medicaid cases has indirectly increased overall health care expenditures due to costs associated with providing health care to large numbers of uninsured. The added costs of treating uninsured children result when care is shifted to more expensive emergency department settings and hospital stays increase for those who delayed treatment (Rimsza, Butler, & Johnson, 2007).

New Strategies to Verify Citizenship with 2009 SCHIP Reauthorization

The shifting political landscape in the U.S. marked by the 2009 election of President Barack Obama and an overwhelming Democratic majority in the U.S. Congress indicate the potential for new direction in welfare and immigration policy. However, it remains unclear if new leadership will result in changes in how social rights are allocated to citizen and non-citizen subjects. In January 2009, Congress passed the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) legislation that removed the five-year bar for immigrant children. While the extension of benefits for up to 11 million immigrant children in low-income families is a tremendous policy shift, the legislation retained citizenship documentation requirements, albeit with new mechanisms that include matching an individual's name with state records for social security numbers. The SCHIP bill suggests that the policy debate around inclusion of immigrants in access to health care benefits continues to wrestle with efforts to shore up the boundary of who can claim social rights through citizenship.

Discussion

This study of Medicaid delivery illustrates how devolutionary trends in welfare and immigration policy converge to narrow the scope of who can benefit from social assistance

programs, further magnifying class, gender and racial inequalities (Meyer, 1994). Though legislators' tough stance on immigrants taps into popular anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States, I argue that the consequences of such scrutiny is shared by all welfare recipients whose citizenship status is added to the state's mechanisms to regulate the poor.

Since 1996, the U.S. has restricted recent immigrants' access to public benefits as part of a broader strategy to curtail spending on welfare. Trends in devolution which started in the 1980s have revisioned the welfare state and the rights and responsibilities conferred to citizen and non-citizen subjects. Devolution of welfare from federal to state government coupled with the localization of immigration enforcement has resulted in increased responsibilities for state employees, including welfare workers, to regulate immigrants and citizens. Furthermore, requirements to verifying citizenship through identity documents shift the focus from who is eligible for public assistance based on financial need to who has the capacity to prove they are citizens during times of financial need. This supports Munger's (2003) discussion of the contractual approach to citizenship, as these regulatory practices reinforce norms of the nuclear family and productive worker. Citizens who are least likely to fulfill documentation requirements for Medicaid are most often children in low-income single-parent or non-parent custodial homes.

Considering the large percentage of U.S. children, both immigrant and native born, who fall into this category, the impact of citizenship documentation requirements fall heavily on families who already face hardships associated with poverty. Ironically, immigrants from Latin American countries, who are the most visible targets of anti-immigrant public policy, are more likely to maintain current identity documents for their citizen children and are thus more likely to fulfill the new requirements for Medicaid. Nonetheless, given the stated intent of the DRA citizenship documentation requirements to weed out unlawful immigrants from using public benefits, this legislation sends a message to non-citizens that they are undeserving of public assistance, while also marginalizing citizens who seek health care from the state.

Devolution of immigration policy has fostered diverse

responses among local and state governments in how they receive and regulate immigrants. In some cases, cities and states have created sanctuaries within their jurisdictions by passing laws that are inclusive of immigrant populations (e.g. non-cooperation agreements between local law enforcement and immigration officials). In contrast, states like Oklahoma and Arizona have passed stringent laws that penalize both immigrants and U.S. citizens who may engage in business with or provide services to undocumented immigrants. The exodus of Latino families from Oklahoma following the passage of HB 1804 in 2007 demonstrates that restrictions on immigrant populations can have far-reaching repercussions on a state's social and economic integrity. An estimated 25,000 Latinos, about 30% of the total Latino population in Oklahoma, moved out of the state in months prior to and following the law's enactment (Associated Press, 2008).

The Retrenchment of Social Rights in a Global Economy

The sum effect of the restructuring of citizenship contributes to the dismantling of social rights associated with the Keynesian welfare state by increasing barriers for citizens to prove their eligibility for Medicaid. Efforts to erode the Keynesian welfare state reflect the continued dominance of neoliberal principles and pressures on nation-states to privatize resources for the global market. Neoliberal principles have also restructured the regulation of immigrants under pressure from the global economy. While a growing number of migrants are recruited for their labor—through legal channels like temporary work programs or as undocumented workers—the regulation of internal borders serves to exclude migrants from social, political and economic rights. Meanwhile, the regulatory practices designed to prohibit immigrants' access to social rights serve the larger goal of contracting expenditures on the welfare state as both citizens and immigrants are removed from welfare caseloads.

Most scholarship has focused on the adverse effects of anti-immigrant legislation on immigrants, with evidence of the "chilling effect" these reforms have on immigrants who are eligible, but are either fearful or discouraged from seeking public benefits. Immigrant rights activists and scholars have

similarly documented how racial profiling of undocumented immigrants for both welfare fraud and national security has disrupted the lives of legal immigrants. This paper potentially broadens the analysis of who is impacted by restrictive immigration policies, by showing how U.S. citizens have been disenfranchised under the banner of keeping undeserving 'illegal immigrants' off of welfare. Although immigrant rights claims are potentially overshadowed by work that highlights the ways citizens are detrimentally impacted by anti-immigrant legislation, much of the research on the DRA citizenship requirements has failed to acknowledge a connection between efforts to restrict social rights for immigrants with repercussions on citizen's access to public assistance. Legislators and their public supporters may be less inclined to target immigrants through increasing documentary standards, if the costs to citizens are more visible.

Impact on Social Work and Social Service Delivery

Citizenship documentation requirements directly impact the role social workers and other street-level bureaucrats perform in scrutinizing and thus disciplining welfare users. The mission of social work, to provide assistance and advocate for marginalized populations, is potentially undermined when social workers must confirm citizenship in order to justify whether individual applicants deserve state support in the first place. As a profession, social workers are positioned to advocate for the human rights of all people to access safety and support, including basic health and social services. There is a need for social workers and social service organizations to address, through training and advocacy, how mechanisms to manage identity information, often in compliance with funders' requirements, undermine their capacity to deliver needed services. Some social service organizations have employed "don't ask, don't tell" policies which state that service providers will not require service users to disclose immigration status while assuring that service providers will not report immigration status to authorities. Further development of organizational policies that delink immigration status from service delivery are needed to protect spaces where people can seek support and safety, without fear of deportation or exclusion based on

their designation in the U.S. immigration system.

Future research on citizenship and social rights is needed to examine how neoliberal restructuring, which has contributed to the devolution of welfare and immigration policy, potentially disenfranchises both immigrants and citizens. Comparative analysis among states in the U.S. is needed to understand differences among states, county and municipal governments and how state and local policies mitigate or reinforce the retrenchment of social rights from the Federal government. At the same time, cross-national analysis among major receiving immigrant nations would identify how different nations are allocating social rights to the growing numbers of immigrants who are recruited for their labor, but remain excluded from full participation in society, including access to the welfare state.

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Why You Should Care About the Threatened Middle Class

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In the last two decades, the income and security of the individual middle class worker has declined and the gap between the middle class and the wealthy has widened. We explain how this is bad for democracy, the economy, and the aggregate health of the nation. We examine the governmental policies and interventions that increased the middle class following the depression and maintained its vigor through the post-World War II period. The impetus for these changes in governmental policies in the 1930s was to end the Great Depression. We pose the question of whether a nation can recover from a depression without invigorating the middle class. We conclude that in order to recover from the current economic and financial crisis, the middle class must be strengthened.

Key words: middle class, depression, economy, social justice, New Deal

Since the early 1970s, income distribution in America has become much less equitable (Kawachi & Kennedy, 2002; Krugman, 2007; Piketty & Saez, 2003; Reich, 2007). Both the bottom quintile and the middle quintile of earners have decreased in their share of the nation's aggregated earned income. For the middle class, the proportion of earned income dropped

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from a 1967 figure of 17.3% to a figure of 14.6% in 2005. For the bottom quintile, the proportion dropped from 4.0% in 1967 to 3.4% in 2005. Who gained? The top quintile rose from 43.8% in 1967 to 50.4% in 2005. Table 1 presents the trends in tabular form, where it is clear that the middle quintile shows the steepest decline.

Table 1: Distribution (in percentages) of all earned income across various quintiles: 1967 to 2005

Income Quintiles	1967	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Lowest	4.0	4.1	4.4	4.3	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.4
Second	10.8	10.8	10.5	10.3	9.7	9.6	9.1	8.9	8.6
Middle	17.3	17.4	17.1	16.9	16.3	15.9	15.2	14.8	14.6
Fourth	24.2	24.5	24.8	24.9	24.6	24.0	23.3	23.0	23.0
Highest	43.8	43.3	43.2	43.7	45.3	46.6	48.7	49.8	50.4

Notes: 2005 average income: \$10,655 for lowest quintile, \$27,357 for second, \$46,301 for middle, \$72,825 for fourth, and \$159,583 for highest.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2005). *Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2006 Annual Social and Economic Supplements*

The reality facing the middle class may be clearer looking at the average income over time (using adjusted dollars). The post-World War II period in America was a prosperous time for the average earner. After World War II, the typical family income doubled from \$22,000 in today's prices to \$44,000 (Krugman, 2007, p. 55). While household income has risen from 1973 to 2007, more households were represented by two working adults (Palley, 1998, p. 63; Pew Research Center, 2008; Sawhill & Morton, 2007). From 1974 to 2004, for males in their 30s, individual median income declined by 12% (Sawhill & Morton, 2007). From 2000 to 2004, the incomes of college graduates declined by 5% (Krugman, 2006). From 2000 to 2007, wages for full-time, employed men were stagnant and middle class household incomes were lower by \$300 in 2007 adjusted dollars (Bernstein, 2008; Pew Research Center, 2008).

While income is a measure of economic prosperity, wealth from property or stocks can also be examined in order to determine how middle class America is doing. The figures here mirror the disparities seen in income levels. From the 1970s to 2007, the nation's richest 1% have more than doubled their

share of the nation's wealth (Reich, 2007, p. 114). The richest 1% owns 39% of the nation's total assets, including real estate (Wolff, 1998). The top 1% own 49.5% of all stocks while the top 10% own 83.6% of stocks (Palley, 1998, p. 58). In terms of all investments (stocks, bonds, trusts, business equity, three quarters of home real estate values) the top 10% owns 90% (Wolff, 1998).

In comparing the United States to other Western countries, America exhibits a much less equitable distribution of wealth than other countries (Brandolini & Smeeding, 2007; U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). This is noted on two indices of income distribution: the Gini index and the Decile Ratio. (Specific numbers are presented in Table 2.) Moreover, considering the probability of moving out of poverty in any given year, chances are lower in American than in other Western countries (Kawachi & Kennedy, 2002, p. 166) and the chances of attaining a higher economic standing than one's parents is lower in the United States than in Denmark, Norway, Finland, Canada, Sweden, Germany, and France (Corak, 2006).

Table 2: Measures of Income Inequality: The U.S. compared to Selected Industrial Countries

Country	Gini Index 2004	Decile Ratio 2000
United States	0.47	5.7
United Kingdom	0.36	4.6
Australia	0.35	4.2
France	0.33	3.4
Germany	0.28	3.4
Sweden	0.25	3.0
Japan	0.25	4.2
Denmark	0.25	2.8

Higher numbers suggest more inequality

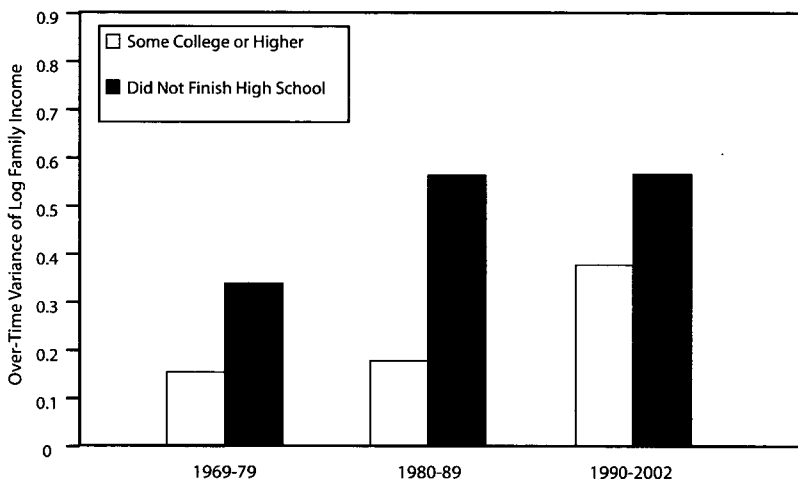
Source for Gini Index: United Nations Human Development Report, 2004;

Source for Decile Ratio: Brandolini & Smeeding, 2007, p. 30

Hacker (2006, 2007) has examined the transfer of risk in the society to the average American over the last two decades. Hacker calls this transfer "the great American risk shift." The

unemployment rate is increasing, while household debt has increased (Sullivan, Warren, & Westbrook, 2006). The probability of experiencing a decline in income level (called economic instability) increased between 1969 and 2002 for both those without a college degree and those with college educations (Sullivan, Warren, & Westbrook, 2000, p. 117). In fact, the probability of experiencing a 50% drop in income was 7% in 1970 and rose to 17% in 2002 (Hacker, 2007). Figure 1 represents this pattern.

Figure 1. Income Instability Increased at Both High and Low Educational Levels



Note: These statistics are detailed in Hacker, *The Great Risk Shift*, supra note 3, at 27-30. The calculations are based on the University of Michigan's Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) and Cornell University's Cross-National Equivalent File (CNEF).

Retirement futures are more insecure as well. In 1980, 83% of firms offered pensions with fixed benefits for life. By 2003, only one third of Americans had guaranteed pensions and more had 401Ks (Hacker, 2007). 401Ks are, of course, very risky because their value fluctuates with the stock market. Ghilarducci (2008) estimates that 50% of retirees will run short of their financial needs in the future, ending up with less than 70% of their pre-retirement income upon retirement.

Manifestations of a Stressed Middle Class

Between 1970 and 2001, bankruptcies quintupled, mortgage foreclosures tripled, and car repossessions doubled (Warren & Tyagi, 2003 p. 78-80). Most people filing for bankruptcy are middle class: they are well educated, own their own homes, and have good jobs. Persons with children are more likely to file for bankruptcy than are households without children. For 90% of those households with children who file for bankruptcy the reasons fall into three categories: job loss, medical expenses, and divorce. Of course, these disasters are more likely today than in the 1950s and 1960s. Even before the recent financial meltdown of 2008, involuntary layoffs had increased by 28% since 1970 (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 82). Displaced workers are unlikely to find employment at similar pay (Hacker, 2007). The cost of medical care has escalated. Fewer Americans carry health insurance. Indeed, one-third of non-elderly adults have periods during which they have no medical insurance (Hacker, 2007). Financial pressures place a burden on marriages in a country with an already high divorce rate.

The absence of savings by the American public and the increase in indebtedness of those who are middle class have led to the common assumption that the middle class is spending on luxuries they cannot afford. Fortunately, the government has kept statistics on the spending patterns of American consumers since the 1970s. Contrary to what might be believed, spending on most categories has declined over the last two decades. Americans spend 21% less on clothing, 22% less on food, and 44% less on major appliances than they did in the early 1970s. What has increased? Health insurance costs have escalated. With two parents in the workforce, child care is a new expense, as is the necessity of a second car. (Seventy-five percent of three- and four-year-olds attended preschool in 2001 compared to just four percent in 1960.) Moreover, the cost of housing has escalated 26% between 1984 and 2001. Are homes more luxurious today? In fact, 6 out of 10 of families live in older homes; however, the size of new homes has increased by 40% over the last twenty years (Warren & Tyagi, 2003). According to Warren and Tyagi (2003), the major factor driving the increase in the cost of housing is the competition to move into good school districts, although Shiller (2008) argues that

cheap interest rates also contributed to inflated housing prices. Comparing houses of similar size and luxury, a five percent jump in standardized test scores of children in one school district versus another adds \$4,000 to the cost of the house. School quality is the single most important factor in determining the price of a house (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, pp. 15-54). Thus, contrary to the perception that today's Americans suffer from some form of impaired impulse control (see Whybrow, 2005), the long-term goal of raising children who can become prosperous adults is driving America's current consumption.

As the housing bubble grew, along with the rush to buy housing in better school districts, home equity loans and mortgages became much easier to obtain. In 1980, Congress passed the Depository Institutions and Monetary Control Act and then, in 1982, the Alternative Mortgage Transaction Parity Act. This legislation effectively deregulated bank interest rates, allowing higher interest rates from borrowers and permitting higher interest rates to depositors (lenders) (Mansfield, 2000). In the past, down-payments of 20% were required when buying a new home (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, pp. 127-129). In the environment leading up to the collapse of the housing bubble in 2008, down payments were sometimes not required at all. All this led to higher mortgage payments, so the proportion of monthly earnings going to mortgages increased. A new term has been created for those devoting in excess of 40% of monthly income to housing: house poor (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 133). Over the past twenty years the number of middle class households that are "house poor" quadrupled, from 2.8% in 1975 to 13.5% in 2001 (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 231).

Advocates for the poor have sometimes lobbied for easier access to mortgages, in part by requesting smaller down payments and even an absence of down payments. Are borrowers being helped by an absence of down payments? Without a down payment, borrowers are paying higher costs in interest rates, higher points and fees, and are required to carry mandatory credit insurance (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 133). Effectively, they pay more. Tellingly, the percentage of household disposable income spent on debt service—principally mortgage, auto loan, and credit card debt had risen from just over 10% in 1983 to 14.5% in 2006 (Phillips, 2007, p. 99). The median

debt-to-annual-income ratio for middle-income adults increased from 0.45 in 1983 to 1.19 in 2004. The median debt-to-asset ratio of middle income adults increased from 0.25 in 1983 to 0.40 in 2004 (Pew Research Center, 2008).

What were banks getting out of deregulation? In the past, the cap on interest rates meant that banks could not offset increased risk with higher profitability attributable to higher interest rates. Banks were reluctant to provide loans that could not be repaid. With deregulation, the allure of high profits (from high interest rates on the loan) lured the banking industry into riskier practices. Before the mass crisis in the banking industry in the fall of 2008, while loan defaults soared, banking profits increased even faster (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 129). Prior to the recent collapse of the housing market, houses were appreciating in value over time. Financial institutions stood to realize an even bigger profit if a foreclosure ensued. Foreclosed properties could be resold at a higher price than the amount of the foreclosed loan (Engel & McCoy, 2002; Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 136). Up until the advent of massive foreclosures and the collapse of housing prices, banks had everything to gain by offering big, risky loans.

The shift in how the middle class spends its money has effectively made life more risky. A higher proportion of income is going to fixed monthly payments: mortgage, insurance, daycare, car payments (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 8). Lower proportions of the pay check are going to categories such as food, clothing, and movies, areas where there is flexibility (that is, room to conserve). If a financial disaster occurs (job loss, divorce, unforeseen health problems), there are limits to how much families can cut back. Often people fall into the trap of using their credit cards to make ends meet at the end of the pay period when the money runs out (Ellis, 1998; Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 113). (In the last 20 years, savings declined from 11% to negative 1 percent. Credit card debt increased from 4% to 12% of income [Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 112].) When families cannot make the augmenting payments on the credit cards, they frequently resort to taking out a home equity loan to pay off the credit card debt (Barr, 2007; Sullivan et al., 2006, p. 251; Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 131). However, the new loan adds its own burden of interest payments, so many are forced to file

for bankruptcy. At the time of bankruptcy filing, the average family owed 150% of an entire year's income in non-mortgage debt (Warren & Tyagi, 2003, p. 78).

What changes have occurred making all this debt possible? Similar to the expansion of credit in the home equity market, the credit card industry was deregulated and the rules have changed (Ellis, 1998). In 1978, the Supreme Court (in *Marquette National Bank of Minneapolis v. First of Omaha Service Corporation*) ruled that the laws in the state where the credit card company is incorporated prevail over the laws in the state where the debtor resides. Not surprisingly, credit card companies are located in states (South Dakota and Delaware) that do not have usury laws. Effectively, usury laws no longer exist. Credit card companies can raise the interest rates on the amount already borrowed when an individual loses a good credit rating, or when the card company summarily decides to lower the maximum amount that can be borrowed and the debtor is above the new limit. When a person fails to pay the minimum payment on a card, the interest rates (on what is already owed) increase and penalty fees are added. The principal as well as the interest on the debt augments. Monthly minimum payment amounts go up (Fanning & Rummel, 2004).

The real incomes of the middle class have declined over the last twenty years. Their share of America's wealth has declined. Expenses have escalated. With two adults working, a second car usually is a necessity. The cost of borrowing money has increased. With both adults now participating in the workforce, the insurance policy of being able to add a second breadwinner should disaster occur has been lost (Warren & Tyagi, 2003). The middle class is far less secure.

Why Is A Strong Middle Class Important?

"When citizens of different countries have been polled about attitudes toward income inequality, Americans come out near the bottom in their dislike of wide disparities" (Kawachi & Kennedy, 2002, p. 25). In fact, only 28% of Americans polled in a World Values survey responded favorably to policies to reduce inequalities versus 65% in the United Kingdom and 80% in Italy (Kawachi & Kennedy, 2002). Kawachi and Kennedy

(2002) point out that “Strikingly, even the poor in America are less likely to endorse redistributive or egalitarian sentiments than low-income citizens elsewhere” (p. 25). Americans seem to have bought the assumption that income disparity is an inevitable outcome of differentials in productivity that accrue from differences in skills and innate ability (Galbraith, 2008). They make this assumption oblivious to the fact that during the last 20 years increases in wages have failed to keep up with increases in worker productivity (Dew-Becker & Gordon, 2006; Krugman, 2007; Sawhill & Morton, 2007).

A Strong Middle Class Is Required for a Democracy

Aristotle was perhaps the first to recognize that government by the middle class produced the best results. The poor would be captured by a demagogue who would bring tyranny for the promise of income redistribution. The rich would be invested in maintaining their position of privilege. Only the middle class could govern rationally. Aristotle advocated policies that would: (a) generate and maintain a prosperous middle class; (b) provide careers, property, and education for the poor to absorb them into the middle class; and (c) encourage the rich to contribute a portion of their wealth to careers for the poor and to civic projects for the society as a whole. Aristotle’s motivation to maintain a strong middle class emanated from his belief that only middle class governance could provide harmony and stability and avert frequent revolutions and blood letting (Glassman, 1995).

Indeed, Aristotle’s fears are mirrored in the current loss of civility and bipartisanship since the 1950s and 1960s when more people had attained economic security (Krugman, 2007). Moreover, using country as the unit of analysis finds that those countries with high levels of inequality exhibit high levels of instability of government (Perotti, 1996).

Historical analysis reveals that the emergence of a middle class brought about a shift from governance by the king to governance by the people. Barrington Moore’s (1966) classic work on development of modern forms of governments finds that evolution from a feudal society structure was occasioned by the emergence of a middle class in cities. As these middle class individuals grew in numbers, they demanded more

representation in assemblies and more constitutional rights. Others have also recognized that during the middle ages, nascent democratic movements were contingent upon a middle class whose wealth emanated from commerce (Glassman, 1995, p. 49, p. 84; North & Thomas, 1973).

While a strong middle class seems to be necessary for a democracy, there are examples of countries with strong middle classes where democratic governance is lacking. Singapore has a large middle class, has business transactions governed by rule of law and courts, but does not elect its leaders. The former Soviet Union is another country with an educated middle class in which leaders were not fairly and democratically elected (Glassman, 1995). Many recognize that Hitler's Germany was a case of the middle class choosing fascism over democracy. Times of uncertainty (either economic recessions or external military threats) seem to increase the possibility that the middle class will move toward fascism (Moore, 1966). We are not claiming that a strong middle class guarantees a democracy, but rather, that democracy will not develop without a middle class.

Political scientists Acemoglu and Robinson (2005) suggest that the presence of a strong middle class is a prerequisite for stable democracy. In their analysis, Acemoglu and Robinson take into consideration the costs to the rich of suppressing a poor majority. They offer detailed calculations to show that when the majority has few, or limited, resources undergirding its demands, the costs of oppression are reduced for the rich. However, a strong middle class has confidence, a sense of entitlement, and resources. (Indeed, all revolutions have been led by the middle-class [Acemoglu & Robinson, 2005, p. 39].) Given a strong middle class, it becomes too costly for would-be oppressors to mount the mechanisms of subjugation. Some form of broad-based participation in decision making becomes a more pragmatic solution. Lipset (1981) reaches similar conclusions.

For the founding Fathers, an equitable distribution of wealth and property was seen as crucial to sustaining a democratic republic (Huston, 1998). On visits to Europe, Ben Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were shocked by the disparities in wealth they observed between the aristocracy and

common people (Gates & Collins, 2002). After visiting Ireland & Scotland, Ben Franklin wrote:

In these countries a small part of the society are landlords, great Noblemen and Gentlemen, extreamly (*sic*) opulent, living in the highest affluence and magnificence: The bulk of people Tenants, extreamly (*sic*) poor, living in the most sordid Wretchedness in dirty hovels of mud and straw, and cloathed (*sic*) only in rags. (Willcox, 1975, p. 7)

Later in this same letter Franklin attributed the enormous inequality he observed in Europe to the aristocratic form of government: "And the effect of this kind of Civil Society seems only to be, the depressing multitudes below the Savage State that a few may be rais'd (*sic*) above it" (Willcox, 1975, p. 7).

John Adams agreed with the 17th century political philosopher James Harrington, who believed that power in society was determined by those who owned property (Adams, 1854). According to John Adams:

...the balance of power in society, accompanies the balance of property in land. The only possible way, then, of preserving the balance of power on the side of equal liberty and public virtue, is to make the acquisition of land easy to every member of society; to make a division of the land into small quantities, so that the multitude may be possessed of landed estates. If the multitude is possessed of the balance of real estate, the multitude will have the balance of power, and in that case the multitude will take care of the liberty, virtue, and interest of the multitude, in all acts of government. (Adams, 1854, pp. 376-377)

In agrarian Colonial America wealth was largely determined by ownership of land.

Of course, one strong reason for opposing concentrated wealth is the undue influence afforded to the rich. Woodrow Wilson stated in 1913 (p. 286), "If there are men in this country big enough to own the government of the United States, they are going to own it." Studies of small communities, such as the classic Middletown study (Lynd & Lynd, 1937), bear out that

those with more resources can buy advertising and manipulate what the public hears. Concomitant with the concentration of wealth in the U.S., we have witnessed the rise of lobbying in Congress and growing concerns over corruption. Campaign contributions *do* buy access to legislators (Stratmann, 2005). Congressmen who succeed in passing legislation for particular industries are rewarded, after leaving office, with high salary jobs as spokespersons for the industries. Financial resources *do* influence election results (Repetti, 2001). Reich (2007, p. 166) argues that super-capitalism (referring to the current state of America with the rich capturing a greater proportion of aggregate income) has diverted the attention of Congress from guarding and promoting the interests of citizens to regulating disputes between corporate interests. In the wars between the powerful, the interests of citizens have been forgotten. For example, in 1963, Congress passed six bills out of ten to reduce economic inequality; again in 1979, it passed four bills out of seven to that same end; whereas in 1991, it passed only two out of seven aimed at reducing inequality.

Beyond the threat to good government posed by the concentration of wealth is the issue of equality of opportunity. The founding fathers were concerned with having a society of equal opportunity. However, Krugman (2007, p. 249) reflects, "A society with highly unequal results is, more or less inevitably, a society with highly unequal opportunity, too." The wealthy will be better able to invest in the education of their children. Their children have more time to devote to their education. A superior education implies that the children of the wealthy will emerge with better skills. Of course, societal investment in public schools and libraries could offset some of the factors militating against equality of opportunity. However, only through clearly progressive taxing, that is, a further shift of the tax burden onto the wealthy, with less allowance for ingenious opting out of taxation, will there be sufficient revenue to support these institutions.

Inequality is Bad for the Health of Persons at All Levels of Income

The Whitehall studies have shown us that with each decrease in level of socioeconomic status, various indicators (mortality, morbidity, risk for heart disease) mark a

deterioration in health (Marmot, 2004; Salpolsky, 2005). Childhood economic status also affects adult health. Both the risk of infectious disease and heart disease is higher in persons whose parents had low incomes when they were growing up, regardless of adult socioeconomic status (SES) (Cohen, Doyle, Turner, Alper, & Skoner, 2003; Kivirmäki et al., 2004; Lehman, Taylor, Kiefe, & Seeman, 2005). The findings of the SES gradient in health are found in nations with universal health care, so unequal access is not a likely explanation. Moreover, the findings hold after controlling for diet, exercise, and smoking (Lantz et al., 1998; Steptoe & Marmot, 2002, p. 44).

What is most surprising in the health research is the comparisons of countries with narrow gaps between the top earners and the bottom (e.g., Greece and Japan) to countries with wide disparities (e.g., the United States). At all levels of income, the health status of persons from the more egalitarian countries is better (Babones, 2008; Marmot, 2004, p. 65; Wilkinson, 2005, pp. 100-143). According to Wilkinson (1992, p. 49) the degree of income inequality in a society explains about three quarters of the variation in life expectancy across countries; per capita Gross National Product explains about 10% of the variance. Studies in which states are the unit of an analysis have produced similar findings (Kaplan, Pamuk, Lynch, Cohen, & Balfour, 1996; Kennedy, Kawachi, & Prothrow-Stith, 1996) as has a study in which the unit of analysis was U.S. metropolitan areas (Lynch et al., 1998). However, at the neighborhood level, poor individuals usually enjoy better health in a mixed income neighborhood than in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty (Stafford & Marmot, 2003). Also, the association between regional income inequality and life expectancy does not hold up in Canada, where across provinces there is not much variation in income distribution (Ross & Wolfson, 1999).

Researchers have yet to identify the mechanisms through which large income disparities impact the health of all persons in the society. However, particular variables such as social capital (measuring whether people view others as trustworthy and participate in voluntary organizations) have been shown to impact health (Kawachi & Kennedy, 2002). Comparing countries with narrower gaps between the top earners and the

bottom finds that the citizens of countries with narrower gaps are more trusting of others and report higher levels of satisfaction (Ellison, 1999; Kawachi & Kennedy, 2002, pp. 102, 110). Essentially, social cohesion is more likely to develop among individuals who are of similar social status. Perhaps the greater social cohesion affords health benefits for everyone.

A Strong Middle Class is Required for a Market Economy with High Productivity and Growth

A large middle class is vital to a capitalist economy because the middle class spends on consumer goods. The middle class is the market. Economists have long known that middle class individuals spend proportionately more of their income (have a marginal propensity to consume), whereas wealthy individuals have a marginal propensity to save (Mankiw, 2003, p. 54). Henry Ford recognized this fundamental truth when he raised the wages of the workers so that they could afford to buy the automobiles they were mass producing. Presently, between 62-70% of current Gross Domestic Product (defined as the money that changes hands in America) is constituted of consumer spending (Krugman & Obstfeld, 2006, p. 283; Mankiw, 2003, p. 27). Without the expectation of selling the goods that get produced, no one will build a factory or employ workers. If consumer spending declines, there is no incentive to invest in new companies and industries. Job creation stagnates.

The emphasis on consumer demand as the impetus for economic growth is referred to as "demand led growth theory." "Supply side" theory emphasizes investment's role in economic growth. It is true that there must be some money to invest. To generate investment dollars, some of the difference between the selling price of a product and the cost of production must go into investment (as opposed to workers' wages). Those individuals in the society with the highest marginal propensity to save (the wealthy) must be left with some after-tax dollars to invest. But, will those with excess money use their savings to increase factory resources and/or open new businesses and create new jobs, without an expectation that a sufficient number of consumers will be able to buy their products?

During the Reagan years in the 1980s, when there was

much deregulation of financial institutions, we witnessed alternatives for the use of investment dollars beyond creating new companies and new jobs. In the era of "hostile takeovers and leveraged buyouts," persons with money to invest bought up companies, closed sectors of the company where unionized workers had negotiated high-wage contracts, and effectively eliminated many jobs (Uchitelle, 2007). Profits can be used to invest in overseas production, as well as being used to buy up company stocks to raise stock values (Madrack, 2007). Managers of hedge funds specialize in making money through speculation. The realization that companies can use profits in other ways, besides buying new equipment that could enhance production and employ more people, may explain a recent paradox. Between 2001 and 2006, profits had risen to approximately 15% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but capital investment fell as a share of GDP by 2 percentage points from the high in 1999 (Madrack, 2007, p. 3). Until the recent downturn, the availability of funds for investment was not a problem. Ira Glass (2008) reports that since 2002, investment funds have doubled. The frenzy to invest prompted the sub-prime housing loans which ended in the recent banking crisis.

So when will investment dollars be used to create new companies? Adam Smith, who recognized that when goods (e.g., pins) are mass produced, unit prices decline owing to an economy of scale, also cautioned, "the benefits of such enhanced potential productivity are only realized if the market is large enough to absorb the new supply of pins" (Smith, 1776/1936). It is well to remember that when the causes of devastating African diseases are discovered, drug companies are not goaded into finding a cure, because there is no market (Sattaur, 1990). Drug companies fail to develop drugs for malaria, which infects the third world, because without consumers who can pay, there is no incentive (Thurow, 2003, p. 179). James Watt, an investor in the mass production of the steam engine, is quoted as saying, "it is not worth my while to manufacture in three countries only; but I can find it very worthwhile to make it for the whole world" (Mokyr, 1992, p. 245). Moreover, economists have credited the growth of the American economy to America's enormous, continent-wide population (Madrack, 2007, p. 12), whereas others credit the industrial revolution to the market

expansion occasioned by world trade (Cameron & Neal, 2003). Rather than technological innovations leading to growth in the world economy, Madrick (2002, pp. 2-12) concludes that an increase in world markets stimulated the growth in the world economy of modern times.

If demand is required for investment and high wages increase demand, then localities with higher wages should realize more economic growth. Researchers have examined how increases in worker wages covary with economic growth. Naastepad and Strom (2006-2007) analyzed data for eight economies (France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, Britain, and the U.S.) for two periods: 1960-1980 and 1980-2001. They found that when wages were high, there was less unemployment and a greater rise in GDP. Alternatively, when wages declined, although corporate profits increased, these periods were associated with greater unemployment and with less growth in a country's GDP.

There are also data on the relationship between the level of income inequality (which will increase with lower wages) and economic growth. Comparisons of countries differing on the degree of equality of income distribution have concluded that there is an inverse correlation between inequality and economic growth (Aghion, Caroli, & García-Peñalosa, 1999; Alesina & Rodrick, 1994; Persson, & Tabellini, 1994), although Persson and Tabellini (1994) found that the inverse relationship between high inequality and economic growth was limited to democracies. Furthermore, in the Persson and Tabellini data, a larger middle class was associated with greater investment within a country. Similarly, Repetti (2001) reviewed studies in which economic units were observed over a 25 year period. Repetti concluded that concentration of wealth is associated with less economic growth over the long run, while the correlation is less clear over shorter time intervals (Repetti, 2001).

The Case for Progressive Taxation

Mechanisms are available for ensuring a healthy middle class: higher wages and progressive income taxation. Those who emphasize the supply side of economic growth object to increasing wages and increasing taxes on the wealthy. If

business people have their profits taxed at, for example, 91% (the level during the 1950s) rather than at 35% (the current level), it is argued that they will be less inclined to make investments with their accumulated profits (Krugman, 2007, p. 47). Without new companies and expanded capacity of production, then economies of scale and increased productivity (amount produced by worker and machine) will not be achieved. The data, however, suggest that such fears are groundless.

Data are available allowing examination of the relationship between high taxes and economic growth. During the period in this country when we had the highest taxes on the rich and the top 1% of the economic hierarchy controlled less of the nation's wealth, viz. 1950-1972, we witnessed better economic growth than in other times. The Multifactor productivity for the years 1929-1996 were as follows: 1928-1950, 1.90%; 1950-1964, 2.35%; 1964-1972, 2.07%; 1972-1979, 1.12%; 1979-1988, 0.90%; 1988-1996, 0.67% (Gordon, 1999).

Others have compared countries to determine how taxation relates to a country's level of economic growth. Using country as the unit of analysis, several researchers have found that high tax rates are associated with more, rather than less, economic growth (Lindert, 2004; Perotti, 1996; Slemrod, Gale, & Easterly, 1995), although these authors recognize that the many confounds of level of taxation with other variables (e.g., the amount of GDP in a country which emanates from agricultural production) make it difficult to draw firm conclusions about causation (Slemrod et al., 1995). However, examining their data, Easterly and Rebelo (1993) conclude that Wagner's law is essentially correct. Wagner's law states that government taxes and government spending will increase with increasing wealth of the country.

There are a couple of arguments to be made about the fairness of a progressive tax system. One such argument is called Engel's law (about.com: Economics, 2009), named after the statistician Ernst Engel. Engel's law states that as a consumer's income increases, the proportion of income spent on food declines. More generally, people with low incomes are forced to spend the bulk of their income on essentials just to survive. For the poor, any tax is likely to be a tax on essentials. For the wealthy, the taxes are on discretionary income. There is a

related economics law, the law of marginal utility, which holds that the more one has of a given commodity, the less the owner values any single unit of it (Cameron & Neal, 2003, p. 15). Thus, if fairness means equal discomfort for all under taxation, you would want to take larger amounts of money from the person who possesses more of it.

Finally, it might be well to remember that those who have accumulated wealth in this country have not achieved their wealth exclusively on their own. Government-sponsored research at universities, which fill our academic journals and end up undergirding everything from pharmaceutical patents to new forms of plastic, are often implicated in new developments in the marketplace. There is also our precious heritage of an open society, where news travels with lightning speed, and promotes the expeditious interchanges that characterize our financial marketplace. More generally, our American institutions (including the financial markets themselves, the educational system, our physical infrastructure, civil courts, the patent office, etc.) enable the accumulation of wealth. Thus, the society as a whole has a claim on the return on its investment (Gates & Collins, 2002, pp. 110-135).

Should We be Particularly Worried Now by the Insecure Middle Class?

Economists have argued that the cause of the Great Depression was insufficient consumer demand (Krugman, 1997). Thurow (2003, p. 72) recognizes that the rest of the world relies on America to create demand, that is, to be the big market of spending consumers. Presently, world production capacity exceeds expected consumption by at least one third in almost every industry, suggesting that a deficit in demand is a world problem (Thurow, 2003, p. 248). Palley's book, *Plenty of Nothing*, was written in 1998, prior to the 2008 collapse of the housing market and the country's financial sector. Palley offered four reasons why the present diminution in middle class wages makes us vulnerable to a depression again:

1. As the disproportionately large cohort of baby boomers ages, the bulk of the population will be older. It is established that older people spend

less than younger people. Thus, the aging of the population will contribute to the decline in demand.

2. In the manufacturing sector, the practice of paying over-time hours (as opposed to hiring additional workers) has increased. During a recession, these hours will be easy to cut.
3. The economy has fewer automatic stabilizers than in the past. For example, rather than increasing wages, workers have been compensated with bonuses tied to company profits. When profits decrease in a recession, compensation to workers also decreases.
4. Over the past several decades, Americans have maintained their standard of living by offsetting declining wages with increased borrowing and debt.

Given present levels of indebtedness, another economic downturn with job losses will make it impossible to borrow further. Rather, more Americans will default on loans and go into bankruptcy. The picture is one of a contractionary spiral, "with wage deflation feeding collapse in spending, and collapsing spending feeding further wage deflation" (Palley, 1998, p. 204). Palley's concerns seem particularly cogent now, as we consider falling prices, job layoffs, and falling retail consumption in the last year.

How Stimulating Recovery from the Great Depression Inadvertently Created the Middle Class

We have thus far argued that a strong middle class is required for maintaining democracy, the health of all citizens, and a vibrant economy. We have argued that in the past 20 years, the vitality of the middle class has been vitiated. But, what created the large middle class which remained robust through the 1950 and 1960s? While there was a modest middle class in America prior to the Great Depression, the middle class gained in strength and numbers following the New Deal and World War II. Goldin and Margo (1992) report that wage inequality began to decrease with the passage of the First New Deal legislation in 1933, but the "Great Compression" continued throughout the 1940s. Economists believe that the "Great Compression" was effectively created by governmental policies: high marginal rates of taxation, the wage and price

controls in effect during World War II, and then policies bolstering labor extant during the 1950s (Krugman, 2007; Levy & Temlin, 2007; Murolo & Chitty, 2001; Piven, 2006). These policies were critical components of Roosevelt's "New Deal." Another component of the New Deal, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), was created in 1934. It provided mortgages to middle class Americans and was followed by more loans for returning veterans through the Veterans Administration. The GI Bill educated the masses and created a more productive workforce. All of these policies increased the size and vibrancy of the middle class.

The New Deal was intended to bring recovery from the Great Depression of the 1930s. In fact, the early years of the New Deal did initiate some marginal recovery from stagnation of the Great Depression. Some believe that the New Deal might have brought the nation out of depression; indeed, by August of 1937, unemployment had dropped from a high of 24.9% to 12.3% and production was up to 1929 levels (McElvaine, 1993, p. 297; Shlaes, 2007, p. 267; Smiley, 2002, p. 106). However, in 1937, when taxes were increased in the form of payroll deductions for the newly initiated Social Security System, Roosevelt cut back on governmental spending, and money supply through the Federal Reserve was cut, a second recession occurred (Borosage & Lotke, 2009; Kuttner, 2009; McElvaine, 1993, p. 297). (The next big government stimulus package, World War II, effectively ended unemployment in America.) While the New Deal was initiated to bring an end to unemployment (i.e., end the depression), concomitantly, it also initiated the Great Compression, the narrowing of the gap between the rich and the poor. Could Roosevelt have ended unemployment and ended price deflation without increasing the size and security of the middle class? We do not have a case-study addressing the issue of whether economic recovery is possible without strengthening the economic security of the bulk of Americans.

In responding to the 2008 financial system debacle and recession, the Bush Administration was ready to infuse money into the banking system in order to ensure that American businesses could secure loans to keep their businesses running. While everyone agrees the liquidity is vital, some members of

Congress were unwilling to ensure good wages for workers in the failing auto-industry or to intervene to prevent foreclosures on those who could not make their mortgage payments. Defining recovery from economic depression as restoring price stability and restoring full employment of the factors of production, we suggest that recovery from an economic depression may not be possible without an increase in the economic security of the bulk of the population.

The housing market offers a case in point. Rationales for renegotiating loans to prevent foreclosures extend beyond compassion for the distressed. With the rash of foreclosures, vacant houses have offered a haven for drug dealers and criminals, increasing the cost of law enforcement (Mummolo & Brubaker, 2008). Additionally, given a glut of houses on the market, property values have collapsed, with prices falling by six percent during 2007 (Barr, 2008). Since more foreclosures are anticipated, shoppers for new homes will not buy because they are waiting for prices to fall to their lowest possible level. Consumer demand, necessary for stabilizing the price of homes, is lacking.

Similar problems in the housing market occurred during the Great Depression. The newly created FHA purchased troubled mortgages from banks. The owner was then asked to repay the outstanding amount on the then current value of the home, rather than the amount of the original loan (Barr, 2008; Mansfield, 2000; Seidman & Jakabovics, 2008). Identifying which particular policies re-stabilized the housing market after the depression is difficult; many governmental initiatives were occurring under the New Deal. However, in line with our arguments about why a middle class is required for an economy, we proffer the hypothesis that bringing an end to the current world recession/depression and stabilizing markets will require bolstering the middle class. Interventions to save corporations will not work unless workers' wages are also saved.

Conclusions

Presently we are confronting another worldwide depression as we did in the 1930s (Meyerson, 2009). In 1930, the government instituted the New Deal to bring the country out of the

Great Depression. The New Deal policies initiated the "Great Compression," widening the middle class and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor. Presently, the government is going to intervene to improve the economy. In sculpting interventions to end the current depression/recession, the government should look to the example of the New Deal and realize that interventions must revitalize the middle class. Recovery from depression may not be possible without strengthening the middle class. Certainly, a prosperous, harmonious, healthy society is not possible without a vibrant middle class. If the middle class is insecure, the outcomes of everyone are compromised. In this time of innovation, hopefully we will get it right.

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Skew Selection Theory Applied to the Wealth and Welfare of Nations

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According to skew selection theory, working citizens who build wealth and, at the same time, share portions of their wealth with those in need are more likely to survive economic downturns than citizens who hoard wealth. In this article, skew selection is employed as a theoretical framework to support governmental efforts to develop social policies that protect the income of working citizens and, at the same time, provide for vulnerable, non-working children and elders. To illustrate its applicability, the social policies of Japan, Sweden and the United States—all of which are challenged by decaying ratios of working to non-working citizens—are compared through the lens of skew selection. Policy recommendations are discussed.

Key words: *comparative social policy, social welfare, Japan, Sweden, United States, bioeconomics*

“If the misery of the poor be caused not by the laws of nature, but by our institutions, great is our sin.”

Charles Darwin, 1839/1989, p. 2

Skew selection, an economic theory based on biological principles, models competition and cooperation as two self-interested survival strategies used by animals to cope with two agents of death—scarcity and aggression (Cassill 2003, 2006).

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According to skew selection, the duality of human behaviors, competition and compassion, has been shaped over evolutionary time by scarcity and aggression respectively. In today's world, competition can be measured by wealth building and compassion by wealth sharing.

In this article, we present skew selection as a theoretical framework to validate the dual roles of government: promoting wealth building, and at the same time, promoting wealth sharing. Specifically, we propose that skew selection theory can support governmental efforts to develop social policies that protect working citizens and, at the same time, provide for dependent children and frail elders. First, we explain skew selection theory and then we use the comparative examples of Sweden, Japan, and the United States to apply the theory to governmental social policies. Finally, using the tenets of skew selection theory, we discuss how the wealthiest country, the U.S., can better manage its three most important resources: its children, its workers, and its elderly.

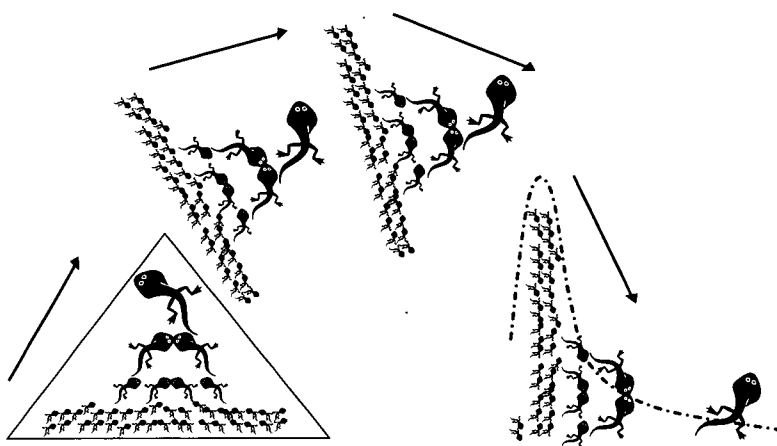
Skew Selection Theory

In nature, the two organizing principles shape animal behavior. They are aggression by predators and cycles of food abundance and scarcity. In humans, the source of scarcity is lack of income; the source of aggression is stealing, murder or war by other humans. Skew selection theory posits that an individual's most successful response to the dual threats of scarcity and aggression is a curious combination of wealth building and wealth sharing (Cassill, 2006; Cassill & Hill, 2007; Cassill & Watkins, 2004). The combination of wealth building and wealth sharing reduces inequality, but does not eliminate it, as the donor always keeps more than he or she gives away.

Skew selection equates income inequality to diversity, not poverty. Diversity and poverty are independent conditions. By themselves, diversity and inequality do not cause poverty. Likewise, uniformity and equality do not eliminate poverty. We can be equally or unequally poor, and equally or unequally rich. In reality, chronic poverty is a uniquely human condition. The causes are political, not environmental. Thus, just as Darwin (1839/1989) feared, "great is our sin" (p. 2).

For skew selection theory, inequality equates with diversity. To illustrate, in Figure 1 animals are first grouped vertically into an organizational hierarchy based on their diverse body sizes. Tip the hierarchy on its side, and the same animals become grouped horizontally as a histogram displaying inequality of body size. The point is this: the foundation of diversity—a good thing—is inequality.

Figure 1. Animals grouped into two graphic forms to illustrate the interchangeability of inequality and diversity



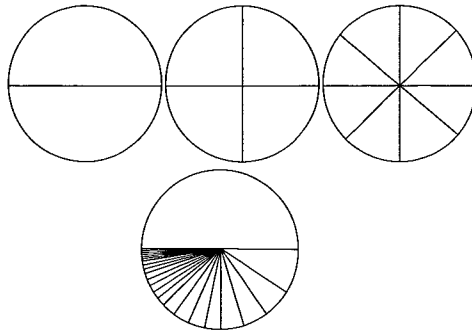
What is the proof that skew selection, which describes the inherent diversity among animals, is a superior distribution pattern to parity and equality? Skew theory has its roots in the study of social insects, particularly ants. Mature ant queens skew the fertility of their offspring, producing hundreds of large fertile daughters called virgin queens, and thousands of small sterile daughters called workers in a 1:20 ratio. The role of the thousands of sterile workers is to feed, shelter and defend their fertile sisters and their queen mother (Cassill, 2006). Skewing the size and fertility of daughters is an incredibly successful allocation strategy as ant queens are known to live 20 to 45 years—longer than cats, dogs or horses. A recent study discovered that mated queens skew the social status of their fertile daughters, the virgin queens, as well (Cassill, Kuriachan, & Vinson, 2007). Dominant virgins are large. Once

they disperse from the natal nest and have mated, they lay significantly more eggs per day than their smaller, subordinate sisters. Dominant and subordinate queens survive significantly longer when they found a family together, in one nest, and share resources than when they found a family alone, in separate nests. Pooling their resources (their labor force of sterile workers) increased their longevity and their individual fecundity (equivalent to wealth) two-fold. In Figure 2, we see that skewing offspring size and fertility allows ant queens to increase group size without jeopardizing the body size of virgin queens.

Other examples of wealth building and wealth sharing are found in human DNA, sperm, body cells, institutions and political philosophies. In humans, more than 97% of DNA sequences have no function. These non-functional DNA sequences, called junk DNA, do not produce the proteins (enzymes or structural proteins) that determine our body's form and function. According to skew selection theory, the junk DNA sequences shield the functional DNA sequences, called genes, from invading viruses (Cassill, 2005). With so much junk DNA, the probability that an invading virus will disable a functional gene sequence is close to zero. Thus, the wealth-building genes (functional DNA) are significantly more likely to survive and reproduce when they share shelter and nutrients with non-functional DNA sequences.

Cells in the testes of human males produce two kinds of sperm—healthy, high-energy sperm and sluggish, low-energy sperm. Only a small portion of sperm, often fewer than 10%, has sufficient energy stores (i.e. wealth) to complete the ten-hour swim from the vagina to their goal—the egg. Why would nature skew sperm ability? The answer lies in the vagina. Vaginas are a tropical paradise, providing nutrients, warmth and shelter for billions of microbes in the form of bacteria, protozoa, and fungi. The large number of low-energy (i.e. poor) sperm form a living barrier within which the few well-provisioned (i.e. wealthy) sperm can hide, and thus avoid death by the vagina's predatory microbes. In a nutshell, a large number of disposable sperm guarantees that at least one healthy sperm will reach an egg.

Figure 2. When resources are divided equally among offspring, parents must sacrifice offspring body size to gain litter size. When resources are skewed, meaning that they are divided unequally among offspring, parents can gain litter size without sacrificing body size.



Wealth building and sharing occurs among other body's cells as well. Once the egg is fertilized by the sperm, this single, omnipotent cell, called a zygote, replicates, divides and differentiates into two kinds of body cells—mortal and immortal. Numerically, the difference is extreme. During their lifetime, females produce hundreds of immortal eggs; males produce billions of immortal sperm. But, the number of immortal cells is nothing compared to the trillions and trillions of mortal cells, called somatic cells that make up a human's organs, tissues and bones. Curiously, in humans and other animals, somatic cells are programmed to die. When somatic cells stop producing replacement cells, organs shrink and eventually fail, causing the death of the organism (if that organism has not already succumbed to disease, predators or starvation). Only the eggs and sperm, the germ cells, are immortal, and are thus able to replicate themselves, creating generation after generation of organisms. Richard Dawkins (1976) was amazingly intuitive when he wrote that a chicken is an egg's way of making another egg.

Can we apply the lessons learned from ants, DNA, sperm and cells to humans? We think so. If wealthy donors do not redistribute some of their excess wealth, the poor cannot survive on their own. On the other hand, without the poor, wealthy

donors would not survive periods of high aggression (i.e. war). Thus, wealth-building and wealth-sharing are reciprocal, not opposing, strategies by which wealthy donors and needy recipients benefit in terms of survival and longevity.

Stated a different way, wealth building and wealth sharing doubly indemnify individuals against job loss and aggression. Both donor and recipient live longer and happier compared to those who hoard and do not share when income is scarce. Hence, even our most cherished moral behavior—helping those who cannot help themselves—is self-interested mutualism rather than self-sacrificing altruism.

Families, military institutions, academic institutions and corporations are microcosms of skew selection at work. Diversity of members among family, military, academic or corporate institutions is a hierarchy of inequality (Figure 1). In each case, a few highly experienced members oversee the efforts of the many, less experienced members. Families, military institutions, academic institutions and corporations build and share their wealth by fostering the young and inexperienced and then moving them up the hierarchical ladder based on their productivity and performance. Those that are unproductive remain in their current positions within the hierarchy indefinitely. These individuals are the most vulnerable members of the hierarchy, and without knowing it, serve to buffer those further up the hierarchy from outside agents of death or destruction—those unpredictable acts of nature. Although unpredictable acts of nature can wound institutions, they rarely destroy them. Destruction usually occurs from within when institutions fail to encourage wealth building and wealth sharing among their members.

How do these examples relate to government's role in promoting social policy? In a capitalistic democracy, income inequality is a natural result of variation in an individual's luck, motivation, and ability (Cassill & Watkins, 2004). When those who gain wealth share with those in need, both donor and recipient live longer (Cassill & Watkins, *in press*). This is largely supported by studies of life expectancy in countries with varying levels of income equality (Gudrais, 2008). The role of government is to maintain a healthy balance between wealth building and wealth sharing. The degree to which

governments promote wealth building and wealth sharing depends on their country's history, demographics, geography, economies, and neighbors. When economies are growing and aggression is low, able-bodied citizens are free to accumulate wealth to the best of their ability and motivation. When income is scarce and aggression high, it is the responsibility of wealthy citizens to share increments of their wealth with those in need (Hill & Cassill, 2004; Cassill & Hill, 2007). The role of government is to reasonably tax the wealthy and reasonably direct the redistribution.

There are examples throughout history of abuses by the "powerful and privileged" (Ehrlich & Lui, 1999; Haile, Sadrieh, & Verbon, 2003). Currently, with the recent crash of Wall Street and banking institutions, and the resulting deep recession in the U.S., we are acutely aware of the foible of focusing primarily on wealth building. The shortsighted greed by such corporations as Enron, Arthur Andersen, and WorldCom and the excesses of CEO compensations and unregulated loans have resulted in the collapse of a once invincible U.S. economy (Cassill & Hill, 2007). The move toward corporate social responsibility is healing the damage that unchecked greed created (Hill & Cassill, 2004). Therefore, it is important to differentiate between benign wealth building and malignant wealth building (Hill & Cassill, 2004; Vehrencamp, 1983).

Benign wealth building involves stockpiling during seasons when resources are super-abundant and builds capacity for wealth sharing when resources are scarcer. Malignant wealth building is an anti-Robin Hood strategy of "taking from the poor and giving to the rich" as seems to be occurring as main street U.S. is bailing out Wall Street via a trillion dollar "rescue plan" approved by the U.S. Congress in October, 2008. Governments and corporations that engage in malignant wealth-building will eventually suffer, as it is not balanced with wealth sharing. Those institutions that share not only survive longer, they prosper compared to those that hoard (Cassill & Watkins, in press).

However, a singular focus on wealth sharing to reach parity can be just as shortsighted and destructive as a singular focus on wealth building. During the 20th century, the mass starvation of tens of millions of humans in the Soviet Union

and China was a direct result of their philosophy on the power of parity, also called communism (reviewed in Tulchinsky & Varavikova, 1996; Deininger, Jin, & Yu, 2007). Public funds were distributed to the poor, mostly rural, populations, irrespective of the quality and quantity of work that they produced. Incentives for food stockpiling were gone. When natural disasters struck, food had not been sufficiently stockpiled (or was not distributed where needed). Famine reigned; death resulted.

Skew Selection Theory Applied to Governments

Wealth building and wealth sharing are complementary strategies for surviving dynamic environments such as those experienced by today's developed nations. Developing governmental policies that promote wealth building and wealth sharing to protect workers and non-workers is a challenge for any government. The challenge is exacerbated by the fact that health and wealth is a moving target that can shift repeatedly throughout one's lifetime from dependent childhood through independent adulthood to dependent late adulthood, as citizens are born, mature, and age. Developed countries, such as Japan, Sweden, and the United States, are facing a burden resulting from their wealth. Namely, citizens are living longer and, at the same time, families are having fewer children. Consequently, the proportion of non-working citizens is increasing at the same time that the proportion of working citizens is decreasing (Anderson & Hussey, 2000; Castles, 2003; Ozawa, 1999). In short, the challenge that these governments face is a decaying ratio of working to non-working citizens.

Several factors have contributed to the decay in the ratio of working to non-working citizens. Low birthrates, often short of the two needed as a replacement rate for workers, have led to a lower portion of maturing citizens entering the work force (Anderson & Hussey, 2000; Castles, 2003; Martin & Kats, 2003). At the same time, the number of dependent elders has increased because of early retirement, better health care, greater longevity, and medically extended periods of dying (Anderson & Hussey; Harper, 2006; Shea et al., 2003). Adding to the decaying ratio of working to non-working citizens is the fact that lower rates of marriage, higher rates of divorce, and two

working parents have led to a larger number of women entering the workforce (Martin & Kats, 2003). Although the addition of working women is beneficial for a government's economy, there is a double-edged downside. First, the low-wage jobs they perform means that a larger number of dependent children are in need of services, such as government-subsidized or government-run child care facilities (Allen, 2003; Mahon, 2002; Palley & Bowman, 2002). Second, as women enter the work force, they are no longer available to care for their older relatives (Harper, 2006). Consequently, the government takes on more responsibility to pay for the care of frail elders (Mahon, 2002; Shea et al., 2003).

Table 1. Economic Profiles of Japan, Sweden, and the U.S.

	Japan	Sweden	U.S.
Total GDP in millions, international \$ ^{b6}	\$3,943,754	\$280,305	\$12,409,460
GDP per capita, international \$ ^{b6}	\$30,821	\$31,062	\$41,854
Social expenditure as a % of GDP ^{a2}	16.89	28.92	14.78
Gini index (a measure of income skew) ^d	38.1 ³	25 ¹	45 ⁵
Taxes as a percentage of GDP ^{c4}	25.3	50.6	25.6

Sources: ^aSocial Expenditures as a Percentage of GDP, 2005 (Columbia University);

^bUnited Nation Statistics Division—Common Database, 2007; ^cTax Policy Center, n.d.; ^dCIA, 2007

Year of data: ¹2000; ²2001; ³2002; ⁴2003, ⁵2004, ⁶2005

We describe the demographics, economics, and social policies in three developed countries—Japan, Sweden, and the U.S.—in order to apply the principles of skew selection. These countries were selected because they are all wealthy nations facing the challenge of a shrinking ratio of working to non-working citizens. However, the demographic and socio-cultural characteristics of Japan, Sweden, and the United States are different and each government's response to the decaying ratio of working to non-working citizens in terms of their

policies for wealth building and wealth sharing is unique. The goal of our analysis is to compare the current priorities of each government for protecting the income of wealth builders and, at the same time, providing for its vulnerable citizens through wealth sharing. We first compare these nations in terms of gross domestic product (GDP), taxes, and demographics. Then we compare their social policies for protecting dependent children and frail elders. Our intention is not to provide answers, but rather to provide a sensible framework upon which governments can analyze and adjust social policies to protect their greatest resource—their working and non-working citizens.

Wealth and Welfare of Citizens

Table 1 presents economic profiles of Japan, Sweden, and the U.S. Despite large variations in total GDP, the GDP per capita is roughly equivalent among U.S., Japanese and Swedish citizens. Although the GDP per capita tells us that citizens of each country are equivalently productive, it tells us little about the spread of wealth among its citizens. To compare wealth, other indicators are needed. The Gini index is an indicator of wealth building. Tax rates and social expenditures as a percent of the GDP are indicators of wealth sharing. Using these metrics, we find dramatic differences in the wealth and poverty of U.S., Japanese and Swedish citizens. According to the Gini index, if the poorest 20th percentile of citizens in the U.S., Japan and Sweden averaged \$10,000 a year, then the wealthiest 20th percentile of citizens per country averaged \$450,000, \$381,000 and \$250,000 respectively. Wealthy U.S. citizens are 18% wealthier than Japan's wealthy citizens and 80% wealthier than Sweden's wealthy citizens. The U.S. has the greatest degree of income inequality among its citizens (see Gudrais, 2008; Phillips, 2002). By itself, a large gap in the distribution of wealth is not a "bad" thing. If a country's poverty rates are low (i.e. the vast majority of citizens are well cared for), then income inequality is benign and extreme wealth is harmless. Indeed, wealth is essential if we are to remediate the triarchy of poverty: famine, disease and illiteracy. It is poverty, rather than wealth, that is the shame of governments.

How do responsive governments redistribute wealth to fund programs for non-working citizens—young and old—

without discouraging its working citizens in their quest to build their own wealth? From the beginning of human time, socially responsive individuals have shared portions of their wealth with those in need (Hill & Cassill, 2004), as have religious institutions. More recently, socially responsive corporate institutions have developed wealth-sharing programs (Hill & Cassill, 2004; Cassill & Hill, 2007). However, by far the most powerful and influential institution for building and redistributing wealth to remediate poverty is government. Its method of choice for wealth building is the tax rate. Its method of wealth sharing is a matter of social policy and allotment of expenditures. Governments may promote the social welfare of citizens by increasing expenditures on institutions to benefit them, such as education and training, or by reducing expenditures on institutions that could do individuals harm, such as prisons.

Table 2. Demographic Profiles of Japan, Sweden, and the U.S.

	Japan	Sweden	U.S.
<i>Population (in thousands)</i> ^{a6}	127,687	8,993	293,623
<i>Foreign population as % of total</i> ^{b4}	1.5	5.3	11.5
<i>% over 64 years old</i> ^{b5}	19	17.2	12.3
<i>% under 15 years old</i> ^{b5}	15	17.9	20.9
<i>Fertility rate</i> ^c	1.33 ³	1.65 ⁴	2.03 ³
<i>Births to unmarried women as % of all live births</i> ^{c2}	1.6	33.2	55.3
<i>Life expectancy at birth</i> ^c			
Male	76.1 ⁴	75.4 ⁴	74.4 ³
Female	82.2 ⁴	80.8 ⁴	79.8 ³
<i>Poverty rate</i>			
Overall	15.3 ^{d1}	6.5 ^{e2}	17.0 ^{e2}
Over 64 years old	19.5* ^{d1}	2.1 ^{e2}	28.4 ^{e2}
Under 18 years old, All	14.3 ^{d1}	3.8 ^{e2}	18.8 ^{e2}
Under 18 years old, Single parent households	na	11.3 ^{e2}	41.4 ^{e2}

Sources: ^aUnited Nations Statistics Division—Common Database, 2007;

^bDemography in OECD Countries, 2005 (Columbia University);

^cHealth Indicators in OECD Countries (Columbia University);

^dTachibanaki, 2006; ^eSmeeding, 2005

Year of data: ¹late 1990s; ²2000; ³2001; ⁴2002; ⁵2003; ⁶2004 Note: *Ages 66-75

Comparing tax rates among our three countries, we find that the country with the least wealth, Sweden, has the highest tax rate—twice that of the U.S. and Japan—and the highest social expenditure. These data suggest that the U.S. and Japan emphasize wealth building more than wealth sharing, whereas Sweden emphasizes wealth sharing more than wealth building “to further the goal of social equality” (Blomqvist, 2004, p. 151). The important question is—does wealth sharing in the form of allotment of social expenditures result in reduced rates of poverty? Before we address the relationship between wealth building, wealth sharing, and poverty, we must review the differences in the demographics of each country.

Demographics

Demographic factors, which directly affect the social policies governing wealth building and sharing, vary among the three countries as shown on Table 2. The U.S. has more than twice as many foreigners as Sweden and more than 10 times as many as Japan. In short, the U.S. has a significantly larger and more diverse citizenry than Japan and Sweden. If diversity is sanctioned and embraced, it can strengthen an economy and enrich a nation’s culture; on the other hand, if diversity is compartmentalized and vilified, it can become a source of poverty. In fact, it may be that in nations or even neighborhoods where there is greater diversity there is more reluctance to share wealth for the common good of those unlike oneself (Gudrais, 2008).

Compared to the U.S., Japan and Sweden have a larger proportion of elderly citizens (Anderson & Hussey, 2000) and a faster rate of aging citizens. Since 1970, the percentage of elderly citizens in Japan has almost tripled from 7% to 19% (Hashimoto & Takahashi, 1995; *Demography in OECD Countries*, 2005). This dramatic increase was fueled by Japan’s longer life expectancy for both men and women. Likewise, the percentage of elderly citizens in Sweden has almost tripled to 17.2% of its population (*Demography in OECD Countries*, 2005), although Sweden’s citizens took 85 years to age compared to Japan’s 30 years (Hashimoto & Takahashi, 1995).

The rapid increase in the proportion of elderly citizens

has contributed significantly to the declining ratio of working to non-working citizens. In response to the declining ratio, Sweden and Japan have developed social policies to increase the work force by encouraging women to participate and, at the same time, to bear more children (Allen, 2003). Sweden is slowly reversing its downward trend in fertility rates into the 21st century (Castles, 2003). On the other hand, despite these social policies, Japan's fertility rate and the percentage of children have continued to decline into the 21st century (Segal, 2004).

Compared to Sweden and Japan, the U.S. has a large proportion of children and a high fertility rate (Martin & Kats, 2003). Childbearing is greatest among U.S. teens and unmarried mothers, placing significant pressure on the government to help children in low-income households headed by teens or single mothers. In response to this need, U.S. social policies are targeted at promoting marriage and discouraging childbearing by teens and other unmarried mothers (Brotherson & Duncan, 2004).

Wealth Redistribution to Children and Elderly Citizens

In developed countries, poverty is a function of social policy (Bradshaw, 2006). In the U.S., child poverty rates are five times higher than they are in Sweden (see Table 2). Close to half of U.S. children being raised in single parent families live in poverty. From the authors' perspectives, this is an embarrassing commentary on one of history's most wealthy and compassionate countries (Conley, 2003). An important factor may be that in the U.S. support for children is viewed as the responsibility of parents rather than government (Grason & Guyer, 1995). Because of the hands-off approach on matters of child and family poverty, programs for children of the U.S. are not universal. Programs that are available target only the very poorest children. As a consequence, U.S. government programs for children are often highly stigmatized. Moreover, they are ineffective, decreasing the high rate of child poverty only a few percentage points (Impact of Taxes and Transfers, 2005).

Given its wealth, the U.S. can afford to vanquish the triarchy of poverty, disease and illiteracy by funding basic nutrition, health care and education for all of its children. If

the U.S. government does not respect and nurture its children, poor and otherwise, it is damaging the upcoming generation of working citizens, as today's children are the hands that will eventually build the wealth needed to provide for today's working citizens as they transition into elders.

In Sweden, the government has reduced child poverty 74% by implementing cash benefits to families (Bradshaw, 2006). In Japan, government policies have also reduced child poverty considerably (Segal, 2004), though to a lesser extent than in Sweden. When we analyze the high rates of wealth and the high rates of child poverty in the U.S. through the lens of skew selection, it is easy to see that the U.S., for all its wealth, does not promote wealth sharing to its vulnerable citizens to the degree that Sweden and Japan do. Social policies emphasizing some form of universal health care for children and families, like those in Sweden and Japan, could ameliorate poverty rates in the U.S.

What about poverty among the elderly? In contrast to child poverty in the U.S., which is viewed by the government as the responsibility of families, programs for elderly U.S. citizens are viewed as the responsibility of government (Grason & Guyer, 1995). As a result, social policies for the elderly in the U.S. are more universal. "The elderly...enjoy universal entitlement to national health insurance through Medicare, a uniform-level of income security, and an organized system of community-based health, nutritional, and social support services" (Grason & Guyer, 1995, p. 567). Despite the overall high rate of funding for the elderly in the U.S., there remains a high level of poverty, particularly among single, elderly female citizens (Anderson & Hussey, 2000). Nevertheless, because U.S. policies for its elderly citizens are universal, the elderly are better protected than children are during times of high unemployment and economic strain (Axinn & Stern, 1985; Pati, Keren, Alessandrini, & Schwarz, 2004).

In Japan, the elderly receive an even higher rate of funding, including universal health care, than do the elderly in the U.S. (Anderson & Hussey, 2000; Lynch, 2001). In Sweden, funding for its elderly citizens continues at a lower rate relative to the U.S. or Japan (Lynch, 2001), even though Sweden devotes a larger percent of the GDP to social spending than do Japan

or the U.S. Still, poverty rates for Swedish elders are low. A contributing cause might be that working citizens have increased their contributions toward social insurance pensions (i.e. 7% percent of personal income; 9% of earnings) [Palley & Bowman, 2002]. With its aging population and its declining birth rate, too little wealth building combined with too much wealth sharing has created a strain on Sweden's ability to meet its obligations to all its citizens. Today, Sweden is re-evaluating its social policies, including social insurance pensions.

Discussion

In nature, there is power in wealth and there is power in numbers. Wealth building in the form of body fat, food caches or defending prime territories are examples of how organisms bridge gaps in resources. Wealth sharing to attract crowds allows organisms to avoid predators. Herein, we hold that these laws-of-nature apply to governments as well. When corporate environments are dominated by recessions and takeover bids (the equivalent of famine and predation), the wealthy and the masses depend on the government for long-term survival by redistributing some wealth to those in need. Indeed, the wealthy that ignore the numerical power of the masses not only lose labor and future profits, they expose themselves to predatory takeover. Likewise, the masses who overthrow the wealthy profiteers lack the ability to attract funding to rebuild the corporate structure that employed them. Several governmental policies have been proposed to avoid investor abuse or worker slackness (Cassill & Hill 2007): (1) transparency of investor identities; (2) transparency of corporate goals, objectives and means; (3) two-way communication up and down the corporate hierarchy that includes collective bargaining for employees; and (4) the purchase of *a priori* corporate malpractice insurance rather than *post priori* bankruptcy for failed corporations. To fund these strategies, wealth builders might forego an increment of annual profit, although this will be offset by significant gains in a corporation's long-term survival, stability and lifetime profits.

Diverse institutions, including governments, corporations, and universities, have a life span just as do individuals.

Thus, institutions are subject to the laws of natural selection. For example, governments risk loss of citizens if they do not evolve and adapt to changing conditions. Recent animal experiments and computer simulation experiments (Cassill et al., 2007; Cassill & Watkins, 2004; Cassill & Watkins, in press) confirmed that income skew is a predictable and natural result of building wealth when resources are abundant. The experiments also confirmed that wealth sharing increases the life span of both donors and recipients.

Given that wealth building and wealth sharing are reciprocal survival strategies, we assert that wealthy institutions that promote the ability of working citizens to acquire wealth and, at the same time, facilitate the responsibility of those same citizens to share increments of their wealth with others in need, are more robust to economic downturns and aggression than are institutions that advocate for one without the other. Indeed, institutions that ignore the misery of the poor are not only culturally immoral, they are biologically and economically unsustainable (Cassill & Watkins, in press).

When the ratio of working to non-working citizens declines, governments must make some hard choices. To counter its declining ratio of working to non-working citizens, one approach is for developed countries, such as Japan, Sweden and the U.S., to remove disincentives and/or offer incentives for the elderly, who are living longer and healthier, to retool their skills as needed and work more years (AARP, 2006; OECD, 2000). As a nation with a high proportion of children in poverty, the U.S. should consider universal programs for children more in line with U.S. policies for older adults (Grason & Guyer, 1995; Newacheck & Benjamin, 2004; Ozawa, 1999).

As members of one of the wealthiest countries in the world, we consider the misery of U.S. children our greatest shame. Shortchanging children today shortchanges the ability of those same children to grow into adults who will generate wealth tomorrow. Likewise, shortchanging the elderly today denies them their just reward for their tax contributions to the welfare of others (Dalley, 1999). Sweden, Japan and the U.S. are remarkable democracies with the capacity to promote the freedom of working citizens to acquire wealth and, at the same time, to assure their responsibility to protect those in need.

In conclusion, we challenge wealth builders—governmental policymakers, corporations, and individual philanthropists—to embrace wealth sharing as a 21st century goal. Let us follow the lead of the Carnegies, the Rockefellers, Ted Turner, Bill Gates, Carl Venter and Brad Pitt in not only redistributing wealth through conspicuous consumption, but by investing in our young and elderly when they are in need.

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Women's Rights=Human Rights: Pakistani Women against Gender Violence

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Gender-based violence constitutes a major public health risk and is a serious violation of basic human rights throughout the world. Counter to many Western images of Muslim women as passive victims, women's groups in Pakistan have begun to organize to respond to these conditions. This study is based upon in-depth interviews conducted with the founders and senior staff of Dastak (Knock on the Door), a shelter for women in Lahore, Pakistan that uses a human rights framework to provide services and advocate for public support for women's rights to safety and security. The study explores how Pakistani women are taking action against violence within their social, cultural and political reality and analyzes how the of human rights approach has been applied in a non-Western, Muslim, developing country.

Key words: gender violence, human rights, women's rights, Pakistan, international social work

Gender-based violence constitutes a major public health risk and has been determined to be a serious violation of basic human rights throughout the world (World Health Organization [WHO], 2005; Amnesty International, 1999, 2002). The urgent need to address this problem because of its toll on the physical and mental health of women worldwide has been recognized by various international organizations (UNDP, 2006; WHO, 2005; United Nations Population Fund, 2000). The Fourth World Conference for Women held in Beijing in 1995 recognized violence against women as a serious

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obstacle to women's advancement. In spite of such declarations and efforts to place high priority on eliminating violence against women, human rights advocates in Pakistan assert that such violence has been on the rise (Jilani & Ahmed, 2004; Amnesty International, 2002). Yet, counter to many Western images of Muslim women as passive victims, women's groups in Pakistan are organizing to respond to these conditions. Since the 1980s there is growing resistance to gender violence and the political and cultural forces that contribute to it.

In today's global world it is argued that a broader understanding of human rights and an internationalist viewpoint is needed to ground social work practice and social action (Ife, 2001). Accordingly, this paper presents a study of Dastak (Knock on the Door) in Lahore, Pakistan which applies a human rights approach to address gender violence. The organizational philosophy and the ways in which Pakistani women are taking action against violence within their social, cultural and political realities are examined, highlighting the strategies these women and human rights activists are adopting to influence policy and campaign for the improved status of women in Pakistan.

Background

Brief Overview of Dastak

Dastak, a non-governmental organization (NGO) which operates a shelter for women, was established in 1990 by the AGHS Legal Group, a legal organization founded by four women in 1986. Dastak has expanded to provide crisis intervention, protection and a temporary residence/safe haven for women and their children, as well as education, legal aid, counseling and resettlement services. Originally managed by one superintendent, they have grown to include to a staff comprised of a program director, a program coordinator and a part-time psychologist. The superintendent and warden live on the premises and assume 24-hour managerial responsibility for the residence. The two organizations work in an integrated manner. A crisis worker located at AGHS makes referrals to the shelter, facilitates family visits when appropriate and conducts outreach, especially in prisons and state-run shelters to

identify women in need of assistance. Dastak has served over 5,000 women since their inception.

Dastak's efforts extend beyond direct service delivery. An important aspect of Dastak's work involves lobby and advocacy activities to gain political and public support for women's basic right to safety and security through opposition of discriminatory laws and use of court litigation to ensure that the existing Constitutional laws which establish rights for women are interpreted properly and enforced. Dastak has been a trail-blazer as the first private shelter program in Pakistan. Working within their cultural context, they have sought to bring about a change in the notion of "protection" for women that isolates rather than strengthening them (Jahangir, 2000). The Dastak model stands in stark contrast to the network of existing state-run shelters for women (Darul Amans) that function in a prison-like manner and severely limit freedom of movement.

A Human Rights Framework

A human rights framework advocates for women under the belief that regardless of culture or gender all humans are entitled to certain basic rights, such as freedom from violence and political economic and social freedoms. In recent years there have been advances in the application of human rights law to address the specific rights violations suffered simply on the basis of gender, including gender violence (Charlesworth, 1994; Cook, 1994; Friedman, 1995; Merry, 2006; Peters & Wolpert, 1995; Stewart, 2000). International norms of non-discrimination on the basis of gender have been developed through international human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which prohibits practices that perpetuate women's inequality (Cook, 1994). The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights further articulated the notion of women's rights as human rights, the state's obligation to protect such rights, and clearly extended the interpretation of human rights violations to include those that are committed on the basis of gender within the "private" sphere of the family (Peters & Wolpert, 1995; Sullivan, 1995). Gender violence is defined as a denial of women's fundamental humanity and states are responsible for the failure to respect women's rights to life, liberty and security of person,

the right to be free from torture, cruel, degrading and inhuman treatment and failure to ensure equal protection under the law (Romany, 1994). The 1995 Beijing Conference dealt explicitly with violence against women and enunciated strategic objectives for government action, constituting another step forward in establishing women's rights.

Women's rights in Pakistan are articulated in the provisions of the Constitution and international laws such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international treaties such as the CEDAW, signed by Pakistan in 1996. Pakistan not only signed the Beijing Conference commitments, but also supports the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These also include goals regarding gender equality and women's empowerment (Rai, Shah, & Ayaz, 2007).

A human rights-based orientation emphasizes universalist concepts of rights and freedom and contrasts with other approaches to gain rights for women. There has been an emergence of women's voices from within Islam, with a grounding of arguments for women's rights within the framework of Islam and emphasis on the intended equality and dignity for women (Hassan, 1999; Mernisi, 1987; Sardar Ali, 2000). This movement has gathered momentum for a host of reasons: in response to colonialism and the hegemony of the West; as part of a quest for an authentic Muslim identity that transcends constructed binaries between "East" and "West", "traditional" and "modern" and religious and secular; and also in the belief that it is a more effective way to appeal to the populace to promote cultural change (Barlow & Akbarzadeh, 2006; Mir-Hosseini, 2004). Muslim feminism reflects positions that are diverse and evolving and do not always agree on what constitutes "justice or "equality" or the best ways to attain them (Barlow & Akbarzadeh, 2006; Mir-Hosseini, 2004). Some interpretations by Islamic states insist that men and women are not equal and that it is the duty of husbands to honor wives without declaring equality (An-Na'im, 1994). AGHS and Dastak turned to norms of human rights law because efforts to reinterpret religion "created controversies and no resolutions," while the human rights framework offered the basis for "equality and social justice in accordance with a set of

internationally accepted standards" (Friedman, 1995, p. 22).

Critiques of a rights-based approach emerge from the cultural relativist perspective which originated from within anthropology and is used by religious fundamentalists and heads of state to oppose the notion of international human rights, especially in the context of the role and treatment of women (Coomaraswamy, 1999; Reichert, 2003; Singer, 1999). Cultural relativists assert that there are no universal standards by which cultures may be judged, that all cultural practices must be accepted without judgment, and many view human rights as an opponent of national culture (Coomaraswamy, 2005; Howland, 1999; Merry, 2006; Muktar, 2003; Singer, 1999). Various critiques of cultural relativism question the assertions of religious fundamentalist movements claiming to speak for an entire culture (Rao, 1995), employ "culture" to serve a variety of interests, construct imaginary, falsely rigid, ahistorical visions of the "Muslim women" based upon a chosen set of self-justificatory texts with which to restrict and control them (Helie-Lucas, 1999; Mayer, 1995; Rao, 1995) or rely on simplistic notions of identity with static and essentialist views of culture (Merry, 2006).

Defenders of women/human rights must often fend off persistent attacks from those who claim that human rights advocates are Westernized or that this approach serves Western economic or other neo-imperial ends (Jamal, 2005; Mayer, 1995; Moghadam, 2003; Muktar, 2003). The human rights approach is fraught with tensions between definitions of rights and societal realities (Coomaraswamy, 1999; Merry, 2006). In Pakistan some tensions arise from the focus on individual rights in a society that is based upon a collective, family orientation, although this collective orientation is generally synonymous with interests of men (Coomaraswamy, 1999; Jamal, 2006; Merry, 2006). Women experience immense pressure to adhere to norms set by the "community," which makes it difficult to leave the family/extended family or social group in order to escape violence or challenge customary practices. Nevertheless, there has been increasing recognition that human rights treaty bodies, constitutional law and law enforcement can effectively promote state accountability and also have normative value in setting standards, sensitizing the community and

strengthening societal response to violence against women and human rights protections (Charlesworth, 1994; Goonesekere, 2004; Jilani & Ahmed, 2004).

Gender Violence in Pakistan

Although there are no systematic studies or reliable government data on the prevalence in Pakistan, it has been asserted that gender violence is pervasive (Amnesty International, 1999, 2002; Jilani & Ahmed, 2004; Shirkat Gah, 2007). It has been noted that data collection in countries like Pakistan is extremely challenging due to the fear and shame that prevents most victims from seeking help from criminal justice or health or social service providers. Questions about accuracy of data also arise because many incidents of violence against women, such as burnings, acid-throwing and murder, are often recorded as accidents. Moreover, in resource-poor countries such as Pakistan, priority is usually concentrated on the delivery of aid to women rather than on statistical data collection. As a result, knowledge and information about the prevalence and consequences of violence come from a wide range of formal and informal sources (Johnson, Ollus, & Nevala, 2008; WHO, 2002).

It is commonly reported that at least 80% of all women in Pakistan are subjected to some form of domestic violence (Amnesty International, 2002; Hassan, 1995; Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2002). Gender violence in Pakistan takes a variety of forms, some of which are similar to the West, such as marital violence and rape, wife beating and others more culture specific. These include so-called "honor killings," forced marriage, child marriage, death by burning (stove deaths, which are presented as accidents), acid attacks, nose cutting (a form of humiliating and degradation) and trafficking of women. In 2002, more than 450 cases of women killed by relatives in so-called "honor killings" were documented and many incidents go unreported or are treated leniently by authorities (Amnesty International, 2002; Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2002; Human Rights Watch, 1999).

Pakistan is a patriarchal society and women are often deprived of their right to make their own life choices. Patriarchal structures are stronger in the rural and tribal settings where local customs prevail, so that women may also be

treated as property or as objects of exchange between families to enhance social status, gain resources or settle disputes (Amnesty International, 2002; Asian Development Bank, 2000). A high percentage of women are also subject to sexual and physical violence in police custody, especially the poor who do not have powerful connections (Amnesty International, 1999, 2002; Hassan, 1995; Jilani & Ahmed, 2004).

The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan adopted by the Parliament established women with equal status as citizens. Article 32 of the Constitution stipulates "there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone." Article 9 of the Constitution also established the right to liberty: "No person shall be deprived of life or liberty save in accordance of law." The Constitution also guarantees the right of consent to marriage and divorce (a right allowed in Islam). These provisions can and are being used in legal interventions to address violence against women and as a mechanisms for state accountability.

The equality for women provided by the Constitution is diminished by discriminatory ordinances, laws and customs (Jamal, 2006; Jilani & Ahmed, 2004). Pakistan is also among the countries that have entered reservations to CEDAW that justify inaction relating to women's and gender issues due to cultural and religious expediencies, which has qualified the commitment to women's rights (Rai et al., 2007). Survivors of violence often encounter unresponsiveness and hostility in the criminal justice system. Domestic violence is not explicitly prohibited in Pakistani domestic law. A recent proposed bill to address domestic violence has been tabled, although women's groups continue to press for passage of such legislation (Shirkat Gah, 2007). Due to this lack of formal recognition, the judicial system, from police officials to Pakistani courts, tends to view domestic violence as a private affair and not open to legal scrutiny (Jilani & Ahmed, 2004; Rai et al., 2007). The paucity of legal remedies, few safe houses and lack of reliable mediation mechanisms to intercede to protect against violence creates an overwhelming situation for many women.

A critical challenge confronting women in Pakistan attempting social and legal reform has been the increased Islamization of the law as a result of the 1979 regime of Zia ul-Huq which lasted for 12 years and left a legacy of

discriminatory laws that continue to oppress women today. It is also significant to note that this regime was heavily financed by the U.S. in its Cold War efforts against the Soviets in neighboring Afghanistan and was responsible for the funding and training of violent and radical Islamist *jihadi* movements that continue with destructive consequences in Pakistani society today (Mamdani, 2004).

Zia enacted the Hudood Ordinances, ostensibly intended to implement Islamic Shari'a law for *zina* (extramarital sex) *Qazf* (false accusation of zina), and theft, laws that had not been applied in Pakistan for centuries. The ordinances made it exceptionally difficult to prove an allegation of rape because the woman was required to provide four adult male witnesses of good standing, and failure to do so could place the woman at risk of prosecution for extramarital sex or for accusing an innocent man of adultery. This law resulted in a large increase in the number of women in prisons, especially poor and uneducated women (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2005). In 1990 the implementation of the laws of Qisas and Diyat further undermined women's rights to safety and security by privatizing violent crimes of murder and bodily harm and eliminating the possibility of state prosecution. As a result, women can be killed in the name of honor without penalty since families can forgive offenders and accept compensation (Ahmed & Jilani, 2004; Amnesty International, 2002).

A positive outcome of this repressive regime was the strong resurgence of the women's movement in Pakistan. The founders of Dastak and many who work there were among those who mobilized. Through their persistent activism these laws came under increased scrutiny within Pakistan and internationally.

The Political, Social and Cultural Context

Women's rights must be viewed in the context of larger issues confronting Pakistani society. There have been continual crises in civil society since its founding in 1947 and Pakistan has been governed more by military dictatorships than by elected governments. Military presidents have ruled from 1958-71, 1977-88 and from 1999-2008, when the country's fourth military coup took place and the military President Pervez Musharraf assumed power (Malik, 1997).

Pakistan is also characterized by a long-standing legacy of underdevelopment, a feudal, elitist socio-political structure and a retreat to conservatism that has marginalized women (Jahangir, 2000; Malik, 1997). The original vision of a secular nation by Pakistan's founders has gone unrealized. Religion has been manipulated and used for political purposes, obscures vital issues of social and economic justice for the Pakistani population, and is imposed in a selective and narrowly defined manner by successive rulers to bolster insecure regimes (Afkami, 1999; Jahangir, 2000). Women have suffered disproportionately from distorted interpretations of Islam and from underdevelopment (Jahangir, 2000; Malik, 1997). Although there is considerable diversity among women and the nature and degree of women's circumstances varies across classes, regions, and the rural-urban divide, the lack of social value and status of women results in less investment of resources and gender disparities in their basic human development (Asian Development Bank, 2000). These disparities are most conspicuous in the rural and tribal areas where poverty, rates of illiteracy and poor health indicators are the highest (Asian Development Bank, 2000).

Historically, Pakistan has been considered a moderate country, and while there have been many setbacks to the democratic process, fundamentalist parties have received limited support. However, during the past decade women and human rights groups have spoken out against the increasing "Talibanisation" of the country and the government's lack of countervailing action. This is a failure to honor the state's commitments under international treaties such as CEDAW and threatens reverse progress for women (Shirkat Gah, 2007). Overall, a realization of rights is hampered by weakened institutions such as the judiciary, failure of state leadership and the dire need of access to economic and social rights that can enable citizens to live dignified lives (Jahangir, 2000).

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive, qualitative case study approach designed to provide a holistic understanding of the organization and its approach to the problem of gender violence in Pakistan (Yin, 2003). The study is based upon in-depth

interviews of 90 minutes to two hours conducted in winter of 2007 with two of the principal founders of the organization and the shelter program director of Dastak in Lahore, Pakistan. A digital recorder was used to tape the interviews, which were later transcribed by a research assistant. The interviews were conducted in English and took place in the offices of the AGHS law firm and at the Dastak shelter. A semi-structured interview protocol was used which had open-ended questions relating to the history, philosophy and approach of the organization, some of the challenges and successes they have experienced and their vision for the future. The subjects agreed to waive the right to confidentiality due to the fact that they are internationally known public figures in the area of human and women's rights and are frequently interviewed in the media, so that there is no risk involved in revealing their identities. Additional sources of information were also used to corroborate information obtained from the interviews, such as observation at the shelter and at the AGHS legal office and participant observation and extensive reading of newspaper reports and other published interviews (Yin, 2003). The analytical method of constant comparison was used. Systems of classification were derived from the research questions and additional conceptual codes were developed as they emerged from close examination of the transcripts with attention to key themes, phrases or quotations. Validity was also confirmed through discussion of the data with the research assistant and other Pakistanis (Yin, 2003).

Findings

The Study Participants

The participants consisted of two of the key founders of Dastak, Hina Jilani and Shahtaj Qizilbash and the shelter Director Victoria Bhajan. All have a long association as activists in the women/human rights movement. Hina Jilani, Executive Director of Dastak, is an internationally recognized human rights leader, an Advocate in the Supreme Court of Pakistan, a founding member of the Women's Action Forum (WAF) a pressure group formed in 1980 in response to the military dictatorship and passing of the Hudood Ordinances, a

founding partner of AGHS Legal Aid Cell in 1986 and a Founder of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HCRP) in 1989. In 2000 Jilani was appointed Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders at the United Nations. Shahtaj Qizilbash is the Founder and Coordinator of the Paralegal Program at AGHS and an original member of WAF and HCRP. Victoria Bhajan was drawn into the women's movement through her work at the YWCA in Pakistan, which also hosted the first meetings of WAF of which she became a member. She is also a longtime member of HRCP and assumed her position at Dastak in 2005.

Agency Background

The shelter began in response to the need identified by the lawyers at AGHS Legal Aid. They encountered many women seeking divorce, most commonly due to violence. These women were under great pressure and were experiencing threats to their safety by their spouses and extended families. Divorce, especially at that time, carried a strong stigma; although divorce was a declared a right of women under Islam, it was difficult for women to obtain. The lawyers at AGHS saw firsthand that many women urgently required much more than legal assistance. Hina Jilani described why the shelter program became necessary:

The services had to be more integrated, more than just taking people's cases to court. We had a long problem of providing protection to those women and I think that is a fundamental right that has to be addressed. So that's the reason why we started giving shelter to these women on a very "ad hoc" basis. We found that without a systematic arrangement for women's protection, we were leaving a lot of loopholes and at the same time raising the expectation of the survivor that she is protected, but without being able to really give that kind of protection. So that's how the whole idea of creating a shelter for women came.

The program is distinguished by its human rights orientation that seeks to counter the "protective" approach that secludes women and is reflected in other programs in Pakistan.

A primary concern is that it does nothing to empower women and reinforces women's dependency, which is already a serious obstacle to women being able to survive independently. Hina Jilani continues:

Why we wanted another shelter when some already existed was because of the approach of the government and the non-governmental organizations that already had started shelters in this country. It's a very patriarchal approach towards protection and does not give any defense to women's parliamentary right to liberty. And we do think that protection cannot be given at the cost of liberty. So the general approach here was if you entered a shelter, you could enter one at any time but you could never leave, something known as "custodial restraint" and that I very strongly disagreed with. I also felt that the shelters were not treating women with dignity; their fundamental right to dignity was not being respected, for one thing.

The founders of Dastak pragmatically adopted a rights-based approach, viewing it as the most compelling strategy to address gender violence in Pakistan rather than those infused with a religious ideology. They also firmly reject cultural relativist arguments and believe that within every cultural context women must be able to decide for themselves when they have reached their limit of tolerance of oppression. "At the center of the human rights movement," said Hina Jilani, "we've always said that people know what is just and what is not just."

Organizational Challenges

Pakistani women activists confront formidable obstacles as they seek to provide services and advocate for social change. Numerous attempts have been made by opposing forces to threaten, discredit and vilify them and to deter women from using their services. Hostile propaganda and misinformation campaigns labeled them as well as their clients as "loose women" and have gone so far as to accuse them of running a brothel, of trafficking women and misguiding them and encouraging rebellious behavior. Shahtaj Qizilbash states with irony, "A women who gets out of her house and demands her

rights has to be a loose woman." Hina Jilani further analyzes why they are targeted:

The fact that we are challenging social norms, state practices and institutions like the judiciary and even the police—that was a new notion that had to be accepted. We try to draw attention to what is being done wrong and we draw hostility from those who want to maintain the status quo. That doesn't deter me—we will continue to draw hostility. Every woman who comes to us is free from violence—when we give support to women, women gather the strength to confront the perpetrators and she can do that with much more strength. This creates anger and they transfer the anger from the women onto us.

Over the years there have been many threats of violence against staff, as well as clients, who are subject to ongoing fear for their lives. The women of Dastak are highly critical of the failure of the state to protect women and believe that continued pressure on the state to assume this function is critical because NGOs such as Dastak cannot do it alone. Shahtaj states: "We learned everything the hard way through experience; we had no model here."

A critical incident in 1999 projected the issue of "honor killing" into the national and international arenas. Samia Sawar, a 29-year-old from an influential family in Peshawar who sought shelter at Dastak while seeking a divorce, was shot dead in the office of Hina Jilani. Samia's mother brought the gunman with her to the office to visit her daughter, claiming that he was there for her assistance due to her ankle injury. After the shooting, Shahtaj was taken hostage, forced into a car to be held as a human shield and fortunately later released unharmed.

It was traumatic for everyone. It was terrible for that girl, obviously...But it was also traumatic for me because this woman had come to us expecting that we would be able to protect her. And we failed. Now I can't blame myself totally for that day but there is no way that we can escape the blame also. We should be

much more vigilant. We should have realized the state colludes and connives with influential parties so that they get that courage to come kill somebody. *They have the guts to come into my office and kill her.*

Referring to the fact that no one was prosecuted for this crime, Jilani highlights the limits to the full protection of women without broader state support:

It's very telling, with regards to what the social beliefs in this society are and how the state in this country has totally failed in obligation to protect women. I have said time and again that women in this country are a population at risk, from the age of zero. Right from birth.

Service Provision and Social Change

According to data maintained by the organization, the shelter has admitted over 5,025 women since their inception in 1990. From August 2007 to August 2008, a total of 296 women were admitted, accompanied by 165 children. Ninety-one of the women were married and accompanied by children, 169 were married and arrived without children, and 36 were single or divorced at the time of admission. During this period a majority (172) of the residents were from the Lahore district, while 122 came from other provinces of Pakistan, although at other intervals there are often more women from distant areas. Two non-Pakistani citizens were also served during this time. The most frequent type of services provided were psychological counseling (235 women) and free legal aid (155 women) which primarily included assistance with divorce, child custody and property or inheritance claims, in that order, although the breakdown is not available. Over the course of the year, nine skills training courses, twenty awareness trainings and one theatre workshop was provided.

Additional data from a study conducted at Dastak in 2003 of the shelter activities for the previous 18 months provides further background on their services. During this period roughly 347 women were serviced. Almost all were experiencing physical violence and sexual abuse at the rates of 98 percent and 96 percent respectively, and 45 percent cited emotional

abuse. Some women had been treated as property, resulting in an abuse of their rights such as forced marriages, forced prostitution, rapes, property/money disputes, selling of daughters, husbands' extra marital affairs or second marriages, and threats on their lives due to marriage by choice. One hundred and nine of women were victims of forced marriages, nine were child-marriages, and 158 women reported that they were involved in watta satta marriages, a tribal custom of exchanging brides between two families.

Most of the women came from rural areas (267). The majority of them were unemployed housewives (200). Further obstacles to a successful transition to independent living stemmed from the fact that 142 women were illiterate and another 75 women completed primary school only. However, violence affects women of all backgrounds. Women from various levels of educational attainment have also been sheltered, including 10 college graduates and 5 masters degree holders. The intended duration of a woman's stay in the shelter home is three months, but the shelter must be flexible in order to meet individual women's needs and ensure their safety. Women are able to stay until a divorce is finalized if that is their plan. Several women who were in danger due to intense threats from family had been allowed to stay for several years. Unfortunately, even with increased precautions, the director reports that at least two women have been killed by their families after leaving the shelter.

Multiple interrelated factors at individual, familial-cultural, community and environmental levels work against a woman becoming independent. Resettling women is reported as the most challenging work of the shelter because of the limited employment and housing options, the low levels of human capital of the women and an inhospitable community climate for women who live apart from family. During 2007-2008 about 31% of the women (91) were resettled, generally meaning that they obtained divorces and established new residences. Staff works to develop linkages with employers such as factory owners, offices and households in need of domestic help. They also provide training in traditional female activities such as sewing and handicraft making as income generation strategies. Women's economic dependence and

community pressures lead about two-thirds of the women to return to their families, although the data does not distinguish whether they returned to husbands or families of origin.

The organization makes a conscious choice to maintain independence from the state so that they can advocate and speak to the issues freely. Major funding comes Oxfam Novib (the Dutch affiliate of Oxfam) and from private donors. Change efforts are directed at multiple levels including the individual, family, community and society and state. A key macro level change strategy includes litigation in order to advance or uphold rights and inculcate respect for the rule of law. Litigation has successfully established valuable legal precedents, such as the right of a woman to marry of her own choice and in defense of rape victims charged with adultery under the Hudood Ordinances. Media has also been skillfully used to publicize high profile cases in order to create greater awareness of violence against women in police custody and the need for greater protection against honor killing. This is done to stimulate public dialogue and create pressure for state and judicial action. According to Shahtaj Qizilbash:

Litigation is a part of the strategy in which we have exposed a lot of problems with the laws and while exposing the problems with the laws, we have also been able to expose the social attitudes that make or exacerbate the problem or are the root of the problem. So a lot of the women's rights debate in this country has been from legal cases that have been taken up like you know, many of the cases became very very well known.

Achievements

In spite of many obstacles, the organization is able to claim a number of achievements. In the absence of national data and comprehensive studies of violence, it is not possible to evaluate their overall impact on the prevalence of violence in the society. It would be unrealistic to expect that one organization in any society, let alone Pakistan, would be able to diminish such a pervasive problem. In fact, it can be argued that an increase in reported gender violence, a phenomenon

which has been acknowledged by the leadership of Dastak and appears in Amnesty International reports, can be interpreted as a successful outcome of efforts to raise awareness among women so that more women are speaking out.

Firsthand accounts of the founders themselves provide their assessment of the progress and changes they have witnessed over the course of the twenty years of the organization's existence. Women are coming forward in greater numbers. Attitudinal changes among the population regarding the acceptability of women's decisions to exercise their rights are also observed by Shahtaj:

I mean it's a different story today from 1989 to now. It's a different acceptance, let's say. Now women have accepted; families have also accepted. If a marriage is not working or if there is violence in a marriage, it is better to get a divorce rather than make the woman suffer like that.

Through its visible stance on issues confronting women and its unwillingness to back down in the face of difficulties, the organization has been able to withstand the backlash and overcome some of the resistance to their model. Shahtaj counts among their accomplishments the following:

I think we've built a very good image for Dastak, which we are very happy about. And all the Mullah propaganda that these women were loose women or that we were supplying women from Dastak, that never took hold. You know now that women who come to Dastak, they feel secure...And previously they used to come and say we've heard this and that. They were scared. They needed Dastak but they were scared at the same time. That's one, that we have built a very good reputation.

This perception is validated by recognition garnered from a number of external bodies and government officials. Dastak has involved other NGOs and the government at the provincial and federal levels to analyze the role of shelters and to formulate reform in existing policies and to create better

systems for strengthening and monitoring shelters. Funding has been allocated by Oxfam Novib to develop legal standards for women's shelters and institutionalize its interventions. Government officials attended meetings and training sessions with Dastak and have acknowledged the dire need to improve and expand women's shelters, but unfortunately, much of the promised changes have not materialized. However, Amnesty International endorsed Dastak's model through a replication of the shelter in Karachi (PANAHA) in 2002. Two comprehensive studies of shelter services in Pakistan explicitly cite Dastak as unique for its humane treatment of women and the range of services provided (Bari, 1998; Zaidi, 2002).

The founders and their organization have gained recognition as advocates for women's rights and human rights in the country and internationally (Amnesty International, 1999, 2002; Carrick, 2008; Human Rights Watch 1999; Stephenson, 2000). Successful advocacy and mass action in concert with other groups have resulted in legal advances, an important foundation for social change. They helped make public the issue of honor killing and pressured officials to take an explicit stance in order to diminish justification of this practice. Jilani states:

The success is that women's rights are now a priority on everybody's agenda, on the agenda for political parties. For instance, just to give you an example, in 1999 when the young woman died in my office, and this whole question of honor killings exploded, a resolution against honor killings was tabled in the Senate.... There was that kind of an attitude. The few people that were propagating this as a traditional cultural value were able to pressure the others. The fact is that they sort of intimidated them to the extent that the Senate refused to act. Today, the advocacy that was launched by the women's movement resulted in at least this much: that nobody, *nobody*, can publicly defend honor killings. Nobody does. And I think that is a huge achievement.

As a result of sustained pressure, President Musharraf announced in 2000: "The Government of Pakistan vigorously condemns the practice of so-called 'honour killing.'" Such

actions do not find any place in our religion or law" (Amnesty International, 2002). Pakistan's Penal Code began to recognize honor killings as premeditated murder in 2004. Such killings do continue, but a framework exists to address the issue.

Dastak was also part of a national lobby with the government and parliamentarians that resulted in the amendment of the repressive Hudood Ordinances with the passage of the of the Women's Protection Act in 2006. This Act moves the crime of rape to the Pakistan Penal Code, distinguishes rape from sex outside of marriage and removes the required testimony of four witnesses. To further empower women with legal literacy, a Paralegal Program initiated in 1990 trains 60 women annually so that they may educate other women in their communities about women's rights under Pakistani law. Jilani finds that pressure for institutional and cultural change continues:

We are not only advocating when we go to court, one of our primary purposes is to make change in institutions..... I believe that the judiciary has to also change its mind. We are talking about independence of the judiciary from social attitudes and prejudices... It has taken us a long time. I do not think that we are there yet, but it's a work in progress and I can see the change.

Discussion and Conclusions

Women's organizations such as Dastak have played a critical role in the global effort to counter gender violence (Johnson, Ollus, & Nevala, 2008; WHO, 2002). In Pakistan, their work is crucial given the absence of concerted governmental effort to document the prevalence of violence against women and lack of political will and appropriation of resources to address the issue (Shirkat Gah, 2007; WHO, 2002). In nearly 20 years of existence, Dastak has successfully projected women's issues to the forefront of politics, have raised awareness about gender violence, advocated for legal reform, and developed beneficial programs that otherwise would be unavailable to women in Pakistan. Shelter programs, often non-existent in resource-poor countries, play a key role in enabling women to resist violence

because of their lack of control over space and unequal power in the family and society in Pakistan (WHO, 2002).

It has been noted that throughout the world, gender violence programs have not been rigorously evaluated. Research about interventions in developing countries is even more limited (Spindel, Levy, & Connor, 2000; WHO, 2002). There has been a call for documentation of the various strategies and interventions around the world for combating intimate partner violence (WHO, 2002, p. 112). Consequently, this study addresses the gap in knowledge about programs that have been initiated in Pakistan, a country generally not considered an active participant in the global effort to eliminate violence against women. Given the prominence of Pakistan in world news and its strategic relationship with the U.S., social workers can also benefit from a more informed view of Pakistan and its civil society.

The experiences reported by Dastak's leaders provide further evidence that universal human rights standards can function in a multicultural world in which values and practices vary. Universal rights norms have gained support in many societies as effective tools for improving the lives of women (Afkami, 1999; An-Na'im, 1994; Bunch, 1995; Coomaraswamy, 1999; Hossain, 1994; Rao, 1995). A rights-based approach need not signify the remaking of the world in a "Western image" or function as a form of cultural imperialism in the global south by those in the global north, as has been debated by some scholars (Merry, 2006; Morgaine, 2006; Rao, 1995). Dastak serves as an example of a program based on a human rights foundation that is thriving in a non-Western developing country.

Undoubtedly, to be effective, human rights principles must be translated into practice in a manner that is consistent with the Pakistani cultural context. At Dastak this begins with respect for fundamental human rights such as the right to life, liberty and dignity, including the right to live without violence and degradation. Women are supported to exercise their right to move about freely, to make important decisions regarding their lives and for opportunities to develop their capacities, all of which challenges the patriarchal ideology that permeates society. Patriarchal views extend into the policies of the other shelters where women are

viewed as being in need of “custodial restraint” and unworthy of care and support (Bari, 1998). These shelters are also characterized by substandard quality of the physical facilities, lack of professional and humane treatment, as well as practices that deny of fundamental rights of social, legal, economic and emotional support which are absolutely essential for women to be able to resolve oppressive situations and reconstruct their lives (Bari, 1998; Shirkat Gah, 2007; Zaidi 2003). Furthermore, the prevailing measure of successful “rehabilitation” is reconciliation with a husband and family or arranging another marriage. Marriage is viewed as the only way for women to sustain themselves (Bari, 1998).

Dastak operates with the premise that human rights work must focus beyond the legal system. Multiple strategies are used to expand rights. While pursuing legal solutions and reform, Dastak challenges deeply entrenched community norms that accept violence against women as normal by “stimulating internal discourse” on women’s legal status and rights in order to deepen and broaden universal cultural consensus on women’s right to be free from violence (An-Na’im, 1994; Coomaraswamy, 1994). For rights to be realized, it is essential that human rights concepts become a respected part of the culture and traditions of society (Coomaraswamy, 1999; Jahangir, 2000; Merry, 2006). Political strategies such as advocacy, mobilization of various sectors of the society and campaigns to put popular pressure on the State to formulate and implement gender-equitable policies have been critical in the change process. In Pakistan, a collectively oriented society, the human rights approach is still fraught with tensions, due to the focus on individual autonomy and rights over what has been perceived as community interests (Ife, 2001; Merry, 2006).

The most serious limitation of the human rights approach is the continued gap between the definition of rights and realities on the ground. Gender issues in Pakistan continue to represent a complex challenge. Pakistan (as well as the rest of South Asia) continues to have some of the worst indicators in the world with regard to violence (Coomaraswamy, 2005). Progress has been made in bringing the issue of violence against women into the open, developing programs and expanding legal remedies, but much remains to be done. Weak

institutions and the lack of strong enforcement mechanisms continue, and rights and norms continue to be violated due to the limited power of treaty bodies established to monitor compliance with CEDAW and other instruments (Merry, 2006; Shirkat Gah, 2007). Growing religious fundamentalism poses grave threats to human rights in general, but women usually suffer disproportionately as the focus of their actions (Shirkat Gah, 2007). At the community level, continued educational approaches and dialogues are essential to eliminate harmful practices to women (Coomaraswamy, 2005).

Critical for the advancement of women's human rights is the redistribution of socioeconomic resources within the society with a focus on economic and social rights of women (UNIFEM, 2007). There are many barriers to leaving abusive relationships. Women's responses to abuse is often limited by the options available, as evidenced by the high rate of return of women to their families and the grave dangers they face when they do leave abuse. Similar issues do exist in the developed nations as well (WHO, 2002). However, these barriers are exacerbated by great gender disparities in basic human development in Pakistan that limit opportunities for women's full societal participation, such as low female literacy rates, low labor participation and lack of access to economic resources (UNDP, 2006; UNIFEM, 2007). Dastak is one of the few organizations in Pakistan that provides vocational training and employment referrals to enable women to live independently, but their program can be strengthened with more efforts in this direction. However, in order for women's rights to freedom from violence to truly flourish, the state must guarantee women the means to assert their legal rights. This includes education, health care, employment and greater roles in public institutions.

In summary, Dastak's model offers a practical example of a human rights-based program that is successfully functioning in a Muslim, non-Western developing country. It provides further evidence that the rights principles have global application and women's claims for dignity and the human right to live free from violence and abuse transcend borders and cultures.

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Preventing Violence in Low-Income Communities: Facilitating Residents' Ability to Intervene in Neighborhood Problems

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The violence found in low-income communities, including areas of concentrated poverty, is often extensive and can involve illegal drugs, juvenile delinquency, and even homicide. A large body of research has emerged which points to the positive effects of informal social control and social capital in preventing violence in low-income communities, including neighbors taking leadership roles by intervening themselves. This article contains a description of an exploratory study of a pilot training program the authors developed to facilitate residents' ability to intervene in neighborhood problems in a low-income community in Atlanta, Georgia. The training incorporated concepts from restorative justice, peacemaking criminology, and macro social work, particularly consensus organizing. The results demonstrated that after their participation in the training, residents were more likely to intervene in a variety of neighborhood problems and were more likely to use direct, non-violent and peaceful intervention strategies. Participants also improved their attitudes

about intervening, feeling it was appropriate to intervene and their neighborhood was safer if residents intervened in problem behaviors. This article provides an important step in exploring the development of informal social control and social capital in low-income neighborhoods. Moreover, the strategies used in the training program can be used by social workers to design programs to prevent violence.

Key words: violence prevention, informal social control, social capital, collective efficacy, restorative justice, consensus organizing

The violence found in low-income communities, including areas of concentrated poverty, is often extensive and can involve illegal drugs, juvenile delinquency, and even homicide. While violence can have devastating effects on individuals and society as a whole, there is now a well respected body of research demonstrating that communities have the capacity to halt its development. Specifically, informal social control, conceptualized as neighbors taking action or intervening in neighborhood problems and inappropriate behaviors, has been shown to reduce crime, violence and delinquency in low-income neighborhoods (Elliott et al., 1996; Morenoff, Sampson, & Raudenbush, 2001; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Moreover, scholars argue that the combination of informal social control with social capital is important in addressing violence. However, much of the knowledge regarding the importance of informal social control and the factors associated with its development has not been transferred back to communities in ways that residents can use to address problems of violence. Further, it is not known whether there is capacity to develop informal social control in the types of neighborhoods where it is most needed.

This article provides an important step in exploring the development of social capital and informal social control in low-income neighborhoods. The article contains a description of an exploratory study of a pilot training program the authors developed in order to facilitate the development of informal social control as well as social capital in a low-income community. Findings are presented from the program illustrating residents' attitudes about intervening in neighborhood problems, including inappropriate behaviors, and perceptions of their

likelihood and confidence in intervening in a variety of hypothetical problem neighborhood behaviors before and after their involvement in the training program.

Background and Literature Review

Recent community-level studies of crime and violence, emanating from Shaw and McKay's (1942/1969) social disorganization theory, have consistently pointed to the positive effects of informal social control and social capital in addressing violence. Social capital has also been viewed as a prerequisite to informal social control. Coleman (1988) defines social capital as the "relations among persons that facilitate productive activity" (p. 100). Informal social control refers to "the development, observance and enforcement of local norms for appropriate public behavior" (Greenberg, Rohe, & Williams, 1982, p. 80). Behaviors included within informal social control include supervising public behaviors, intervening in inappropriate behaviors and administering rewards and informal sanctions (or threats of informal sanctions) for behaviors. Informally controlling inappropriate community behaviors has been linked to the reduction of crime and violence within neighborhoods (Elliott, et al., 1996; Morenoff, et al., 2001; Sampson, et al., 2002; Sampson et al., 1997; Sampson & Groves, 1989).

Putnam (2000) expands on Coleman's (1988) definition of social capital by distinguishing between two types of social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital includes social ties and social cohesion among residents, and encompasses the notion of dense social networks among small groups of people that bring them closer together. It accumulates in the daily lives of families and individuals living in communities through the course of informal interactions and includes social networks, trust, norms, and values. It is these interactions and the resultant capital that support residents' willingness to directly intervene in inappropriate neighborhood behaviors. Alternatively, social ties between neighborhood residents and both individuals and organizations outside of the neighborhood are central to Putnam's notion of bridging social capital. Bridging social capital refers to more loosely connected

networks of large numbers of individuals typically linked through indirect ties (Putnam, 2000). It connects neighborhoods and people to others, across diverse social groups and/or localities. Bridging social capital includes connections to institutions that facilitate more traditional indirect intervention strategies, such as relying on the police and social services. Through social ties norms are acknowledged and reinforced, connections to external resources are developed, and an awareness of our responsibility to others is sharpened. As Putnam reminds us, social ties widen "our awareness of the many ways in which our fates are linked" (pp. 288-289).

Given the significance of social ties in supporting residents' ability and desire to perform these tasks, it is not surprising that social capital has been found to be foundational to social control. This relationship has been born out in research demonstrating a connection between social capital and a higher likelihood of informal social control among neighborhood residents (e.g., Elliott, et al., 1996; Greenberg, et al., 1982; Sampson, et al., 1997; Warner, 2003). Contemporary social disorganization theory argues that neighborhood structural factors, such as concentrated disadvantage and residential mobility, create a deficit of social capital that inhibits the manifestation of informal social control. Communities that are disadvantaged and have high levels of residential mobility provide a weaker context to transmit informal sanctions or social control derived from the community itself (Bellair, 1997; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Sampson, et al., 1997; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Warner, 2003; Warner, Wilcox, & Rountree, 1997).

Within social disorganization theory, informal social control has been conceptualized in primarily two ways: informal surveillance (i.e., guardianship) and direct intervention. Informal surveillance or indirect intervention refers to "the casual but active observation of neighborhood streets that is engaged in by individuals during the course of daily activities. It includes recognizing and paying careful attention to strangers in the neighborhood and keeping an eye on neighbors' homes and property" (Greenberg, et al., 1982, p. 9). Informal surveillance presumably increases the likelihood that formal authorities, such as the police or social services, will be contacted in the event of deviant behavior and that residents will

be able to identify wrongdoers once formal authorities are involved. However, calling the police or social services may not be a viable response to problems in some neighborhoods. For example, neighborhoods with a long history of negative relationships with the police may be unwilling to work with the police. In such neighborhoods, community policing programs have had difficulty in getting residents to participate, due in part to the community's history of political and economic disinvestment, estrangement from and/or tension with law enforcement, and residents' skepticism and or fear about working with the police (Grinc, 1994; Rosenbaum, 1987).

Direct intervention, on the other hand, involves residents themselves, "questioning both strangers and residents of the neighborhood about suspicious activities. It may also include chastening people for certain behavior and admonishing children" (Greenberg, et al., 1982, p. 10). Greenberg et al. suggest that direct informal social control "should be particularly effective in conveying an image of a cohesive and well regulated neighborhood" and should help to "establish social norms for the area" (p. 10).

This direct form of informal social control by residents has been viewed as an essential part of a democratic society. As Clear and Karp (1999) have pointed out, "citizens in a democracy must actively work toward the welfare of the whole society and not just look out for themselves. Thus, citizens are morally obligated to fulfill whatever tasks are necessary to sustain a good society. Failures in public safety are at least partially the result of citizens' shared assumption that the responsibility for public safety belongs entirely to the criminal justice system" (p. 32).

Paralleling the criminological awareness of the importance of social capital and informal social control for preventing crime and violence, community-based social work strategies emerged which sought to build social capital by enhancing citizen participation and building the capacity of residents to address problems in poor disadvantaged communities (Johnson, 1998; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996). These interventions are grounded in theories associated with social capital and include community capacity, asset building and community organizing. In particular, there has been a renewed interest

in community-based strategies to address youth violence (see Andres-Hyman, Forrester, Achara-Abrahams, Lauricella, & Rowe, 2007; Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004). These strategies moved beyond changing individual behaviors to affecting the environmental context associated with youth violence, including such risk factors as poverty and social isolation, as well as problems related to the accessibility of weapons and drugs, low social capital, and high social disorganization. Rather than focusing on punitive responses to youth violence, youth themselves have been engaged in developing solutions, including soliciting their views and suggestions and focusing on their strengths and ability to engage in positive civic action in their neighborhoods (Checkoway, 2005; Hoffman, 2005; Hughes & Curnan, 2005).

Social work practices to enhance the ability of residents to intervene in neighborhood problems often rely on theories of self efficacy, which is closely related to collective efficacy. Bandura's (1982) theory of self efficacy suggests that residents who have strong beliefs in their capabilities approach potential stressors with the assurance that they can exercise some control over them. Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) argue neighborhood collective efficacy, or the shared willingness of local residents to intervene for the common good, depends on conditions of mutual trust and cohesion among residents. Thus developing strong social capital and ties among residents along with efficacy in controlling inappropriate youth behaviors is an important component in facilitating residents' ability to intervene. As residents are seen successfully intervening with youth, they will model these behaviors to other neighborhood residents.

In order to successfully model these behaviors within the community, however, residents must have the knowledge, skills and capacity to safely and effectively provide informal social control. Residents must develop a specific sense of efficacy in controlling inappropriate behaviors in their neighborhoods, including youth violence and delinquency. While criminological and social work research literatures have provided both increased awareness and empirical support for the effectiveness of developing social capital and informal social control among residents for the prevention of violence, this knowledge has

generally not been translated back to the community. The pilot program described in this article transferred the knowledge regarding the efficacy of informal social control, social capital and collective efficacy in addressing crime and violence back to the community, while at the same time facilitating residents' ability to intervene in neighborhood problems and inappropriate behaviors.

Theoretical Orientation of the Pilot Program

The pilot program borrowed from the literatures in restorative justice, peacemaking criminology, and macro social work, particularly consensus organizing, to support the development of informal social control and social capital among neighborhood residents for the prevention of violence. Three components were included: (1) teaching residents consensus organizing strategies for building relationships with other residents and external stakeholders, thus facilitating social capital and ties in the community; (2) helping residents identify and establish community norms that support pro-social behavior and mutual trust; and (3) teaching residents new skills to enhance their self efficacy and ability to directly intervene in inappropriate neighborhood behaviors in a respectful and supportive manner, using the principles of restorative justice. Each of these elements is discussed below.

A foundation of positive social interactions facilitates the ability of residents to use direct intervention strategies to address inappropriate neighborhood behaviors. Traditional community organizing strategies for building social capital (Beck & Eichler, 2000; Eichler, 2007; Ohmer & DeMasi, 2009) are important tools that can support the development of social ties among neighbors. One of the primary community organizing methods for strengthening bonding social capital includes facilitating effective one-on-one relationship building skills among residents. Using the strategies of consensus organizing, the pilot program included exercises that facilitated residents' ability to find new ways to meet and have discussions with other residents, particularly residents with whom no previous relationship had been established. Role plays and field exercises were used to build residents' skills and self efficacy in these

areas. For example, one exercise focused on how to approach other residents (e.g., at the grocery store, while taking a walk, etc.) and have a conversation about neighborhood strengths, weaknesses, norms, and/or issues that concern them. These experiences and class discussions helped residents develop direct and vicarious experiences of success, as well as more extensive social networks.

The program also emphasized consensus organizing strategies for building bridges between low-income communities and external organizations (Eichler, 2007; Ohmer & DeMasi, 2009). In part, the purpose of the development of these bridges was to break down low expectations and negative stereotypes that external players may have had of low-income neighborhoods, while at the same time breaking down the negative images that low-income residents may have had of people in power (Haskin & Lloyd, 1994). In addition, the program helped to develop social ties and capital among community residents and between the residents and external partners to help increase residents' confidence and ability to intervene in both direct and indirect ways in problem neighborhood behaviors. As part of the training program relationships among residents and external leaders were built by including external players in the program, inviting them to meet with and educate residents about their programs, as well as listen to what residents cared about. In addition, participants were given assignments that involved interviews with external resource players they felt were important to their community, but with whom they did not have relationships.

While social ties provide an avenue to positively reinforce norms as well as develop a common understanding of what the community norms are, there must also be a substantial level of agreement regarding the norms and values that are to be reinforced for informal social control to have a positive effect on neighborhoods and their crime levels. The norms and values supported by the neighborhood must encourage pro-social behavior, and be prevalent to the degree that residents can build mutual trust and be willing to intervene for the common good. Yet the development of norms that support both pro-social behavior and mutual trust may face obstacles in low-income communities. Questions regarding the type of

norms found in low-income environments have been raised in the literature. For example, norms that are widely held may not be always visible, and visible norms may not reflect widely held values. Wilson (1996) suggests that although disadvantaged groups may hold middle class values, they may not be able to live them out in all instances, given the eroding nature of the pervasive problems associated with poverty (see also Warner, 2003). Similarly, Anderson (1999) has pointed out that children may take on the norms of "street behavior" even if they do not agree with them "in order to get by." Thus, what is valued in a community may be difficult to observe directly.

Participants in the pilot program were given the opportunity to explore community norms. The trainers discussed research regarding norms and values and their role in building strong communities. Residents were also given opportunities to internalize the significance of norms in their neighborhood. The trainers asked participants to respond to a series of questions about norms. These questions included defining norms in the context of their own lives, as well as describing circumstances in which they had violated norms, and times when a harmful or uncomfortable consequence resulted from norm violation. From this "story telling," the trainers worked with the participants to understand the relevance of norms. Participants were also asked to talk with a wide spectrum of residents about what they believed the norms were within the neighborhood. These interactions allowed residents to begin to understand neighborhood norms as others saw them, and began a process in which non-normative behavior was defined through communication and interaction among group members.

In addition to building relationships and identifying and establishing community norms, it is also critical to make residents more aware of the importance of their role in providing a safe neighborhood. Clear and Karp (1999) argue that "Each community member deserves to be treated with dignity and respect" (p. 32). Thus it is important that intervening should never be done in a threatening or condemning fashion. Relying on work by Bazemore (2001), Braithwaite (1989), Braswell (1990), Pepinsky and Quinney (1991), and Sullivan and Tift (2005), participants were taught how to intervene in respectful, non-coercive ways when faced with inappropriate

neighborhood behaviors, thereby fostering values that encouraged helping others and recognizing moral obligations to others, rather than isolating and stigmatizing others.

During the training participants explored ways in which they could address transgressions in a respectful manner. In addition, the trainers presented methods for maintaining personal safety while intervening, including discussing with participants neighborhood problems in which participants would feel safe intervening alone and those in which they might need assistance from a neighbor or family member. Respectful interactions were modeled and participants learned skills such as reflective listening, re-framing, and non-violent communication to promote such interactions. Residents were given time to practice these skills through role playing and homework assignments carried out with friends and family whom they trusted. Participants were able to practice interactions in a respectful manner by critiquing each others' homework assignments and role plays.

In summary, it was expected that the pilot program would lay a foundation to increase residents' capacity to intervene in problem neighborhood behaviors by facilitating social capital, as well as clarifying residents' definition of community norms and values. Specifically, the current study examined whether or not the program: (1) improved residents' attitudes about the appropriateness of intervening in inappropriate and problem neighborhood behaviors, as well as increase their likelihood of intervening in these behaviors; (2) increased the likelihood of their using restorative and indirect methods of intervening rather than punitive ones; and (3) increased their confidence in intervening.

Method

Procedures

The pilot program took place at a community facility in a low-income neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia. The neighborhood is located in a relatively high crime area, particularly in the offenses that the training program would most likely have an impact on—burglary, larceny and auto theft—all of which rose over the year prior to the start of the program. The

neighborhood is also a high poverty area, with 48.3% of families living below the federal poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Most urban literature considers poverty levels above 40% to be concentrated/extreme poverty or "ghetto poverty." Further neighborhood characteristics confirm the extreme poverty of the area. For example, only 40% of the residents are employed and 44% do not have a high school diploma. Thirty-six percent of the households are female-headed households. The neighborhood is predominantly (97%) non-Hispanic African American. Fifty-nine percent of the neighborhood residents are female and the median age is 23 years old. Only 24% of the residents are married.

The characteristics of the training participants are fairly consistent with the neighborhood in terms of income, race and gender, although participants were more likely to have a higher level of education, to be older and to be married. The majority of participants had very low to low incomes, with 29% (N=4) having incomes at \$10,000 a year or less, 36% (N=5) between \$10,001 and \$20,000 a year, 21% (N=3) with incomes between \$20,001 and \$30,000 a year, and 14% (N=2) with incomes between \$30,001 and \$40,000 a year. Ninety-three percent of participants responding to the question regarding race/ethnicity were non-Hispanic African American (N=13), and 6% (N=1) were African American/Native American. Sixty-nine percent of the participants were female (N=11) and 31% (N=5) were male. While the age of participants ranged from 20 to 78, the average age was 50 years old. Participants' marital status included married/domestic partnership (44%; N=7), widowed (25%; N=4), separated/divorced (19%; N=3), and single/never married (13%; N=2). The majority of participants did not have children living at home (81%; N=13), while 13% (N=2) had 1 child at home, and 6% (N=1) had 3 children living at home. Half of participants completed a high school degree or GED (N=8), 38% (N=6) completed some college or a 2-year degree, 6% (N=1) completed a bachelors degree, and 6% (N=1) completed a graduate/professional degree. Twenty-five percent (N=4) were employed full-time, 19% (N=3) were retired, 19% (N=3) were on disability and not working, 13% (N=2) were employed part-time, 13% (N=2) were unemployed, and 13% (N=2) were full-time students. Finally the average length of

residency in the neighborhood was 6.5 years; however, several residents were new to the neighborhood (minimum 2-4 years; N=4) and others were older retired residents who had lived in the neighborhood most of their adult lives (maximum 40-52 years; N=2).

The training program included six 2.5 hour weekly sessions, consisting of a combination of lectures, discussions, role plays and homework assignments (training modules are available from the authors). Participants were recruited for the program using a variety of methods. The goal was to recruit 15-20 individuals who were active in their community and/or had an interest in gaining skills to build a safer and more cohesive neighborhood. The authors partnered with a local family service agency working in the neighborhood, and worked with several existing neighborhood organizations and institutions to recruit participants, including faith-based organizations, community development corporations, the neighborhood planning unit, social service agencies, and the local public housing community. The authors attended meetings of these organizations to inform residents about the program. In addition, interested residents were asked to let others know about the program. Several informational meetings were held for potential participants to provide more detailed information about the project and determine a convenient time for the training sessions. Sixteen out of 18 residents recruited from the community completed the training program and both the pre- and post-training surveys. Two participants dropped out of the training program because they were not able to make the commitment to attend the majority of the sessions. Those who did attend stated they were interested in gaining new skills that would help them build relationships with other residents and address violence in their neighborhood.

Institutional Review Board permission was obtained to develop and conduct the pilot program. Participants were given an informed consent form which explained the benefits and risks of participation as well as the responsibilities, and a confidentiality pledge card to sign, addressing the confidentiality of participants' comments and interactions in class. The authors also explained that participants would be asked to complete a survey at the first and last session of the program,

and that notes would be taken on their comments, experience with the role play activities, and their homework assignments. Participants were also informed that their responses would be confidential, and that they could choose to "pass" for any reason on any activity of the training. Participants were paid a small fee (a maximum of \$100) for their participation in the program that varied according to the number of sessions attended and surveys completed.

Measures

Participants were administered a pre- and post-training survey during the first and last days of the training. Surveys were read aloud to groups of approximately 3 participants, with participants filling in their own responses on the surveys. The surveys took about thirty minutes to complete and included approximately 100 questions. Surveys included questions on social ties, participation in neighborhood organizations, questions regarding inappropriate behaviors within their neighborhoods, questions about their attitudes toward intervening, and their likelihood and confidence in intervening in a variety of situations, and demographic questions. The following measures were created for the current study and were used to determine whether or not the training had a significant impact on participants' attitudes about intervening, likelihood of intervening, confidence in intervening, and the form of intervention they were likely to use.

Attitudes about intervening. Attitudes about Intervening were measured with five questions regarding participants' attitudes about the appropriateness of intervening in inappropriate neighborhood behaviors. The five items were: (1) It is appropriate to intervene in suspicious behaviors that occur in your neighborhood; (2) It is appropriate to question strangers in your neighborhood; (3) It is right for someone to say something to someone behaving inappropriately in your neighborhood; (4) When neighbors intervene, neighborhoods are safer; and (5) Good neighbors mind their own business (reverse coded). Responses to these items ranged from (1) "strongly disagree" to (4) "strongly agree." Each participant's responses were averaged across the five items. Cronbach's alpha for these five items was .81.

Likelihood to intervene. Likelihood to Intervene was measured on five separate scenarios, including: (1) A couple was having a raging fight in public in which it appeared as if the man could turn violent; (2) Elementary-aged boys were seen away from school grounds on a school day; (3) Teenage boys were seen away from school grounds on a school day; (4) Neighbors were having a loud party; and (5) A group of boys were bullying another boy. For each of these situations, respondents were asked, "how likely would you be to intervene?" ranging from (1) "very unlikely" to (4) "very likely." The likelihood of intervening was averaged across these five scenarios. The reliability of this scale was moderate; Chronbach's $\alpha = .52$.

Confidence in Intervening. Participants were asked about their confidence level (on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 meaning "very unconfident," to 4 meaning "very confident") in intervening in two hypothetical scenarios previously identified in the survey: a couple having a raging fight in public, and a neighbor having loud parties. Correlations between these two items were not very high ($r = .31$); therefore, they were analyzed separately.

Most likely to do when intervening. Participants who responded that they were "likely," or "very likely" to intervene in the above two hypothetical situations (the couple having a raging fight in public, and the neighbor having loud parties) were then asked an open-ended question about what they were most likely to do when they intervened.

Results

Results from the t-tests

Tests of hypotheses that the training would increase all measures were conducted using one-tailed significance tests. Further, because of the small sample size, a more relaxed significance level of .10 was used. The results from the t-tests demonstrate that the mean scores regarding participants' attitudes about intervening and their likelihood to intervene both increased significantly from pre- to post-test, despite the very small sample size ($N=15$). The mean score for participants' attitudes towards intervening at the pre-test was 2.84, and it increased to 3.33 at the post-test, demonstrating a significant

improvement in participants' attitudes towards intervening after the training ($t = 2.38$, $df = 14$; $p = .017$). Similarly, the pre-test mean score for participants' likelihood of intervening across the 5 hypothetical situations was 3.08, and the post-test mean was 3.35, demonstrating that participants were significantly more likely to intervene in these situations after the training ($t = 1.88$; $df = 14$; $p = .052$).

While the mean scores for participants' confidence in intervening in both of the hypothetical situations increased from pre-test to post-test, the increase did not reach significance levels. However, the mean scores did go in the intended direction. The mean confidence level for intervening in the couple fighting was 2.94 at pre-test, which increased to 3.13 ($t = 0.28$; $df = 14$; $p = .290$). Similarly the mean confidence level for intervening with the neighbor's loud party was 3.40 at pre-test, which increased to 3.60 ($t = 0.50$; $df = 14$; $p = .167$). While the increase in the quantitative scores was not significantly different, it is interesting to note that the forms of intervention that respondents' stated they would use showed more variation (as discussed below), suggesting confidence with more forms of intervening.

What Participants were Most Likely to do when Intervening

Participants who stated that they were "very likely" or "likely" to intervene in the couple having a raging fight in public and a neighbor having loud parties into the night, were asked what they were most likely to do when they intervened. The majority of participants stated they would use only indirect intervention strategies to intervene in the couple having a raging fight before the training program ($N=10$), such as calling the police or 911 (e.g., "I would not intervene personally, I would call the authorities"). Only 3 participants said they would use direct forms of intervention before the training program (e.g. "I would try to reason with them"). However, after the training, participants stated they would be more likely to use direct forms of intervention to address the couple fighting ($N=9$), either alone ($N=4$) or in combination with indirect strategies ($N=5$). Moreover, after the training only four participants stated they would use only informal surveillance or indirect forms of intervention ("I would observe and call for

help or 911"). Participants stated they would intervene directly by trying to talk to the couple (e.g., "Ask if everything was OK and stick around until it calmed down"), asking them if they needed help (e.g., "I would approach them and ask them if they need help, and then go and call or look for police or security guard"), or trying to calm them down (e.g., "Try to calm the couple and maintain some coolness. Call 911."). A few participants indicated they would try to diffuse the situation by their tone of voice (e.g., "With a gentle voice I would ask, 'Is there a problem here, can I help? If not, 911 is the only way'"). These methods illustrate several of the skills participants learned regarding peaceful and non-threatening intervention strategies.

The majority of participants stated they would use only indirect strategies to intervene in the neighbor having loud parties before the training (N=10), such as calling the police or 911 (e.g., "If it got to be too late, I would call the police"). Only 3 participants said they would use direct forms of intervention (e.g., "Go to the neighbor and notify that their parties are disturbing and ask them to calm down"). However, after the training program, the majority of participants stated they would be more likely to use direct forms of intervention to address a neighbor having loud parties (N=11), either alone (N=8) or in combination with indirect intervention strategies (N=3). Only 3 participants stated they would use only indirect forms of intervention with the neighbor having loud parties after the training. Participants indicated they would intervene directly by approaching their neighbor in some way to address the situation, including asking them to turn the music down ("Go and knock on the door and ask them to turn it down"). A few participants also discussed the manner in which they would approach the neighbor, including creating a pleasant atmosphere ("Smile, eye-contact, ask them about another person and create a different mood"), being polite (e.g., "I will ask please, your loud music sounds good but it is too loud"), or making a connection with the person ("Tell them I like the music also, but could they just turn it down a notch"). In their responses, participants illustrated strategies for directly intervening that they learned in the training, including using a peaceful demeanor and non-threatening language. Moreover, after the training participants said they would intervene

directly first, then call the police only if their direct intervention strategies didn't work (e.g., "Go over and ask them to politely lower their music. If this didn't work, I'd call the police.").

Limitations of the Current Study

This study was exploratory in nature and limited to analysis of residents' perceptions and attitudes using self-report data. No data were collected after the training to examine whether or not participants actually changed their behaviors regarding intervening in neighborhood problems. In addition, the very small sample size limits the study's validity and generalizability. While a pre- and post-test design was one the study's strengths, causal relationships cannot be inferred because of the nature of the design.

Discussion

Concentrated poverty has emerged as major social problem in the United States. Its effects range from intergenerational poverty to concentrated social problems that include illegal drugs, juvenile delinquency, and violence, including homicide. A large body of research has emerged which points to the positive effects of informal social control and social capital on violence and related problems in a variety of neighborhoods, including those with concentrated poverty (see Elliott, et al., 1996; Sampson, et al., 2002). This research delineates two types of informal social control: informal surveillance or indirect intervention, which is based on relying on formal entities to intervene, such as the police or social service agencies, and indirect intervention, which involves neighbors directly taking leadership roles by intervening themselves. Direct forms of informal social control by residents have been viewed as an essential part of a democratic society. Results from the current study demonstrated that after their participation in the training program, residents were more likely to intervene in neighborhood problems, including situations involving elementary and teenage boys missing school or hassling another boy, and in situations involving a couple fighting or neighbors having loud parties. Participants were also more likely to use direct, non-violent intervention after the training, including

approaching the individuals involved in the transgressions in a respectful manner. They also improved their attitudes about intervening, feeling it was appropriate to intervene and their neighborhood was safer if they did intervene.

Residents participating in the training also expressed their views regarding their experiences during a debriefing session on the last day of the training. Overall, participants stated that they believed they had gained important skills in intervening in neighborhood problems in a nonviolent manner, particularly regarding the tone of voice they might use and their orientation to the approach. Similar to their response on the survey, residents said they viewed intervening as calling the police or chastising behavior prior to the training, but afterwards they realized that these approaches also carried costs. More specifically, participants realized that the police may not follow through or may not arrive in a timely way, and chastising neighbors could escalate matters and not effect a change in behavior. After the training, participants stated that they now realized they could approach their neighbors using problem solving strategies, and several gave examples where they were using these skills in their daily lives. For example, one participant explained that while she was passing out flyers, she saw "two girls getting ready to fight and was able to diffuse the situation by distracting them with her flyer." Another participant stated that "A women approached me in an angry way, and I used a spirit of sweetness to tell her the rules and regulations." The participant also added that "being in this session has taught me a lot...I can handle a situation; if it is heated situation I know how not to put the coals on the fire."

Facilitating residents' ability to directly intervene in a non-threatening and respectful manner is an important social work strategy for preventing violence in low-income and concentrated poverty neighborhoods. Furthermore, facilitating relationships, social capital and social ties among residents and teaching them how to identify and clarify community norms lays the foundation for direct intervention to be successful. The training program illustrates how research on criminology and peacemaking can be integrated with traditional macro social work and community practice strategies to address neighborhood violence. The results from the program illustrate that it

is possible to develop residents' capacity to intervene in inappropriate behaviors in low-income neighborhoods. Additional and more rigorous research is required to examine the development of informal social control and social capital among residents in low-income communities. This article provides an important first step in exploring these issues. Moreover, the training program illustrates specific strategies that social workers can use to design violence prevention programs.

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Book Reviews

Amy Stuart Wells, Jennifer Jellison Holme, Anita Revilla and Awo Korantemaa Ayamda, *Both Sides Now: The Story of School Desegregation's Graduates*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009. \$24.95 papercover.

The backdrop to this collaborative publication is the landmark Supreme Court decision fifty-five years ago that forged the desegregation initiative in educational institutions across several American states. In distinctive ways, the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling (1954) set the stage for grappling with today's multi-ethnic/racial school environment, and the ongoing shaping of school reform. Subsequent critical accounts of the outcomes of this court-mandated movement have covered a wide array of topics concerning the school populations, both white and non-white, that were affected by the decision. Within a span of more than half a century, this civil rights journey has trodden a path from segregation to desegregation and back to segregation again. It has been shaped by multiple events, the experiences of different groups, a changing political climate, economic flux and demographic shifts. Although desegregation raised consciousness and improved academic access for minorities, it failed to usher in integration in its true sense, and also resulted in serious imbalances in academic resources and performance.

This book is a diligently executed qualitative research effort by academics from education, sociology and women's studies who undertook in-depth case studies of six high schools and their graduates who were involved in the desegregation endeavor. The study involved a five-year data collection exercise and was based on more than 550 interviews of selected members of the class of 1980, as well as policy makers, lawyers, educators and others in the school districts in which the high schools were located. A content analysis of historical

documents, school board minutes, yearbooks, newspaper articles and legal documents was also undertaken. The study explored the way the graduates of the schools experienced and understood desegregation and examined its effect on their lives, both then and now. In addition, the policy context that shaped these experiences is also explored.

The book's first five chapters describe the six high schools, the wider political context and the contemporary experiences of the graduates. A rationale for the sample selection and a description of the method of study are also included. The social contexts that presented barriers to the success of integration are analyzed in the form of themes such as the continuation of segregation outside of school, the role of bussing of minorities, privileged access to high-track classes, the role of a partisan media and a pervasive color-blindness, especially among teachers, that evaded discussing inter-racial issues and even eluded relevant course content. This insightful account is followed in the subsequent three chapters by a description of the post-school life of the graduates and their work, family and community life experiences. The narrative intersperses sensitive accounts of individual experiences across the schools, races, gender and economic classes through using various themes and authors' interpretations.

The foreword to the book aptly points out that "it is not the answer we might have liked, but [the book] provides the answer we need." Its strength lies in the in-depth analysis, the methodological rigor and the objectivity gained through including diverse participants from different geographical areas. Though the findings validate what other scholarly accounts have shown in terms of the gains of desegregation and continued struggles to diffuse inequities, the authors present a strong case for school restructuring. However, the teachers' perspective in the analyses is conspicuous by its absence, although their role is frequently mentioned in the graduates' narratives. Nevertheless, the book is a valuable resource for parents, educators, policy makers, researchers and counselors working in schools in this country. It promises to stimulate wider discussion about school reform, and points the way toward solving the continued social and academic marginalization of minorities.

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Marybeth Shinn and Hirokazu Yoshikawa (Eds.), *Towards Positive Youth Development: Transforming Schools and Community Programs*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. \$49.95 hardcover.

Since the 1990s, youth development has been a popular focus area for funders, policy makers and researchers across disciplines who are interested in examining and influencing life outcomes for children and adolescents. While there has been substantial research regarding the identification of risk and protective factors for positive youth development, little has been written at the macro level. How do particular settings support positive outcomes for youth? The primary goal of *Toward Positive Youth Development* is to explore how settings in which we commonly find youth can be changed in order to create effective interventions for youth.

The book begins with an introductory chapter which describes its purpose and layout. The remaining eighteen chapters are separated into five sections. The first four sections of the book examine primary settings and contexts for youth. Each chapter within these first four sections addresses issues of theory (such as network theory and the ecological theory of action), describes chosen methodology, and provides exemplars (including MyTeachingPartner and the Meyerhoff Scholars Program). The first section (chapters 2-4) focuses on the classroom. Specifically, these chapters appraise how changes instituted by the teacher can influence a variety of issues such as classroom climate, behavior norms, and student engagement, in order to improve student success. The second section (chapters 5-9) examines changes that are introduced school-wide. Policies and climate are considered in relation to a variety of factors that influence youth outcomes, including perceptions of safety and teacher expectations of youth.

Community organizations, settings in which youth may interact during non-school hours, represent the focus of the third section (chapters 10-13). Including these chapters is useful in providing a more holistic view of youth development settings. The lens is further widened in the fourth section (chapters 14-17), where broader social contexts are considered. Chapters in this section consider how larger systems (local, state, federal)

interact to influence youth outcomes and how system or community-wide interventions can be implemented. In particular, the use of data to educate stakeholders and inform change is discussed in several chapters. Finally, the fifth section concludes the book with two chapters which cover all setting levels. Chapter 18 addresses strategies for improving the validity and reliability of setting level measurement while chapter 19 summarizes and examines themes, common to all setting levels, which illuminate effective intervention strategies.

A primary strength of the book is its format. All contributing authors not only provide theoretical support for their setting interventions, but concrete examples which illuminate the strategies described. Additionally, common themes woven throughout the book support the goal of offering effective strategies for creating setting-level changes. For example, participatory approaches to change, including stakeholders in assessment and goal setting, are described and promoted in several chapters. Successful change requires buy-in at multiple levels and early on in the process. The commonality of issues illuminates key strategies to consider when undertaking change.

One weakness of the book is the shortage of well-documented, evidence-based change models. Though the book is robust with proposed theory and methodology, much of the research is recent. However, given the uniqueness of this book's focus, it is not surprising that many of the studies are still in early stages. Hopefully, a second edition of this book will be produced when more of the identified studies have concrete findings. Nevertheless, *Toward Positive Youth Development* is a collection of well-written, inspiring scholarly contributions which build an evidence base for setting-level interventions to improve youth outcomes. While focused on macro level change (settings), the book maintains an awareness of micro level goals (positive youth outcomes). This unique, integrated focus should be of interest to a wide range of practitioners, researchers, funders and policy makers—those dedicated to improving the lives of youth and those interested in organizational development and change.

Amy D. Benton, University of California at Berkeley

Mel Gray, John Coates and Michael Yellowbird (Eds.), *Indigenous Social Work Around the World: Towards Culturally Relevant Education and Practice*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008. \$99.95 hardcover.

The publication of this book is very timely given the groundswell of interest in Indigenous issues across societies. Global climactic change and the threat of natural disasters, growing interest in ethnoecology and biomedical solutions, and spiritual depravity in the industrialized world drive this growing interest. The social work profession is also finally coming to terms with the non-viability of traditional social work practices across cultures and the need to find or develop fundamentally different approaches to human helping and healing. Although the literature on Indigenous social work and related matters is somewhat patchy, this book represents seminal work in Indigenous social work and is an excellent review of existing concepts and issues.

While offering a broad and global view of the issues, concepts and theories on social work with Indigenous groups, this book is framed within a political process related to competing epistemologies and efforts to decolonize perspectives. One of the most meaningful points found throughout the text is the problem of the wholesale acceptance of Western epistemology on which contemporary social work theory and practice is founded. The authors describe a continuum of colonial impositions that morphed into a post-modern emphasis on the presumed universality of human behavior. Thus, localized practices drawn from alternative epistemologies of human processes and psyches have historically been neglected and with unconfirmed effectiveness.

The dominant Western paradigm that structures much of social work practice is alleged to be in collusion with economic forces that subjugate Indigenous societies. The authors argue that the very purpose of professional social work is to placate and pacify as a means to maintain the power differential between majority and minority cultures. Sadly, as a result of colonial domination, many of the beliefs and narratives of Indigenous people are really those of colonialists and cultural hegemony whose rendition of history and reality serve

to justify colonial mastery. These unchallenged assumptions regarding the ontologies and epistemologies of Indigenous groups are often reproduced at the level of social work education and practice, which tends to valorize its own history of propping up communities pillaged by rampant capitalism. For social work to progress in its quest for social justice, it must deal with different versions of reality in which rival claimants compete to assert their notions of what is meaningful and effectual.

While the book offers deep analysis into the social and political challenges associated with the need for corrective action, it does not necessarily offer tangible options or suggest ways to change existing systems. Despite the obvious need, resistance to indigenization is profound, even within the presumed liberal circles of social work. Infusing new paradigms into established pedagogy poses significant challenges. As mentioned in the book, most social work scholars were indoctrinated with Western principles and epistemologies and subscribe to little else. Thus, shifting schools of thoughts would serve to disempower and render less advantageous their knowledge, the same process that Indigenous people have been subjected to for centuries.

There is immense power and control associated with normalized knowledge. To make room for Indigenous voices, the entire academic/research complex must be reconstructed. Social work practice is validated through evidence derived from a narrow set of standardized methods and metrics. Programs offering evidence-based practices are more likely to receive funding and continue to operate. It is a tidy self-fulfilling cycle involving cost-effective short-term interventions, evaluations that prove immediate success, branding and packaging programs, and building curriculum around techniques. The majority of these evaluations involve compliant and homogenous cohorts that are most likely to adhere to treatment. However, as argued in this book, Indigenous practices do not readily lend themselves to measurable outcomes, are not always restricted to Western timeframes, do not always manifest immediate results, and are rarely published in professional journals. Nevertheless, uncounted numbers of Indigenous-based social service programs exist nationally and internationally. Many

receive government or private funding and are not averse to the notion of evaluation. Indigenous programs must initially convince sources of their merit and potential for making a positive impact on the disaffected, those least likely to participate in mainstream programs. Administrators of Indigenous programs understand the need for an articulated theory of change and accountability through evaluation. The crux of the matter is about goodness-of-fit and the development of methods that best apprehend both short- and long-term programmatic impacts.

Conspicuously missing from the book is coverage of critical Indigenous concepts such as historical trauma. This concept applies to most Indigenous populations whose populations and lifeways were decimated following Western contact. Severe and persisting social problems among Indigenous groups are attributable to ancestral trauma, and the study of disenfranchisement provides critical clues into the restoration of their well-being.

Finally, the book tends to connote pure and unadulterated Indigenous cultures and practices. The use of metaphor describing fabrics with invasive Western threads detracts from the reality of most Indigenous peoples' experience. They have been Christianized, Western-schooled, become entrepreneurs, and many aspire to have the same modern materials as everyone else. Indigenous program design must have a core of Indigenous principles, but in the majority of instances must likely be based on an amalgamation of cultural techniques. Overemphasizing the exceptionality of Indigenous culture may be akin to exoticification, creating a different set of problems related to goodness-of-fit.

Jon K. Matsuoka and Peter Mataira, University of Hawai'i

Leland T. Saito, *The Politics of Exclusion: The Failure of Race-Neutral Policies in Urban America*. Stanford, California: Stanford, 2009. \$60.00 hardcover; \$22.95 paperback.

When I was an elementary school student in Korea, we were taught about the "melting pot" which characterized a country called the United States. The melting pot was defined

as "a place where a variety of races, cultures, or individuals assimilate into a cohesive whole." I always imagined a big bowl of delicious soup with lots of ingredients. Then, I grew up and came to the United States. The image of a well-blended soup disappeared as I lived in a Midwest city, where the "black" areas and the "white" areas were divided with a bridge in between. The image turned into a separated mixture of oil and water.

Nearly half a century has passed since the civil rights movement of the 1960s successfully challenged discrimination in voting, employment and other aspects of everyday life in the United States. Still, racial issues still prevail in the country. The United States has passed the era of "race-based policies" such as slavery and segregation, and most of its policies today are "race-neutral." Now, in his important new book, Leland T. Saito asks the question, "If policymakers intend to make race-neutral policies, why do policies have racial consequences?"

The book begins by providing a background to the race-neutral policies in the United States. Saito claims such policies result from the fundamental beliefs of the policymakers that the country is based on the principles of equality and democracy and that racial minorities are integrated into the society. The beliefs sound reasonable: What would be a better example of minority individuals' success than Barack Obama, a biracial American, now occupying the highest government position in the country? A few examples of minority individuals' success have been used as the rationale for blaming those who are not so successful and supporting theories or images such as "culture of poverty" and "model minority." But Saito declares: "We remain a nation divided by race." By denying this fact, race-neutral policies may, intentionally or unintentionally, produce racialized consequences. Saito uses case studies in each chapter of the book to illustrate this point. Chapters 2 and 3 describe how downtown redevelopment and historic preservation were contested and racialized in the examples of the Chinese Mission, and Douglas and Clermont/Coast Hotels in San Diego. A downtown redevelopment campaign fueled by a "growth machine strategy" placed buildings of historic importance to the minority community at risk of being demolished. The author further describes how these significant buildings

came to be considered simply “ugly-looking” structures suitable for destruction. These chapters show how the lobbying efforts of the Chinese American and African American communities preserved the buildings.

In Chapters 4 and 5, Saito examines charter reform, redistricting, and the council elections in the New York City. He asserts that “by fragmenting minority groups and placing them in separate districts, the race-neutral election policies perpetuate the practice of disenfranchising minority communities.” In Chapter 6, he uses redistricting policies in the Los Angeles region as a case study. According to Saito, Asian American, African American, and Latino organizations successfully worked together during the 2000-2002 redistricting process in Southern California, achieving their common goals through a multiracial coalition.

Saito also argues that contemporary race-neutral-looking policies may in fact support racial outcomes “because of the history of systemic racism in society.” The book’s historical and political perspectives in explaining the persistence of racial inequalities are innovative, and provide new perspectives in examining other kinds of inequalities experienced by minorities in other areas such as gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities. The book’s focus on Asian Americans is rare and valuable. However, the book does not offer suggestions other than the creation of multi-racial coalitions and race-neutral policies that have positive consequences for everyone.

The book is essential reading for future social workers and community organizers who advocate for ethnic minorities. This book should also be read by urban planners involved in redevelopment and policymakers, especially those who argue for race-neutral policies. The case studies in the book provide excellent fodder for class discussion on redevelopment and election systems, especially in interdisciplinary classes.

Jaehye Yi, University of Southern California

Jeanne Flavin, *Our Bodies, Our Crimes: The Policing of Women's Reproduction in America*. New York: New York University Press, 2009. \$36.00 hardcover.

The issue of women's reproductive rights is often discussed with reference to the framework of abortion rights but many scholars believe that this approach offers a limited framework for analysis. Responding to the challenge, this book adds to a growing body of literature that places women's reproductive rights in the larger context of human rights rather than the narrowly focused perspective of abortion rights. Exploring the issue from a human rights perspective allows the expansion of reproductive rights discussions to include legal and criminal justice policies regarding the reproductive rights of women who abuse substances, who are in abusive intimate relationships, or who are incarcerated.

The introductory chapter establishes the larger question of women's reproductive rights as a civil and human right that has been diminished by political and social construction of reproductive rights as a one-issue concern of abortion rights. Flavin sees this one-issue focus as limiting discussions of women's reproductive rights, thereby allowing the legal, criminal justice, and social service systems to undermine the full range of women's reproductive rights.

Flavin's first three chapters trace the history of abortion in the United States from the early 19th century when first-trimester abortion was basically unregulated, through the 1970 *Roe v. Wade* decision to legalize abortions, to current policies that undermine *Roe*. Politically and socially framing abortion as an issue of the rights of the unborn child has shifted the discussion away from a woman's right to choose when or when not to become a mother. The focus of the next chapter is the difficult subject of neonaticide and infant abandonment, an issue that disproportionately involves young women in their teens and twenties. Social and political pressure to eliminate comprehensive sex education and lack of access to contraceptives for teens are taken to task for creating an environment that causes young women who get pregnant unintentionally to experience fear and denial about their pregnancies. Safe haven legislation is discussed as an alternative for young women.

Chapters 5 through 8 deal with criminal justice policies and procedures and their effect on women's reproductive abilities and rights. Drawing on court cases, the discussion centers on legal proceedings that determine women's reproductive rights. From *no procreation* court orders for women who are involved with social services or the legal system, to custody decisions that remove children from their mothers because of domestic violence in their homes, the legal and criminal justice systems have become enmeshed in determining women's reproductive rights. Those rights are thus diminished by allowing these systems to determine who has the right to be a mother and to uphold socially constructed norms for motherhood.

Social biases against incarcerated women that label them as "bad" mothers are discussed in the chapters on incarcerated women. Drug addiction coupled with incarceration often results in their labeling as bad mothers who do not deserve to have children. The number of incarcerated women, many of whom are nonviolent drug offenders, has grown dramatically in the past twenty years. The majority of incarcerated women are poor, women of color, and mothers. More than 60 percent of incarcerated women have minor children. Many were the primary caretakers of their children prior to incarceration. Parental rights of incarcerated mothers may be terminated through provisions of the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and in some states incarceration itself is grounds for termination of parental rights.

Another issue for incarcerated women is health care. Health care for inmates may not be a priority for correctional facilities, and women's reproductive health care, including Pap smears and breast exams may be neglected or ignored. Additionally, about 2,000 women give birth while incarcerated. Most state prison systems allow women to be shackled when they are in labor and giving birth. Babies are often removed immediately and placed in the custody of family members or social services. Because many women are incarcerated in facilities far from their homes, visitation with these newborns or with older children is often very limited, if not impossible.

The book is thoroughly researched and provides a review of criminal justice policies and a discussion of the social construction of the attributes that define *good* and *bad* women and

good and *bad* mothers. The book's liberal feminist perspectives are both thought-provoking and controversial, as they challenge prevailing policies and attitudes regarding the reproductive rights of *good* and *bad* women in a manner that will appeal to some readers and offend others.

Debra Durham, University of Louisville

Ellen Annandale, *Women's Health and Social Change*. New York: Routledge, 2009. \$45.95 papercover.

In writing about women's health and social change, Ellen Annandale spans several fields of study, including feminism, sociology, and epidemiology. This reviewer approached her work from a background in the epidemiology of women's health, as related to alcohol consumption.

Beginning in the 17th century and focusing on Britain and United States, Annandale discusses the relation between women's health and their position in society at the time from the perspective of women writers and feminists. The period from the 17th century through the early 20th century is characterized as a patriarchal society dominated by binary divisions—social/biological, mind/body, reason/emotion—in which men claimed the higher values of the social, mind, reason, and action, assigning to women the less valued attributes of biology, body, emotion, and passivity. This negative appraisal of women's capabilities served to justify limiting their access to societal resources. Poor health association with such deprivation was attributed to their weaker constitutions, a view challenged by women writers of the day who attributed women's illness to the oppression they suffered.

Although this binary view of men as employment-oriented producers and women as home-based consumers crumbled somewhat during World War II, it took on new life after the war ended, giving rise to a second, powerful wave of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s. In Chapters 2 through 4, Annandale reviews the various elements of this movement, its concerns with women's health, and its relation to the emerging science of medical sociology. She identifies formulation of the

distinction between sex as a biological construct and gender as a social construct as a major breakthrough providing a foundation for sociological and feminist research on gender and health, and discusses two directions taken by this research. One emphasized social similarities between women and men, holding that women should receive treatment equal to men, and the other acknowledged biological differences, focusing on reproductive health and the importance of women gaining control over their own bodies.

Limitations of these approaches are examined in Chapter 5. Thus, focus on women's reproductive health led to their routine exclusion from clinical trials to protect them in case they became pregnant. Medical research and practice focused on gender differences risked overlooking similarities. For example, coronary heart disease was perceived as a man's disease, and less research and clinical attention was given to this condition in women. Now coronary heart disease kills more women than men. In Chapter 6, Annandale proposes an alternative conceptual framework for the analysis of women's health, a new single system of patriarchal capitalism. In the new single system sex and gender take on multiple forms, and capitalism puts pressure on both males and females to produce and consume. As discussed in Chapter 7, women in the 1960s and 1970s lived substantially longer than men, but recently the gender gap in longevity is decreasing. A third generation of feminism reflects concern that greater freedom also exposed women to greater risk, and changes in reproductive technologies are giving a whole new layer of complexity to the roles and health of women in the 21st century. Thus, as she puts it: "the old shackles have been replaced by slippery silken ties that nonetheless bind" (p. 146).

The strengths of the book are its broad scope, coupled with an encyclopedic, nuanced treatment of feminist writings and developments in sociology since the 17th century as they relate to women's health. While Annandale provides an informative history and an interesting perspective on the women's health and social change, her book was not an easy read, particularly for one not steeped in the history and language of feminism and sociological theory. Editing to translate highly theoretical passages into more readily comprehensible explanations of

the ideas involved and reduce unnecessary repetition would improve the book's readability and increase its accessibility.

Marcia Russell, Prevention Research Center, Pacific Institute for Research & Evaluation

Robert Hartman McNamara, *Homelessness in America* (3 Volumes). Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2008. \$300.00 hardcover.

Homelessness in America is a particularly complex problem, vulnerable to changing political realities, demographic shifts, and seismic cultural events such as the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Researchers and policy advocates have debated nearly every facet of the phenomenon, from the number of homeless to the causal factors to solutions for homelessness. McNamara's three-volume edited overview nicely captures the depth and the breadth of the issue. Given the luxury of three volumes, it manages to be both comprehensive and yet in-depth on most topics, whereas most other overviews of homelessness tend to leave the reader frustrated with the relatively surface-level discussions.

The structure of the three volumes is quite fascinating: Volume One is titled "Faces of Homelessness" and deals with the diversity of homelessness (chapters include rural homelessness, homeless veterans, homeless women, and the elderly homeless). Volume Two is titled "Causes of Homelessness" and tackles both the micro (HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, mental illness) and the macro causes (housing policy, Hurricane Katrina). Finally, Volume Three is titled "Solutions to Homelessness" and thoroughly covers not only potential solutions, but also discusses the evolution of the homeless population and discusses future trends.

The strength of these volumes is certainly their comprehensiveness. All the major issues related to homelessness are covered in great depth and with skillful analysis. Particularly strong are the chapters on lesser-studied facets of homelessness, such as Jaimie Page's discussion of youth who age out of foster care and Hodas and Myers' examination of rural

homelessness.

Less strong is the organizational logic of the three volumes. At times, it feels as if there is redundant content between the volumes (such as the demographics and trends of homelessness) as well as within volumes, such as the discussion of criminalization of the homeless in Volume 3. With the three volume structure however, it would be difficult for each volume to be comprehensive without some duplication of content. On the other hand, given the very slender size of each volume, it seems quite feasible for this project to have been constructed as one larger volume with three subsections on faces of homelessness, causes of homelessness, and solutions to homelessness. However, these are very minor objections to what is certainly the most thorough, analytical, and honest discussion of one of the most perplexing social problems in America. This volume not only encapsulates the arguments of the previous thirty years, but deepens and extends them for the current complexity of the issue.

John Q. Hodges, Western Carolina University

Kate Morris, Marian Barnes and Paul Mason, *Children, Families and Social Exclusion: New Approaches to Prevention*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2009. \$36.95 papercover.

The importance of prevention has been emphasized in social work, criminal justice and social welfare for many decades but unfortunately, it has not been given the priority it deserves. Although everyone agrees that it is more important to prevent rather than respond to social problems, resources have traditionally been disproportionately allocated to remedial interventions. One problem is how to translate the ideal of prevention into concrete policies and programs that can be evaluated, reformulated and adopted to achieve prevention goals.

This book reports on a major prevention initiative in the field of child welfare which was introduced in Britain in the early years of this century by the Labour government in the wake of a series of child abuse cases which attracted a good deal of public attention. Although British child welfare policy

has long emphasized the need for preventive action, these cases revealed that the traditional child protection approach had failed to prevent children from being neglected abused and even killed by their careers, many of whom are family members. Recognizing that a more effective approach was needed, the government began to allocate resources to non-profit organizations operating at the local level that targeted specific groups of at-risk children. Four distinct groups were identified, including children with disabilities, black and minority ethnic children, the children of Gypsies and Travelers and refugee and asylum-seeking children. A special organization known as the Children's Fund was created to identify suitable community-based organizations and to provide resources for a variety of prevention projects targeted at these children. In addition to the work of the Children's Fund, the Labour government had previously introduced a national childcare program known as Sure Start which was modeled on Head Start in the United States. It also introduced a cash stakeholder grant for all newborn children which pays a small sum to establish a savings account.

Morris, Barnes and Mason provide a lengthy discussion of these developments. They examine child welfare from the perspective of social exclusion, which is a currently popular term in European social welfare circles, but which is similar in many ways to the more conventional concepts of poverty and deprivation. The authors review preventive strategies in child welfare, focusing particularly on the work of the Children's Fund and the various legislative instruments the government has used to promote its prevention agenda. The book also examines a variety of evaluations of the work of the Children's Fund, pointing out that although community-based prevention efforts face problems, much has been achieved.

In view of the paucity of literature on prevention in child welfare, this book will be welcomed by anyone working in the field today. There is currently widespread disillusionment among practitioners, politicians, academics and members the public about the effectiveness of the child welfare system in the United States. The British experience may not provide a ready-made solution, but the efforts of British colleagues to work closely with local, nonprofit organizations to implement

community-based prevention strategies deserves to be carefully considered when child welfare prevention policy is being formulated in the United States.

James Midgley, University of California, Berkeley

Lynn M. Nybell, Jeffrey J. Shook, and Janet L. Finn (Eds.), *Childhood, Youth and Social Work in Transformation: Implications for Policy and Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. \$60.00 hardcover.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the world's most widely ratified human rights treaty, became the first legally binding international document to incorporate civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights into child welfare more than two decades ago. Although the United States has signed the convention, it continues to share the distinction with Somalia as being one of only two countries that have not yet ratified the document. Lynn Nybell, Jeffrey Shook, and Janet Finn contend that not only has there been a notable absence of domestic debate or discussion about the convention but, in their experience, most social workers in the United States have little or no familiarity with this treaty. Readers may find that having a general understanding of the Convention's history, and the resulting standards that were negotiated for a decade by an interdisciplinary group of international stakeholders, will assist them with accepting the fundamental premises of the text—that concepts of childhood and youth are socially and culturally constructed and that traditional developmental psychological notions of childhood are insufficient for understanding children's voice and agency.

The text is organized thematically into three parts with a shared set of underlying premises. Each of these premises challenges the social work profession's ideas about childhood that are grounded in developmental psychology literature. The first premise rejects the notion of biological universality and instead embraces nonlinear socially and culturally constructed discourses about youth and childhood. The editors challenge policymakers and those charged with policy implementation

to acknowledge that a child's needs and perspectives must be identified and respected, and that the child and family do not function as a single unit.

The second premise recognizes children and youth as being entitled to their own voices and the right to be active agents in their lives. The editors and contributors further posit that social workers in the United States have largely failed to examine questions about children's voice and agency, unlike their international counterparts who have grappled with these issues for some time, due in part to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by their respective countries.

The third premise involves the contention that concepts of childhood and youth should be analyzed within the context of their relationship to political and economic power. The contributions to the text clearly support the editors' argument that the daily practice of social work involves ongoing struggles over conflicting understandings about the notions of childhood and youth—struggles that extend beyond the individual and the family and that are intertwined with the cultural politics of childhood that vary by place and space.

The editors specifically target social work practitioners and students; however, the interdisciplinary collection of scholarship extends beyond the social work literature to include legal, sociological, anthropological, and geospatial analysis concepts applied as theoretical lenses for interpreting social work practice and policies affecting children and youth. As a result, the text may be of interest to practitioners and students in other fields as well. The editors aptly describe the twenty case studies used in the book as social work practice portraits. Although there is noticeable variance in the writing styles and formality of the scholarship, each chapter is thoughtfully placed within the three sections of the text to assist the reader with the progression from cases addressing the transformation of the discourse surrounding childhood and youth, to a focus on contexts and settings and their correlation with risk and resilience, ending with descriptions of projects that challenge practitioners to rethink their existing paradigms and reinvent social work with children and youth in a manner that embraces children's voice and agency. The sets of questions at the end of each chapter

force the reader to think critically about social work practice and also the philosophy of social work—both historically and prospectively—as it pertains to children and youth.

Ann Reyes Robbins, University of Southern California

Margaret A. Zahn (Ed.), *The Delinquent Girl*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2009. \$54.50 hardcover, \$31.95 papercover.

Delinquency among adolescent girls, while not uncommon, is often understudied. *The Delinquent Girl*, edited by Margaret A. Zahn, offers a comprehensive review of empirical evidence related to delinquent behaviors among girls. With evidence supporting increasing rates of girls' involvement with the juvenile justice system, this book presents a timely, multidisciplinary evaluation of the causes and related factors associated with delinquency.

The book opens with two chapters rooting female delinquency within a theoretical context. Contributing authors cite mainstream and feminist theory as foundations with which to define and contextualize delinquent behaviors among girls. This is followed by a review of recent growth trends in female delinquency coupled with possible explanations for the decreasing gender gap in delinquency rates. Chapter 4 offers an interdisciplinary perspective on the influence of various biopsychological vulnerability factors on high risk behaviors among girls. These factors include exposure to stress, the presence of Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity and Conduct Disorders, intellectual deficits, early onset of puberty, and other mental health issues.

Next the book considers the impact of family, peers, school and the community. The chapter on family influences suggests that negative family experiences and parental deviance effect females and males equally. However, the study of emotional processes and gender roles in the family context requires more research if it is easy to provide more explanative power. Chapter 6 addresses peer influences. The author highlights the importance of peer groups for females and indicates the role of mixed-gender peer groups in the development of delinquent

behavior. Although implicated, romantic partners have not yet received enough study to provide a strong causal link. School-related factors, as discussed in Chapter 7, as well as community factors discussed in Chapter 8, are inconclusive for explaining gender differences in delinquency. However, the literature suggests that girls have more negative effects when exposed to community violence.

Chapters 9 and 10 address girls' violence. Chapter 9 focuses on violence within the context of peer groups, families, schools and communities. It concludes that girls tend to be violent towards other girls and that reasons for violence may be rooted in issues of status, self-protection and enjoyment. Chapter 10 tackles adolescent girls' involvement in gangs. It reviews girls' participation and level of involvement in gangs, risk factors and entrance into gangs, the context of delinquency while involved, and the consequences of involvement. Finally, the book concludes with an overview of the treatment of girls within the juvenile justice system. The author contends that more effort is needed to address the social service needs of this population.

This book provides an in-depth analysis of the causes, mediators, and moderators of adolescent female delinquency. It reviews the current literature to present a unique snapshot of the factors that contribute to high risk behaviors. Each chapter concludes with recommendations which will be of much use to practitioners and policy makers. However, a definitive summary of the overall recommendations is lacking. A criticism of this field is the disjointed nature of the literature, thus, an overall summary that addresses the many factors contributing to the behaviors would be helpful. Nonetheless, this book is a "must read" for anyone invested in this population.

Cara Pohle, University of Southern California

William Spanos, *The Legacy of Edward W. Said*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009. \$25.00 papercover.

Edward Said's writing made a decisive contribution to the way scholars today view the legacy of European imperialism,

current global realities and the experiences of those exposed to Western forces whom he labeled “the Other.” Together with Aime Cesaire and Franz Fanon, Said shaped the interdisciplinary field of post-colonialism, and although ambivalent towards postmodernism and poststructuralism, he is recognized as a deft contributor to the deconstruction of widely accepted attitudes and beliefs, as revealed in the Western canon and in the way scholars, the media, political elites and ordinary people in the West view cultures other than their own. In this important book, Spanos assesses Said’s intellectual legacy and also pays tribute to his extraordinary contribution.

Said was born in Jerusalem in 1935 but, like many other Palestinians, fled his homeland after the creation of the state of Israel. He was educated at an elite English language school in Cairo and subsequently at a private school in Massachusetts. Although quiet and withdrawn, he regularly topped the class. He went on to study at Yale and Harvard before being appointed to the faculty at Columbia University where he subsequently became University Professor of English and Comparative Literature. He was a prolific writer producing major scholarly books as well as a plethora of articles, commentaries and newspaper columns. He was also politically active, and was a major spokesperson for the Palestinian cause, although he disagreed sharply with the Palestinian leadership on several issues. He died in 2003 of leukemia at age 67.

Said is best known for two books—*Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993)—both of which shaped the emerging field of postcolonial studies. With meticulous documentation and citations from the Western Canon, Said demonstrates that non-Western people and cultures were over a long, historical process defined by Western political elites, civil servants and military officers, writers and commentators as inferior and as having a host of personal and cultural attributes that justified their subjugation. Negative stereotypes of native people diffused widely throughout the Western world and were generally accepted. These reinforced the Western imperial project. In addition to revealing the deep structures of power and subjugation that find expression in the literary canon and in popular attitudes, Said did not hesitate to write more directly about oppression, particularly with reference to

the continued subjugation of the Palestinian people by successive Israeli governments. For this he was subjected to frequent personal attacks, including an attempt to set fire to his office at Columbia University. But like other oppositional intellectuals including his friend Noam Chomsky, Said was not deterred.

Panos has produced a dense but important commentary examining the intellectual influences on Said's work and most importantly his debt to Gramsci and Foucault, both of whom exposed the role of power and hegemony in shaping popular cultural attitudes. But as Panos points out, it is difficult to pigeonhole Said, for at times he seemed sympathetic to positions he had earlier criticized. Although the Foucauldian legacy in Said's work is clear, Panos believes that Said's unshakable humanistic values predominated, revealing an ambivalent attitude to the rigors of poststructuralist thought. At the same time, he believes that Said's work is actually a fulfillment of the revolutionary possibilities of poststructuralism. These and other paradoxes are characteristic of Said's thought and find sympathetic treatment in this highly recommended book.

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Overall style should conform to that found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition, 2001. Use in-text citations (Reich, 1983), (Reich, 1983, p. 5). The use of footnotes in the text is discouraged. If footnotes are essential, include them on a separate sheet after the last page of the references. The use of italics or quotation marks for emphasis is discouraged. Words should be underlined only when it is intended that they be typeset in italics.

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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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