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MODELS OF POVERTY AND PLANNED CHANGE:  
A FRAMEWORK FOR SYNTHESIS

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Recent discussions of planned social change have organized interventive strategies into models which identify underlying philosophical assumptions, value orientations, and political perspectives. Two papers published in 1965 can be taken as the beginning of this model-building discussion: Richard Walton proposed a dichotomy between attitude change and power strategies,<sup>1</sup> and Roland Warren outlined a continuum from collaborative through campaign to contest strategies.<sup>2</sup> In the subsequent literature, three publications stand out as major formulations of models of planned social change. What is particularly striking is that each develops a trichotomous typology of change strategies. Jack Rothman (1968) formulates the Locality Development, Social Planning, and Social Action models;<sup>3</sup> Robert Chin and Kenneth Benne (1969) formulate the Rational-Empirical, Normative/Re-Educative, and Power-Coercive models;<sup>4</sup> and James Crowfoot and Mark Chesler (1974) formulate the Countercultural, Professional-Technical, and Political models.<sup>5</sup>

The models developed in each of these major publications parallel one another. It is clear that each is describing roughly the same three perspectives on planned change. Crowfoot and Chesler use the term "meta-strategies" to emphasize the underlying assumptions that provide the basis for distinguishing among the models, but they do not ask whether there is a theoretical grounding for these three and only three meta-strategies. It is conceivable that these are just three of several models that might be identified.

Interpreted in terms of a theoretical framework put forth by Jürgen Habermas, the three meta-strategies can be seen to represent three basic dimensions of human society. For Habermas, there are three fundamental conditions or media through which social systems are maintained: interaction, work, and power or domination. All human societies use these means to resolve the problems of preserving

life and culture. Corresponding to each of these media are the human "interests" in mutual understanding, technical control, and "emancipation from seemingly 'natural' constraint." Derived from these human interests are the systematic sciences of human action: the historical-hermeneutic sciences, the empirical-analytic sciences, and the critical sciences.<sup>6</sup> The major typologies, therefore, do not merely present three of a long list of possible models of strategies for planned change. They represent fundamental dimensions of social life, and may well be exhaustive of possible alternatives if stated in a sufficiently general form<sup>7</sup> (see Table I).

Chin and Benne achieve the most general formulation of the approaches to planned social change with their Normative-Reeducative, Rational-Empirical, and Power-Coercive models. These correspond to Habermas' media of human systems maintenance of interaction, work, and power, and to the human interests in mutual understanding, technical control, and emancipation. The need for what Habermas calls an historical-hermeneutic approach to human interaction is apparent in Chin and Benne's statement of the assumptions of the Normative-Reeducative model:

Intelligence is social, rather than narrowly individual. Men are guided in their actions by socially funded and communicated meanings, norms, and institutions, in brief by a normative culture. At the personal level, men are guided by internalized meanings, habits, and values. Changes in patterns of action or practices are, therefore, changes, not alone in the rational informational equipment of men, but at the personal level, in habits and values as well and, at the sociocultural level, changes are alternatives in normative structures and in institutionalized roles and relationships, as well as in cognitive and perceptual orientations.<sup>8</sup>

Rothman labels his models within a narrower tradition of the social work profession's approaches to community organization practice, but his model of Locality Development clearly falls within a Normative-Reeducative approach, particularly in the sense of community development as field education. From this perspective it is apparent that Crowfoot and Chesler have drawn their Counter-cultural model too narrowly. It is only one approach from a variety of change strategies based within the sphere of culture,

TABLE I  
 HABERMAS' MEDIA OF HUMAN SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND  
 MODELS OF PLANNED SOCIAL CHANGE

Habermas (1965) Medium (& human "interest")	Rothman (1968)	Chin & Benne (1969)	Crowfoot & Chesler (1974)
Interaction (mutual understanding)	Locality Development	Normative- Reeducative	Countercultural
Work (technical control)	Social Planning	Rational- Empirical	Professional- Technical
Power/Domination (emancipation)	Social Action	Power- Coercive	Political

and therefore it fails to attain the level of generality of Chin and Benne's Normative-Reeducative model.

Crowfoot and Chesler's Professional-Technical and Political models, on the other hand, correspond well in generality with Chin and Benne's Rational-Empirical and Power-Coercive models. Both sets of writers agree that the Empirical-Rational/Professional-Technical approach emphasizes scientific and technical knowledge acquired and utilized by experts within bureaucratic organizations. Rothman's model of Social Planning identifies an important professional tradition within this framework of instrumental rationality. Similarly, the Political/Power-Coercive models point to the importance of political and economic power in the perpetuation of inequality and privilege. Rothman's Social Action model includes a number of political change approaches ranging from Alinsky-type organizations to broader social movements.

The models of planned social change are strategies based on different understandings of the underlying roots of social problems. Converging with the models of planned change, therefore, are explanatory or causal models of poverty and underdevelopment. Charles Valentine contrasts two models used by social scientists to explain the persistence of poverty in advanced industrial societies. One is a subculture of poverty model, which he terms the "Self-perpetuating Subsociety with a Defective, Unhealthy Subculture;" the other is an internal colonialism model, which he terms the "Externally Oppressed Subsociety with an Imposed, Exploited Subculture." Valentine also offers an eclectic synthesis of his two types, the "Heterogeneous Subsociety with Variable, Adaptive Subcultures."<sup>9</sup> In my previous work on the Appalachian case, I have suggested that the subculture of poverty model (as exemplified by Jack Weller's Yesterday's People) and the internal colonialism model (as developed by Helen Lewis and associates) need to be supplemented by a regional development model which rationalizes those scientific, technical, and professional approaches of such organizations as the Appalachian Regional Commission.<sup>10</sup> Such a model might be termed, in Valentine's vocabulary, as an Heterogeneous Subsociety with Inadequate Resources and Adaptive Elites. The relationship of these causal models of poverty to Habermas' framework and models of planned social change (using Chin and Benne as the most general presentation) is outlined in Table II.

TABLE II

MODELS OF PLANNED SOCIAL CHANGE RELATED TO EXPLANATORY  
MODELS OF POVERTY AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

<u>Habermas (1965)</u> <u>Medium (and Type of Science)</u>			
Interaction (historical-hermeneutic)	Technique (empirical-analytic)	Domination (critical)	Synthesis (1973): Advanced Capitalism
<u>Chin &amp; Benne (1969)</u> <u>Models of Planned Social Change</u>			
Normative- Reeducative	Rational- Empirical	Power- Coercive	
<u>Valentine (1968)</u> <u>Models of Poverty</u>			
Self-Perpetuating Subsociety with a Defective, Unhealthy Subculture	(Heterogeneous Subsociety with Inadequate Resources and Adaptive Elites)	Externally Oppressed Subsociety with an Imposed, Exploited Subculture	Eclectic Synthesis: Heterogeneous Subsociety with Variable, Adaptive Subcultures
<u>The Appalachian Case</u>			
Subculture of Poverty (Weller, 1965)	Regional Development (Appalachian Regional Commission, 1965)	Internal Colonialism (H. Lewis, 1970)	Peripheral Region within Advanced Capitalist Society (Walls, 1976)

In a study of poverty in the non-metropolitan South, George Thomas identifies two additional causal explanations of poverty, the genetic and the scarce resource models. In practical terms, both are non-social, representing the extremes of a continuum from the sub-individual to the ecological. The genetic explanation asserts that poverty is biologically rooted in inferior genetic traits. The scarcity thesis holds that resources are inadequate to provide affluence or abundance for all, at least in this historical period, and that poverty for some is an unavoidable outcome. Both of these explanations place the sources of poverty beyond human intervention in the short run. Certainly neither is supported by enough evidence to be taken seriously for the advanced industrial countries, and the scarce resource thesis needs to be carefully qualified even on a world scale.<sup>11</sup>

It is tempting to characterize the subculture of poverty, regional development, and internal colonialism models as, respectively, conservative, liberal, and radical models of barriers to social change. While this would contain a substantial amount of truth, the description would be misleading in one respect. The underlying meta-strategies are not, strictly speaking, mutually exclusive alternatives. All societies have to be concerned with each of the three modes of interaction, technique, and domination. Habermas' framework provides a basis for viewing cultural and communicative adaptation, technical planning, and redistribution of power as potentially complementary aspects of social development.

To assert the possibility of complementarity is not to deny that the models have ideological uses. The subculture of poverty model is well known for its conservative bias, but it is only one example within a broader range of explanations rooted in the tradition of cultural idealism. Affirmative cultural approaches are the obverse side of the coin from the pejorative tradition. Although they come to opposite conclusions about the virtues of the traditional subculture, they are contending on the same turf.<sup>12</sup> The regional development model, and its professional-technical strategy for change, can be seen from Habermas' perspective as resting within the contemporary technocratic image and ideology of science. As John Friedmann points out, the regionalism movement of the 1930s, as personified by Howard Odum and others, was rooted in cultural idealism. The new regionalism of the 1960s, as represented by the Appalachian Regional Commission, discarded this grounding in favor

of the technical reason of neoclassical economic theory.<sup>13</sup> In a period of extensive public disillusionment with the role of private business in our society, the prestige of the professional planner with technical expertise has been substantially enhanced. As Habermas notes, "technology and science themselves in the form of a common positivistic way of thinking, articulated as technocratic consciousness, began to take the role of a substitute ideology for the demolished bourgeois ideologies."<sup>14</sup> In the words of Trent Schroyer, "Contemporary science and technology have become a new form of legitimating power and privilege . . . . the scientific image of science has become the dominant legitimating system of advanced industrial society."<sup>15</sup> Without a broader critique of power and domination, the regional development and rational-empirical models serve as a rationalization of existing structures of privilege.

This synthetic framework helps explain why writers widely considered to be champions of a certain development model or change strategy also draw on other models. To take an example from the Appalachian case, Harry Caudill is best known for his description of the Cumberland Plateau as an example of colonialism, but in Night Comes to the Cumberlands he also paints a pejorative picture of the subculture of the eastern Kentucky poor. In one essay Caudill appears to embrace many aspects of the regional development model, while in a recent work he has reemphasized a genetic explanation.<sup>16</sup> From the other side, Weller is best known for his subculture of poverty characterization in Yesterday's People, yet he recently described Appalachia as "America's mineral colony."<sup>17</sup> Such examples can be viewed as cases of inconsistency, confusion, or conversion. They can also be seen, at least in part, as attempts to grapple with the complexity of analyzing the problems of Appalachian development.

To suggest that a dialectic of mutual interaction takes place among the modes of culture, technique, and power is to argue for a more sophisticated model of the origins and perpetuation of inequality in advanced industrial societies, and a correspondingly elaborate strategy for planned social change. In a recent work Habermas suggests a model for the analysis of advanced capitalist societies which focuses on the structure of the economy, the role of the state, the system of legitimation, and class structures.<sup>18</sup> I have mentioned some of the issues raised by the model for the Appalachian

case in my earlier discussion. The conspicuous empty space in Table II suggests we are missing a strategy of planned social change which would follow from an elaborated analysis of advanced industrial capitalism. Such a successful democratic socialist strategy is yet to be developed by the Left in North America and Western Europe. Efforts to attack the persistent problems of poverty, inequality, and privilege in advanced capitalism will remain partial and fragmentary until a strategy is devised adequate to the challenge of simultaneous activity in the realms of culture, technique, and domination.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Richard E. Walton, "Two Strategies of Social Change and Their Dilemmas," The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 1 (April-May-June 1965), 167-179; rpt. in Readings in Community Organization Practice, ed. Ralph M. Kramer and Harry Specht (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 337-345. In a similar vein, Louis A. Zurcher describes the "Overlap Model" and the "Alinsky Model" in the "The Overlap Model: A Comparison of Strategies for Social Change," Sociological Quarterly, 9 (Winter 1968), 85-96.

<sup>2</sup>Roland L. Warren, "Types of Purposive Social Change at the Community Level," Brandeis Univ. Paper in Social Welfare No. 12 (1965); rpt. in Readings in Community Organization Practice, ed. Kramer and Specht, pp. 205-222, and as Ch. 1 in Warren, Truth, Love, and Social Change (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971), pp. 7-34.

<sup>3</sup>Jack Rothman, "Three Models of Community Organization Practice," in Social Work Practice 1968 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1969); rpt. in Strategies of Community Organization, ed. Fred M. Cox, et al., 2nd ed. (1970; Itasca: Peacock, 1974), pp. 22-29.

<sup>4</sup>Robert Chin and Kenneth D. Benne, "General Strategies for Effecting Changes in Human Systems," in The Planning of Change, ed. Warren G. Bennis et al., 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), pp. 32-59.

<sup>5</sup>James E. Crowfoot and Mark A. Chesler, "Contemporary Perspectives on Planned Social Change: A Comparison," The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 10 (1974), 278-303.

<sup>6</sup>See particularly his Frankfurt inaugural address of June 1965, published as "Knowledge and Human Interests: A General Perspective," in the appendix to Jürgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 301-317, quoted phrase from p. 311. See also the brief explication of Habermas in the epilogue to Joachim Israel, Alienation: From Marx to Modern Sociology (1968; Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971), pp. 343-347.

<sup>7</sup>For example, I do not think that Stockdale's model of "Advocacy Planning" adds a new dimension as fundamental as Rothman's models; see Jerry D. Stockdale, "Community Organization Practice: An Elaboration of Rothman's Typology," Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 3 (May 1976), 541-551. In Habermas' terms, Stockdale's Advocacy Planning shares an "emancipatory interest" and a critique of power and domination. The ambiguity of the advocate planner's role is developed in Frances Fox Piven, "Whom Does the Advocate Planner Serve?" Social Policy, 1 (May/June 1970), pp. 32-35. The alternative roles of the planner may be best understood in terms of the "contradictory location within class relations" of the planner who is often an employee at one level or another of the state bureaucracy. The advocate planner attempts to serve the interests of subordinate classes rather than the dominant class; see the explication of this idea in Erik Olin Wright, "Class Boundaries in Advanced Capitalist Societies," New Left Review, No. 98 (July-August 1976), 3-41, also available as Reprint 219 of the Institute for Research on Poverty of the University of Wisconsin--Madison.

<sup>8</sup>Chin and Benne, p. 43.

<sup>9</sup>Charles A. Valentine, Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-Proposals (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 141-147.

<sup>10</sup> David S. Walls, "Central Appalachia: A Peripheral Region within an Advanced Capitalist Society," Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 4 (November 1976), 232-247; and the longer paper, "Three Models in Search of Appalachian Development: Critique and Synthesis," as revised May 1976, ERIC No. ED 125 806. Examples of the three models in the Appalachian case are Jack Weller, Yesterday's People (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1965); Helen Lewis, "Fatalism or the Coal Industry? Contrasting Views of Appalachian Problems," Mountain Life & Work, 46 (December 1970), pp. 4-15, rpt. in Appalachia: Social Context Past and Present, ed. Bruce Ergood and Bruce R. Kuhre (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt, 1976), pp. 153-162; and the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 and any of the subsequent Annual Reports of the Appalachian Regional Commission. Cultural and developmental approaches are often combined, as in the case of the "modernization" perspective.

<sup>11</sup> George Thomas, Poverty in the Nonmetropolitan South: A Causal Analysis (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1972). In addition to the genetic and scarce resource models, Thomas outlines the culture of poverty, opportunity, and maldistribution explanations. The latter two can be reconstructed to mesh with our regional development and internal colonialism models. On the scarcity thesis, see Nathan Keyfitz, "World Resources and the World Middle Class," Scientific American, 235 (July 1976), pp. 28-35.

<sup>12</sup> See the contrast of the pejorative and affirmative approaches in Mike Maloney and Ben Huelsman, "Humanism, Scientism, and Southern Mountaineers," Peoples' Appalachia, 2 (July 1972), pp. 24-27; and in Stephen L. Fisher, "Victim-Blaming in Appalachia: Cultural Theories and the Southern Mountaineer," in Appalachia, ed. Ergood and Kuhre, pp. 139-148.

<sup>13</sup> John Friedmann, "Poor Regions and Poor Nations: Perspectives on the Problem of Appalachia," Southern Economic Journal, 32 (April 1966), 465-467.

<sup>14</sup> From Habermas' 1968 paper, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology,'" in his Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon, 1970), pp. 114-115.

15 Trent Schroyer, "Toward a Critical Theory for Advanced Industrial Society," in Recent Sociology No. 2: Patterns of Communicative Behavior, ed. Hans Peter Dreitzel (New York: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 210, 212. See also his The Critique of Domination: The Origins and Development of Critical Theory (Boston: Beacon, 1973).

16 For a glimpse of Caudill in a relatively optimistic mood, expounding regional developmentalism, see "Jaded Old Land of Bright New Promise," Mountain Life & Work, 46 (March 1970), pp. 5-8; rpt. in Appalachia in the Sixties, ed. David S. Walls and John B. Stephenson (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1972), pp. 240-246. His genetic and subculture of poverty arguments are apparent in Night Comes to the Cumberlands (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962), pp. 1-31 and 273-301, but are strongly emphasized in A Darkness at Dawn: Appalachian Kentucky and the Future (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1976), which begins with the sentence, "Every person and society is a product of two factors, genes and culture."

17 Jack Weller, "Appalachia: America's Mineral Colony," Vantage Point, No. 2 (1973), pp. 2-3 (a now discontinued tabloid issued by the Commission on Religion in Appalachia, from Knoxville); rpt. in Colonialism in Modern America: The Appalachian Case, ed. Helen M. Lewis, Linda Johnson, and Don Askins (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, forthcoming).

18 Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, trans. Thomas McCarthy (1973; Boston: Beacon, 1975), pp. 33-41. In addition to the references on this analysis cited in my November 1976 JSSW article, see also the following: Robert T. Averitt, The Dual Economy: The Dynamics of American Industrial Structure (New York: Norton, 1968); David A. Gold, Clarence Y. H. Lo, and Erik Olin Wright, "Recent Developments in Marxist Theories of the Capitalist State," Monthly Review, 27 (October 1975), pp. 29-43, and (November 1975), pp. 36-51.