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FEMINIST THEORY AND SOCIAL POLICY
OR
WHY IS WELFARE SO HARD TO REFORM?

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ABSTRACT

More than 10 years ago Henry Aaron wrote a classic paper entitled "Why Is Welfare So Hard to Reform?" (1973). This paper answers that question from the perspective of the new discipline of Women's Studies. The author suggests that the use of feminist theories, notably those of Hartsock and Chodorow, can further one's recognition and understanding of male bias in social policy development. Tracing the history of U.S. welfare policies for women and children the analysis provides explanations for the differential treatment of women in the welfare system and the failure of work strategies to increase poor women's economic independence. Flaws in proposals for welfare reform are discussed and some suggestions for the development of new models of policy analysis are made.

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The emerging discipline of Women's Studies is changing the face of various endeavors in society, both within and without academia. In social work the new women's consciousness has provided enlightenment with regard to women's experience, such as considerations of what constitutes mental health, (1) the "discovery" of wife battering (2) and sexism in the profession. (3) New methods of helping women cope with experiences particular to them have been developed, such as methods for the treatment of battered wives and the development of wo-
men's community service programs.(4) Considerations of broad social policy, however, have only occasionally taken women's experiences as women and women's lives into account.(5) A reexamination of the assumptions and methodology of social policy analysis is just beginning to take place.

The thesis of this paper is that an emerging feminist theory of knowledge can provide a useful way of analyzing the development and implementation of social policy. It also has the potential of transforming the basic methodology of social policy analysis. With the use of feminist scholarship, social policy analysis has the potential of becoming androgynous.

Women's Studies

Women's studies began as a way of correcting ideas and information that have been distorted by sexist perspectives such as notions that women are as a group incapable of certain physical or mental activities, or that women enjoy being raped and battered.

The work of correcting misinformation about women is no small task, since the concept of womanhood and what it means has largely been invented and controlled by men. Work is being done in many fields, such as biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and history to reveal the truth about women's lives.(6) Women's Studies does more than correct misperceptions, however.

Women's Studies is also about "filling in the gaps" of knowledge, where women's lives and perspectives have been ignored or hidden, and women's interests not pursued. Efforts in this area seek to discontinue the practice of simply studying men's lives and inappropriately generalizing one's conclusions to women. Thus, for example, historians are sear-
ching and finding information, heretofore unnoticed, about women's history. (7) Women's exclusion in sociological research has been challenged. (8) We have begun to see that understanding men is not tantamount to understanding women.

Notwithstanding the enormity of these undertakings, Women's Studies does not "stop" here. Theoretical and empirical studies have begun to question the very essence of knowledge in the Western World.

Our understanding of the act of knowing something and how we come to know it has been dominated by men for centuries. We have heard it said that men and women think differently—this has always been interpreted to mean that women do not think as well as men. Contradictions in views about women's thinking are commonplace. For example, some say that women's thinking is characterized by too much attention to small precise details rather than the whole picture. Others say that women are too emotional to think logically and precisely. In any case, women and men have accepted an ideal of rational objective thinking and have associated this ideal with men's thinking. Liberal feminists, for example, have attempted to groom women for success in the male labor force by teaching them to think like men. The book, Games Mother Never Taught You: Corporate Gamesmanship For Women explains that women don't get ahead because they are not socialized think in terms of the game rules that men have used since boyhood (Harragan, 1978). Now some feminists are saying that indeed, women by and large do think differently, due to their childhood socialization, but these thought processes are not inferior to men's but different from men's. Moreover, women's exclusion from the development of thought in the Western World renders this thought incomplete, partial, and biased.
It is important to note that the use herein of the gender designations of male and female refers to a conceptualization of two very different ways of thinking and perceiving the world. The male is the dominant form, constitutes the infrastructure of Western thought and is considered by most to be superior and of most value. The female is at best relegated to particular spheres of society (the home and the nursery) and although romanticized, in fact considered inferior and part of a lower domain. The terms do not refer to individual men and women, or even groups of men and women. It is probably true that most people incorporate some of both ways of thinking some or all of the time, although women are more likely to incorporate and adopt the male forms, since these provide the rules for getting about in the world. However, many men incorporate female forms and in social work it is probably more common for men to experience and espouse "female" ways of thinking, for reasons that will be discussed below. The point here is that in our culture one way of thinking, a way that is male-dominated, is considered superior by most people and essentially determines how social policy is formulated and implemented and how the country is run.

Feminist Theory

According to Hartsock, the masculine world view is based on the concept of the dichotomous nature of things, the perception of the world as a series of dualisms. The mind/body dualism is central to this concept. The body is seen as inferior to the mind, the abstract on a higher plane than the concrete, and "man's" most noble aspirations are linked to overcoming or conquering the natural world, even death, for a higher purpose. In this construct women represent the inferior realm of material need. A woman—mother represents
nature, the temptations of the flesh, the earth. She also represents the mundane necessities of life, filth, and death (Hartsock; 1983:231-250).

Feminist psychoanalytic theory attributes the attainment of this dualistic framework to the parental sexual division of labor after birth, namely the fact that mothers and not fathers care for infants. This creates a difference in the developmental tasks required of males and females. Chodorow states:

> From the retention of preoedipal attachments to their mother, growing girls come to define and experience themselves as continuous with others; their experience of self contains more flexible or permeable ego boundaries. Boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct, with a greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiation. The basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world; the basic masculine sense of self is separate (1978:169).

Hartsock elaborates:

> ...the boy's construction of self in opposition to unity with the mother, his construction of identity as differentiation from the mother, sets a hostile and combative dualism at the heart of both the community men construct and the masculinist world view by means of which they understand their lives (1983:240).

In other words, males need to maintain the differentiation of self from "the other," or female, and retain their boundaries, or risk
fusion (Hartsock; 1983:240). The construction of dualisms is in service to this need. Hartsock explains:

Masculinity must be attained by means of opposition to the concrete world of daily life, by escaping from contact with the female world of the household into the masculine world of politics or public life. This experience of two worlds, one valuable, if abstract and deeply unattainable, the other useless and demeaning, if concrete and necessary, lies at the heart of a series of dualisms—abstract/concrete, mind/body, culture/nature, ideal/real, stasis/change. And these dualisms are overlaid by gender; only the first of each pair is associated with the male (1983:241).

Women's life experience is entirely different:

Women's construction of self in relation to others leads in an opposite direction—toward opposition to dualisms of any sort; valuation of concrete, everyday life; a sense of variety of connectednesses and continuities both with other persons and with the natural world. If material life structures consciousness; women's relationally defined existence, bodily experience of boundary challenges, and activity of transforming both physical objects and human beings must be expected to result in a world view to which dichotomies are foreign (Hartsock; 1983:242).

A study of women's moral values conducted
by Carol Gilligan supports these theories. She found that women's moral considerations tend to center on relational systems, that is, how one's actions will help or harm people, with an emphasis on caring and nurturing, and mutual responsibility for each other. In contrast, men's moral values uphold the ideal of morality to be adherence to abstract principles that transcend situational concerns (1982:10). One can see the mind/body dualism in this framework.

Societal Implications

These theories offer additional explanations to the sociological and economic theories that seek to explain the intransigency of notions of male supremacy in society. They suggest that men seek to separate themselves from women in order to better define themselves and maintain their autonomy as well as to retain the power and privilege bequeathed them by the patriarchy. The sexual division of labor is established, with men in the public sector and women in the private, with the latter in service to the former. But, contrary to conservative arguments, the spheres are not held to be equally valuable, and women do not dominate the private sphere. Men must uphold their superiority and control in order to maintain their autonomy. The inferiority and dependency of women must be maintained. Thus women, like children, are assumed to be dependent, incapable of self-support, self-sufficiency, or even proper parenting without men. They are tied to the material necessities of life, from which men need to separate themselves for their own psychological survival.

Even in the public sphere, these dualities have been maintained to a great degree, through the occupational segregation of women and task differentiation in the work place. Women are responsible for the material well-
being and social compatibility of the work place. They not only get the coffee and take the notes; they also tend to advise the students, arrange for the rooms, greet the speakers. Note how many women top executives are in system-maintenance or people-oriented positions, rather than money or product-oriented jobs.

In social work, of course, there is a lot of cross-over because the profession by definition is concerned with making connections and taking care of people and the relationships that people have with the systems that provide their material needs. It is not a coincidence that social work is a women's profession. Social workers are the housewives of the world. They care for the dependent, neglected, rejected, and all those whom only a mother could love. And they are disparaged for it. Men social workers sometimes have a difficult time with this because they are identified with a female realm. It is a common notion that social workers are vilified because of their association with the poor, who are castigated for their dependency. I submit that they are held in low esteem also because they are so closely tied to basic material needs, that is, the female realm.

Let us now examine how these theories apply to considerations of welfare, poverty and welfare reform.

The "Worthy" Poor

Women with children, the elderly and the disabled have traditionally been counted among the "worthy poor," that is groups who, when impoverished, deserve private or public charity. Able-bodied men, on the other hand, have always been classified as "unworthy poor," not only undeserving of charity but subject to punishment and humiliation. A common interpretation of this state of affairs is that
rather than blame the economic system for the impoverishment of men, it is easier and more functional for society to "blame the victim" for his dependency. The worthy poor, on the other hand, have obvious personal reasons for being dependent and therefore our help and sympathy for them are not threatening to society. The aged and disabled have been presumed to have a limited capacity for paid labor. Children are considered naturally dependent and their mothers are needed to take care of them. Presumably able-bodied women without children would be considered as unworthy as their male counterparts. Until recently, however, there have been very few able-bodied women without children, and the few that there were often stayed home to care for relatives' children, the sick, aged and dependent. For the majority, motherhood was not a free choice, either culturally or biologically, and for many today it still isn't. This circumstance has masked the fact that women have been included among the worthy poor not only due to their status as mothers but also because their dependency was assumed as a natural state of being.

Along with their children women have been, and still are, viewed as inherently dependent. According to the theory posed herein, their dependency is necessary to the differentiation of gender roles and the perpetuation of the patriarchal system. This dependency is maintained as a legitimate function of the welfare system in the absence of support by individual men, which is the preferred mode of dependency. From this perspective one can entertain the notion that able-bodied dependent men are denigrated not only because their existence challenges the economic system but also because their dependency "lowers" them to the status of women and children.

Throughout our history, even while women with children have been categorized among the
worthy poor, they have received and continue to receive less aid than the poor aged or handicapped, and they have been subject to much more stigmatization. Under Mothers' Pensions established by the states early in this century, financial aid was dependent not only upon need, but the woman's link to the father of her children: death and imprisonment of the husband were acceptable, divorce or desertion less acceptable, and out of wedlock parenthood completely unacceptable (Bell, 1965:8-9). The issue focused on the reluctance of the state to encourage men to abandon their families. But the women and children and not the men were punished for these circumstances. White widows and their children were the most likely to receive help, but even after meeting the stringent eligibility requirements the mothers were subject to constant monitoring of their child care and moral behavior (Bell; 1965: 8-9; 14).

The inclusion of Aid to Dependent Children (ADC - later to become AFDC) in the Social Security Act of 1935 did not change matters much. From the beginning, federal funds for the other assistance titled, Aid to the Blind and Old Age Assistance, were more generous (Bell; 1965: 22-23). Furthermore, the "suitable home" rules, used in Mothers' Pension programs, were incorporated into the program in most states. Mothers considered immoral or unfit could lose their children, or more likely, be denied ADC and awarded the lower general assistance grant instead (Bell; 1965:32-42). Later, as the rolls increased and more women with illegitimate children came on the rolls, "man in the house" or "substitute parent" rules were established. Any man with whom a recipient had a relationship was expected to support her and her children. The discovery of such a man constituted the discovery of a "substitute parent" and would result in a cut-off of the family's grant.
"Refusal to cooperate," including refusal to admit unannounced investigators into one's home at any hour of the day or night, could also result in the cessation of the grant (Bell; 1965:76-79; 184-89).

These diligent efforts were ostensibly undertaken to rule out fraud and cheating. However, they were not being applied with equal vigor to detect fraud among aged, blind and disabled recipients of welfare grants.

The culmination of the differential treatment of women with children on welfare was the establishment of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program in 1973 that federalized welfare for the poor aged, blind and disabled. SSI pays, on the average, more than AFDC. The median monthly state payment per four person family on AFDC in July, 1982 was $368 (Welfare Advocates, 1982:14). The Federal monthly payment for an SSI couple was $426.40 (Welfare Advocates, 1982:5). SSI is more equitable from state to state, and is much less visible than AFDC, a great advantage for a means-tested program. Since 1975 it has had an automatic adjustment of benefits tied to yearly increases in the cost of living. Although means-tested it is much less stigmatized and some writers no longer refer to it as "welfare".

This differential treatment of welfare recipients lies in the patriarchal necessity of perpetuating women's dependency while espousing its inevitability. The most acceptable dependency is within the family structure. Outside the family dependency on the state is preferred to economic independence but it must include control - to substitute for the control imposed within marriage, and punishment - for the condition of malelessness. A woman who does not clearly depend upon a man threatens gender differentiation since she is "acting like a man." Therefore
she must be controlled and/or punished for her independence. Thus, women without escorts are in danger of being raped; the threat of rape inhibits their independence and controls them. If they ignore the threats the actual rape punishes them. Likewise, if a woman dares to be independent through divorce or separation or gives birth to illegitimate children, she subjects herself to potential punishment or control. This is why punishment and control of the woman client has permeated the administration of the AFDC Program from its inception.

Work Strategies and Welfare Mothers

Work strategies introduced into the AFDC programs in 1967 in response to the enormous rise in the rolls that was occurring at the time and the increasing acceptance of mothers in the work place. Work incentives were established through deductables for child care and work expenses, as well as allowing the recipient to "keep" the first $30 earned and 30 cents on the dollar thereafter. The Work Incentive Program (WIN) was established to provide job training, job referrals, and supportive social services such as transportation and child care to AFDC recipients.

The WIN program has been in existence for a long time and it is instructive to examine its impact. A 1982 General Accounting Office (GAO) report indicated that the program fell far short of achieving its objectives. The GAO study found that very few people were even served by the program because of inadequate resources, and most of those served obtained jobs on their own without benefit of the program (U.S. General Accounting Office; 1982:16). Moreover the Jobs didn't pay well; as a result, many registrants remained economically dependent on AFDC (p. 21). An analysis by Mildred Rein reinforces these findings. She indicates that many registrants received service and training that were not immediately
work-related (1982a:66). Furthermore, available funds for work-related social services and child care under Title XX were minimally allocated for WIN registrants and instead primarily used for higher income, non-AFDC, income-eligible service populations (1982b:214). There is also evidence that women, minorities and youth were underserved by WIN and that job placement through WIN increased men's earnings much more than women's (Pearce and McAdoo, 1981:10).

According to my analysis, the WIN program was not successful in bringing women-headed families out of poverty and dependency because it was not designed to do so on any significant scale. The underlying functions of the WIN program were to reduce the cost of AFDC marginally by encouraging some work effort and to uphold the national value of the importance of work. The few resources the program did have were used to attempt to change the clients without changing women's place in the labor force. Launching an effective work program would have involved working to broaden women's work opportunities beyond the low pay, dead end, secondary labor market. It would have meant training them for "men's" jobs, seeing that the women got them, and demanding equal pay for equal work as well as comparable pay for jobs of equal worth. It did not change AFDC or the labor market. These functions of the WIN program are compatible with the underlying functions of AFDC which are to uphold the patriarchal system by limiting recipients' choices to dependence on the state or individual men, and to facilitate the economy's reliance on a secondary labor force.

The significance of this analysis is that it assumes that these underlying functions (of AFDC and WIN) were not consciously formulated but are the result of a perspective that is based on a white male world view. This view, described above, is so imbued with assumptions
about the nature of men and women that the failure of the manifest goals of the WIN Program was inevitable but unanticipated.

Current Issues

The conservative program of the Reagan administration, which openly espouses the rigid differentiation of gender roles, has explicitly attempted to increase and enhance men's control and women's dependency. This Administration influenced the Congress to limit the $30 plus one-third work incentives of AFDC to the first four months of welfare, put ceilings on the allowance for child care and work expenses, and cut social services. In addition, the Administration has attempted to limit birth control information and has essentially banned abortion for large segments of the population (Bell; 1983: 123). Women on welfare are now poorer and it has become economically preferable for many women to be on welfare rather than take a job (Joe; 1982:14; ii). The Administration has developed the Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) and the Work Supplementation Program (WSP) without pretending that these have anything to do with meaningful work, adequate pay, or career ladders (Rein; 1982a: 156-58). These programs are geared to cost savings, punishment, and control.

Current Welfare Reform Proposals

With new cuts in social programs and considerations of the economy, currently there is a renewed interest in welfare reform. But this time it is more "realistic." Bradley Schiller, for example, has suggested that we revise our expectations for welfare reform. He notes that providing good jobs for welfare recipients might entice some to go on welfare just to get a good job, so he rejects that idea. Instead he says, "The welfare system in its many manifestations has helped millions of
individuals and continues to do so. In this sense, the system has largely attained its original goal of providing minimum income support" (1981:64-65). He thus resigns himself to the poverty of 11 million persons, most of them children. Indeed, most analysts reject the possibility of tampering with the reward system in the labor force that penalizes women, in spite of the fact that the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity pointed out that "if wives and female heads of households were paid the wages that similarly qualified men earn, about half of the families now living in poverty would not be poor" (Pearce and McAdoo; 1981:3). Even those who propose jobs as the answer to poverty tend to ignore the differential compensation of blacks and women in the labor market.(9)

Another area that is not considered among policy analysts is the complication of combining labor force participation and homemaking. The dualistic concept of public/private spheres renders women's work at home as trivial or non-existent. The proximity of the (paid) work place to the home, the child care center, the school, the launderette and the grocery store, and all of these to each other, has rarely been considered seriously in work-related welfare reform proposals. Moreover, societal institutions are, for the most part, designed to accommodate the work patterns of affluent white families with men in the labor force and women at home. Thus we have incongruent work and school hours, no time off for child care, rigid work hours and weeks, to name but a few. Furthermore, the time and effort required to do "woman's work", shopping, cooking, chauffering, laundering, cleaning, is a problem for the working poor. Fashionable newspaper articles ask whether the career woman with a $35,000 per year salary and a husband who makes even more can "do it all." Yet we expect poor women to do it all,
often without another adult in the household, without monetary resources, and without accommodation in the labor force or other societal institutions. If men were obliged to do even half of the household chores that women do, the labor force would have shifted to a four day week years ago.

There are existing reform proposals that, if achieved in reasonable forms, would alleviate poverty for all poor persons, regardless of family composition. Many have advocated for a noncategorical guaranteed minimum income, a national health program for everyone, better housing, and universal social services including comprehensive child care. As proposals are developed beyond the suggestion state, however, and are prepared as proposals for legislative enactment, often their original goals become obscured. It is within the specific areas of design that biased assumptions and distortions in thinking tend to appear. The WIN program, for example, was a liberal program that failed through its design as well as from a lack of resources. Indeed, as proposals for reform get closer to the corridors of power and thus become more likely to be considered, policy analysts tend to make them more categorical, more specific, more punitive, less comprehensive, more cynical, more traditional. They tend to ignore the importance of people.

New Models of Policy Analysis

It is necessary to build new models of policy analysis that recognize the blind spots of the old way of thinking and that counterbalance traditional methods. These new models should move policy analysts toward androgynous thinking by attempting to break down the false dichotomies of abstract principles and material reality. The new models would reject the false assumption that there is any such thing as pure objectivity and would accept the in-
evitability of subjectivity. They would re-
ject the dualistic notion of the private realm
versus the public, recognizing the needs,
demands and importance to the individual of
both realms, and their interdependence. They
would begin and end with the individual and
the family.

One way to begin doing this is to add
experiential elements to the design and pro-
cess of policy analysis. To mathematical
formulas and economic simulations, qualitative
information should be added and compared. The
use of simulation techniques among policy
analysts themselves is one way of doing this.
Thelma McCormack, writing on futures research,
discusses simulation as a research tool. She
writes:

Simulation...refers to a type of
research which examines processes,
e.g. decision-making...in a labor-
atory situation where extraneous
or compounding factors can be
eliminated or where it is possible
to introduce factors that are
oblscured in historical records
...Simulation can, and in most
instances does, assume role flexi-
bility, the blue collar worker is
asked to be a diplomat; the execu-
tive a union leader; a driver, a
pedestrian; a college professor, a
judge; a school drop-out, a banker
(1981:9).

This type of exercise is, of course, not
new. It is used as an educational device to
produce insight and understanding of a partic-
ular experience or circumstance. I suggest
that simulated experiences of clients be in-
corporated seriously and systematically into
the process of policy analysis for purposes of
broadening the scope of reality for policy
analysts, providing help in conceptualizing
problems from a client's perspective and facilitating creative and relevant policy alternatives.

Another method is to consult clients directly, on a regular basis, about their lives and how they perceive their needs and the operation of the system. It is very easy for all of us to become disassociated with the very people about whom we profess to be concerned. People's lives become obscured by the statistical data and analysts need to construct better ways of obtaining and institutionalizing the use of people's own views of their own lives. McCormack quoted Einstein in her paper: "In so far as mathematics is about reality, it is not certain; and in so far as it is certain, it is not about reality" (1981:4). Incorporating qualitative processes of data collection would have the goal of grounding policy analysis to material reality. Quantitative research should not be abandoned but qualitative inquiry is crucial to the interpretation of results and the formulation of policies that are relevant to the way people really live.

A third avenue that must be pursued is to encourage more women to be involved with the formulation and analysis of social policy. Bringing more women into the field of social policy should increase the likelihood of androgynous formulations, provided that they do not buy into the system by "thinking like a man." In addition, the common experiences that we share with women on AFDC should be acknowledged and used. Those of us who have been welfare clients should be encouraged without stigma to speak about our experiences. We must come to grips with the fact that in very important ways, "they" are "us"

Conclusions

This paper's analysis is a beginning at-
tempt to use feminist theory to discover and explicate how and where social policy has distorted women's lives, disregarded their experiences, or, in its methodology, failed to incorporate woman-oriented thinking. What I propose is the development of androgynous thinking in policy analysis and policy making. At this point we can only begin to determine what this would look like and what difference it would make.

It seems difficult to discuss women's issues from the perspective of a women's profession because the male/female distinctions are not clear-cut and because there is a lot of defensiveness among both men and women professionals who struggle for status and rewards that are not forthcoming from society. With new understandings of the obstacles, however, social workers can be better prepared to develop new methods and new creative solutions to the problems that confront them.

Pioneers are breaking new ground every day in relation to the theories and issues discussed in this paper. Social workers and policy analysts can either be part of this work or can once again watch passively from the sidelines. It is unfortunate, for example, that shelters for battered women were initially established by activists in the women's movement, not the social work profession. Social workers and others in the social sciences participated too long in the conspiracy of silence that denied the reality of battered women's experiences. Now that it is "safe," social workers are delivering appropriate services to battered women and "family violence," has become a popular area for research. Let us not repeat this process over and over again!

What I have suggested here is the beginning of an enormous undertaking. It will take a lot of work and a lot of re-working, as we
struggle to develop and clarify our thinking on these issues. Yet the effort has the potential of effecting great positive change. I invite you to join me in clearing the woods.

1. See Gottlieb (1981); Hipple and Hipple (1980); and Berlin (1976).

2. See Carlson (1977) and Schuyler (1976).

3. See Sutton (1982); Dailey (1980); Langres and Bailey (1979); Rauch (1978); Knapman (1977); Belon and Gould (1977); Romero (1977); Fischer et al. (1976); Kravetz (1976); Zeitz and Erlich (1976); and Fanshel (1976).


5. See Boneparth (1982); Chambre (1980); Wattenberg and Reinhardt (1979); Rosenman (1979); and Young (1977).


9. See for example, Rein (1982a); Schiller (1981); Public Welfare (1980); Turem (1982).

10. See Bell (1983); Dolgoff and Feldstein (1980); Rodgers (1982); and Kamerman and Kahn (1979).
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ADDRESSING SOCIO-LEGAL PROBLEMS: A UNIFYING PERSPECTIVE FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

Problems where social work and the law overlap have consistently challenged social work professionals, and the challenges promise to continue. The overlap exposes important interdisciplinary issues, which are best addressed when certain conditions are met. The article describes these conditions within the context of a perspective that underlines the interaction between the two fields and structures the professional's approach to these interdisciplinary problems.

Many practical challenges confront professionals who deal with problems where social work and law overlap. The challenges can be seen on several levels. First, legislation remains a conspicuous legal structure for social welfare funding (Reamer, 1983). Second, practitioners encounter client problems that are becoming increasingly "legalized" (Cavanaugh and Sarat, 1980). Third, social service clients possess -- even if they're unaware -- an array of legal rights (Hannah, et al., 1980). Finally, increasingly, professional conduct is being measured against legal requirements (Woody, 1984; Besharov, 1983). Collectively, these developments portend significant consequences for professionals working at the law-social ser-
The literature on this subject includes diverse viewpoints, including the benefits of interprofessional collaboration (Hoffman, 1984; Needleman, 1984; Weil, 1982; Constantinou, 1981), the settings that require legal skills (Craigie, 1982; Schroeder, 1982), the prerequisites for implementing legal mandates (Sosin, 1979; Moss, 1984), the prospects of teaching law and legal skills to social workers (Miller, 1980; Katkin, 1974), the inquiry into who should administer the social services (Gelman, 1976), the "due process" requirement as a constraint on social work practice (Stone, 1978), the social work advocacy ethic and its skill requirements (Albert, 1983; Epstein, 1982; Kutchins, 1980), the phenomenon of legal discretion and its implications for practitioner decision-making (Gaskins, 1981), the principle of confidentiality and its relation to practice (Wilson, 1979), the legal consequences for irresponsible professional conduct (Woody, 1984), and the issues that arise with particular target groups or in particular settings (Besharov, 1983; Hardin, 1983; Roberts, 1983; Gelman, 1982).

These contributions are descriptive and helpful as such, but the practitioner needs more. Although they describe certain interdisciplinary issues, they stop short of explicating a way to structure problem-solving. The omission is a serious one, because the law's role in relation to social policy and service delivery is likely to expand to encompass virtually every aspect of social work practice. Given the potential for growth in this area, then, the question arises: How can the social work professional address multidimensional problems? A unifying perspective, such as the one proposed in this article, would provide a mechanism that would bring into focus the interaction between the two fields and thereby enhance the professional's...
approach to these interdisciplinary problems. The perspective's practical worthiness, therefore, lies in its ability to inform professional conduct and to promote an awareness of disciplinary interdependence.

CONCEPTUALIZING SOCIO-LEGAL PROBLEMS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Law fulfills many roles in society, and each shapes the scope of social problems that emerge ultimately in social work (Kutchins, 1980). "Conflict between relatives, friends, and neighbors," according to Cavanaugh and Sarat (1980), "belongs to the province of family or community. As both lose their ability to impose order and develop normative consensus, disputes that once would never have been expressed in terms of legal breaches of legal duty are increasingly cast in precisely those terms.... Regulation by public processes, especially litigation, replaces regulation by parents, teachers, and clergy and the order provided by shared norms."

Social workers figure prominently in this interchange between law and social processes. Their role is based on longstanding concerns about the conditions under which legal intervention into an individual's private affairs is appropriate. Consequently, they assume a mediating role (Schwartz, 1961) in an array of knotty issues, such as: judicial control of disputes as volatile as child abuse (Hardin, 1983; Besharov, 1982), spouse abuse (Constantino, 1981), involuntary commitment (Whitmer, 1980), and divorce (Bernard, et al, 1984; Saposnek, 1984; Bohm, 1981; Silberman, 1981; Markowitz and Engram, 1984); institutional reform litigation (Moss, 1984); juvenile and criminal justice settings (Roberts, 1983); and agency regulations and public participation in the regulatory process (Albert, 1983).
The concrete problems that unfold within this law and society context, as a practical matter, can be defined operationally as socio-legal. The definition is both practical and consistent with similar conceptualizations in the literature (Schroeder, 1982; Bradway, 1929). It also places social work in relation to law in a way that exposes the legal context within which social work problems unfold. More important, it underlines that the interdisciplinary dimensions of these types of problems are sufficiently entangled to require the professional to structure their problem-solving approach accordingly.

The operational definition is also connected to a very straightforward perception of client concerns in a socio-legal setting: clients bring problems to social workers and don't articulate the various dimensions of their troubles; they seek assistance expecting to place themselves in a better position than they were in prior to social work intervention. Practitioners can meet this expectation, but only if they appreciate the complicated (i.e. interdisciplinary) nature of the problems they encounter.

A PERSPECTIVE FOR ADDRESSING SOCIO-LEGAL PROBLEMS

The perspective is built around issues that surface when the professional encounters problems where social work and law interact. Though gleaned from the literature, these issues are supported by the author's survey of law-trained social workers2 and by discussions with professionals who routinely deal with socio-legal problems. Collectively, they suggest the conditions under which socio-legal problems are resolved and, impliedly, underscore the requisite knowledge and skills for effective problem-solving.
In constructing the perspective, the author borrowed from a method suggested by Mullen (1978), and drew heavily on literature that specifically dealt with socio-legal issues in social work practice. Some may seem obvious, but the literature suggests they're all interrelated and important. Further, neither the literature nor the survey respondents indicated that any one is more important than another. Perhaps future research will not only validate their individual importance, per se, but also indicate their relative weight in the problem-solving process.

As the discussion below will show, then, the perspective is built around a recognition that socio-legal problems are addressed most effectively when the social work professional appreciates:

(1) that there are legal boundaries for service delivery and for social worker-client relations;
(2) that a problem may provide a legal basis for intervention and/or may suggest a strategy for law reform;
(3) that interprofessional collaboration can be productive -- if occasionally frustrating; and
(4) that certain legal concepts and skills are essential supplements to an intervention strategy.

THE EXISTENCE OF LEGAL BOUNDARIES

The legal context for social work practice takes several forms: the legislative structure for social welfare funding; the boundaries that simultaneously protect the client's legal rights and control official discretion; and the sanctions for professional misconduct.

First, we note that legislation articulates social policy choices, identifies rights and obligations, and allocates funding
for program implementation. Under these circumstances, legislation specifies the limits of available program funds, provides the framework for services to be delivered, and outlines substantive rights -- the broad purposes and goals of the legislation and its intended beneficiaries.4

For example, in the child welfare field, there is the legal context for balancing the tripartite interests of the parent, the state, and the child. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Adoption Act of 1978 and the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 are two illustrative federal statutes. There are numerous state counterparts. The context thus provides exposes a difficult practical dilemma: to respect parental rights while also communicating that these rights can be forfeited upon proof of abuse or neglect AND, in the process, to provide statutorily-mandated social services.

Second, the legal context helps protect a client's legal rights by imposing a structure, which typically includes regulations that stem from a specific piece of legislation, designed to guard against an administrative agency official's abuse of "discretionary power".6 These safeguards are the result of the law's increasing reliance on administrative agencies -- and the officials who control them -- to implement the goals embodied in social legislation (Freedman, 1981; Handler, 1984; 1979).

Hoshino's (1974) discussion of the pursuit of administrative justice in the welfare state illustrates this structure. "The social service state," he observes, "is characterized by mass bureaucratized professionalized administrative agencies. Because of their statutory authority, functional roles, command of highly-specialized knowledge and skills, ability to ration or secure access to needed or desired services, and capacity to
apply sanctions in overt and subtle ways, professionals in service delivery systems have enormous discretion, and therefore, power over the ordinary individual. Under these circumstances, how does the individual cope with large bureaucracies, especially if he is poor, or a minority group, or is socially, or legally vulnerable? Thus, he concludes, administrative agency officials still exercise considerable discretion despite the existence of these limits on their exercise of authority.

Drawing, again, on the child welfare field for an example, we note that the law may allow state intervention to remove a child from unfit parents, but the decision must also withstand constitutional scrutiny. In this instance, the Due Process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment demands that the state present certain proof before severing parental rights in the child. As a practical matter, social work professionals must recognize that their recommendations will also be evaluated against this standard -- despite their clear convictions about parental incompetence. The United States Supreme Court articulated this standard in Santosky v. Kramer, 455 U.S. 745 (1982), when it announced that "before a state may sever completely and irrevocable the rights of parents in their natural child, due process requires that the state support its allegations by at least clear and convincing evidence."

Finally, Wilson's (1978) discussion of legal boundaries stresses the existence of sanctions awaiting professionals whose conduct exceeds legal limits. "The topic of confidentiality," she observes, "is becoming a primary area of concern for many of the helping professions. The consumer's increasing sensitivity to confidentiality and his desire to assert and protect basic privacy rights are giving rise to complex legal and ethical problems which were not imagined only
a few years ago." A corollary concern is the confidential communications privilege. Although not all states currently provide for such privileges, professional licensure of social workers may increase the likelihood that this protection will be extended to the officially licensed practitioner. When this occurs, no professional will be able to escape knowing the legal prerequisites for protecting client communications. The California Supreme Court, in Regents of the University of California v. Tarasoff, 17 Cal.3d 425 (1976), underscored this point. In Tarasoff, a therapist was informed by his client that he intended to harm a third party. The therapist failed to warn this third party, who was subsequently killed by the client. The court, in holding that the welfare of the community overrides any claim of confidentiality between the therapist and patient, stated:

when a therapist determines, or pursuant to the standards of his profession should determine, that his patient presents a serious danger of violence to another, he incurs an obligation to use reasonable care to protect the intended victim against such danger. The discharge of this duty may require the therapist to take one or more of various steps, depending on the nature of the case. Thus, it may call for him to warn the intended victim or others likely to appraise the victim of the danger, to notify the police, or to take whatever other steps are reasonably necessary under the circumstances.

The exercise of discretion by child welfare workers provides another concrete example. The exercise of discretion carries with it the responsibility to decide correctly, and experience has shown that this is not the case always. Besharov (1983) states that social workers are often accused of exercis-
ing poor judgement in adequately protecting a child, in violating parental rights, in inappropriate foster care services, and in inadequate follow-up of children in foster care placements. But this is not to suggest that social workers are at fault at all times. The law is sometimes worded ambiguously, and they do their best under unclear legal mandates and overwhelming practical conditions. Legal ambiguities aside, however, the social worker must make certain judgements for which he/she will be held accountable.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM'S SOCIO-LEGAL SCOPE

The interchange between law, social policy, and social problems, given the law's multiple social functions, exemplifies the debate over legal competency and effectiveness (Kidder, 1983; Jenkins, 1980; Nonet and Selznick, 1978). Social workers enter the fray by instigating an examination of the law's responsiveness to client needs and social issues.

As a practical matter, however, identifying the problem's legal aspects is compounded because problem identification varies with the social caseworker, the clinical social worker, the agency administrator, the social planner, and the community organizer. This does not mean that each allows their particular methodological approach to limit their professional world view -- at least it should not because they are all connected by a shared knowledge base, by professional values and ethics, and by the profession's stated commitment to social justice. Nevertheless, professional training and experiences directly influence the practitioner's selection of intervention options, which, in turn, can shape their recognition of and response to any interdisciplinary aspects of client problems (Schwartz, 1974).

Lukton (1974), for example, discusses an
apparently straightforward social work problem whose scope was broadened to recognize and take advantage of its underlying legal issues. Faculty at Adelphi University School of Social Work collaborated with Nassau County Legal Services in a suit brought against a landlord on behalf of a group of families who charged that their rented premises were substandard. They argued that these dwellings violated the "implied warranty of habitability" and, consequently, had a negative impact on their emotional, mental, and familial conditions. The plaintiffs hoped to establish a legal precedent that would clarify available tenant remedies when the landlord failed to fulfill obligations under the implied warranty. The Adelphi faculty gathered data to use as evidence and for their role as expert witness. They hoped their data would substantiate the tenant's claims of psychological harm caused by the substandard housing. For Lukton, the experience "... offered a unique opportunity to develop methods for intervening at a crucial point of articulation between the individual and the milieu."

The challenge, then, is to delve underneath the problem -- to scratch behind the surface -- to expose its legal dimensions. As suggested above, the task may be difficult; but the worker who backs away from this challenge does so at the client's expense.

INTERPROFESSIONAL COOPERATION AND CONFLICT

There are numerous opportunities for friction between social workers and lawyers. The basis for these confrontations has remained essentially unchanged since Bradway's (1929) observations on the topic. Although conflict will continue, it is not unreasonable to expect the differences to yield to rational discussion.
of socio-legal settings suggests that a growing number of social work problems are cast in interdisciplinary terms. Given these types of settings, interprofessional collaboration will need to be the norm. Legal Services is a prominent example: "The legal difficulties of the poor," Craige asserts, "are frequently symptomatic of longstanding economic, social and personal problems....Legal services attorneys share the [social work profession's historical] goal of enhancing the lives of poor people through...direct services...and through the modification of sociolegal forces in society."

The events depicted by Lukton (1974), Schottland (1968), and Stein and Golick (1974), for example, illustrate the potentially fruitful opportunities for social worker-lawyer alliances. Constantino's (1981) description of lawyer-social worker collaboration in dealing with battered women provides another example of the benefits to be gained from interprofessional partnerships. Bernstein (1980) describes the rich possibilities for interdisciplinary teams in child custody and divorce. Barton and Bryne (1975) assert that social worker-lawyer tensions could be reduced if they better understood each other's roles, values, purposes, methods, and the contributions each could make to support mutual interests. And Weil's (1982) study points to positive experiences between social workers and lawyers in the areas of child dependency and adoption.

USING LEGAL CONCEPTS AND SKILLS TO SUPPLEMENT SOCIAL WORK

Socio-legal problems require an intervention scheme that integrates both social work and legal skills. Dickson's (1976) survey of legal skills -- though not the final word on the subject -- is a useful
starting point. "Along with a general knowledge of law, legal systems, and procedures," he suggests, "the legal skills social workers need are investigation, interviewing, legal research, legal writing, and preparation of case materials, informal and formal advocacy, and an understanding of discretionary decision making."

Dickson also states that the reciprocity between social work and law requires an appreciation of some of the more abstract concepts of legal theory. He suggests that social workers must be aware of "... the extent to which cases and statutes control or influence rules, procedures, and behavior; the relationships among legal organizations and their impact on how laws are enforced; and locating and understanding decisions that affect careers of individuals who enter, go through, and leave legal systems."

Jankovic and Green's (1981) research into child welfare worker training concluded that social work education is not fully responsive to a clearly identified need for specialized knowledge and skill in law. Their model for incorporating legal concepts into the curriculum would address: "... confidentiality, client consent to social work intervention, understanding legal rights of parents and children, evaluation and documentation of evidence in a case record, using legal authority for one's position as a base for practice, giving substantive, factual testimony in a court hearing, and legal duties implicit in professional practice."

Finally, Sosin (1979) stresses the value of mastering legal skills where social workers advocate for the implementation of legal mandates. He cites legislative analysis -- and by implication, the understanding of legislative and administrative processes upon which such an analysis is based -- as one of the legal skills needed to reconcile service delivery with legislative purposes and goals.
The ability to decipher and interpret statutes, for example, can increase the advocate's ability to challenge attempts to ignore, evade, or subvert legislative purposes. He states that "... social work expertise in substantive areas such as child welfare, mental health, or public welfare can be combined with skills in legislative process in order to help bring about needed social reform."

CONCLUSION

Essentially, the above perspective is an attempt to at once expose some of the unique interdisciplinary dimensions of socio-legal problems and elucidate a way of thinking about how these dimensions surface for the practitioner. We discussed several conditions that the literature and experience have identified as central to the resolution to these types of problems, but the reader is cautioned that these conditions are not offered as an absolute formula for problem-solving. Rather, the intention is to express that they constitute a foundation for structuring the professional's approach to a particular type of practice situation; namely, where social work and law converge. And these instances, as this article has argued, are best addressed when the social worker is aware that certain influential questions arise concerning the existence of legal boundaries, the legal basis for intervention, the role and impact of social worker-lawyer partnerships, and the requisite legal knowledge and skills to support intervention. These questions are not exhaustive, and others will be presented in the course of practice. The important point is that they're threshold concerns; ones that are sufficiently fundamental to initiate a search for an effective interdisciplinary resolution.
In the light of the law's expansive role in social policy formulation, then, social work professionals will be pressed to respond to an increasing number of situations that contain both legal and service delivery aspects. The above perspective is offered to prod practitioners to think about these types of problems. The conditions described, therefore, are perhaps best viewed as introductory, and the reader is urged to evaluate their validity through application in practice.

FOOTNOTES

1. Bradway's interstitial field lay somewhere between social work and law; in the gap reserved for problems that resisted neat categorization as purely social work or legal. Essentially, this conceptualization signaled the fact that many social work relationships were being cast in legal terms.

2. The study dealt with social workers who had received specialized legal training through the Law and Social Policy program of Bryn Mawr College's Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. The Program leads to the Masters of Law and Social Policy (M.L.S.P.) degree. A questionnaire was sent to all individuals (degree candidates, as well as those who were not) who had enrolled in the program to explore how they were integrating their specialized training in law with their social work practice. The somewhat limited pool notwithstanding (the study was limited to a sample size of 37 in a universe of 120 possible respondents, which represents a 31% response rate), the findings shed light on the conditions under which social work and law come together in practice to confront the practitioner. As already noted, the findings are consistent with the author's discussions with social work practitioners who routinely deal with the social
work-law relationship.

3. Mullen describes a research utilization strategy that seeks to produce a "model of practice", which he defines as a systematic problem-solving approach devised by the practitioner, and gleaned from his/her professional experiences and from research. The practitioner uses experiences and research to develop general principles, which effectively structure his/her intervention strategy. The model is refined -- and validated -- by integrating additional experiences and research.

4. Regarding their increased awareness of the legal context for their agency's services, 80% (N=32) of the respondents stated that their legal training had improved their awareness of this context. Additionally, 49% (N=31) responded they thought a legal approach to practice was very useful, while another 39% found this approach useful.

5. Regulations are "promulgated" (issued) pursuant to their enabling legislation. They must be consistent with the legislation from which they stem and their implementation must follow from the legislation's intent. These regulations are, in effect, the context for the routine decision-making of those most frequently in contact with clients. For a discussion of this regulatory process and the social worker's role in it see Albert (1983).

6. Administrative agency officials must make their decisions within the context of the regulations that govern the programs they administer. They have the authority to exercise their discretion in the interpretation of regulations in relation to enabling legislation. Although they do not enjoy total control -- their decisions may not be "arbitrary" or "capricious" -- they generally have considerable leeway to determine how a particular regulation will be interpreted, given a particular set of facts.

7. The concept of "due process of law" stems from a view of the relationship between the
state and the individual and articulates the conditions under which the state may deprive an individual of life, liberty, or property. It represents the notion that individuals have a constitutionally-guaranteed right to fair treatment by government. The concept is made operational through the imposition of certain procedural requirements on the state; steps it must take before it can interfere in an individual's private affairs or deprive him/her of their freedom or property. These procedural steps—perhaps best thought of as requirements for the state; safeguards for the individual—include: (1) timely notice; (2) opportunity for presentation of evidence; (3) representation by counsel; (4) opportunity to confront and cross-examine witnesses; (5) open or public proceeding; (6) impartial decision-maker; (7) decision based on the record; and (8) timely hearing.

8. Essentially, the concept that certain communications are privileged against disclosure by a witness in a trial is a rule of evidence, based on the notion that, for public policy reasons, certain confidential relationships between parties give rise to communications which the law will not compel one of the parties to divulge. For an interesting discussion of the topic and its relation to social workers, see "New Privilege for Communications Made to a Rape Crisis Counselor." 55 Temple Law Quarterly 1124 (1982).

9. The most recent definition of the purpose of social work emphasizes these common attributes.

10. The implied warranty of habitability helps ensure that the landlord will provide premises that contain all services essential to maintaining the tenant's health and safety. The warranty applies from the beginning of a residential lease and continues for its duration. For example, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court noted: "In order to constitute

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a breach of the warranty the defect must be of a nature or kind which will prevent the use of the dwelling for its intended purposes to provide premises fit for habitation by its dwellers. At a minimum, this means the premises must be safe and sanitary -- of course, there is no obligation on the part of the landlord to supply a perfect or aesthetically pleasing dwelling." Pugh v. Holmes, 486 Pa. 272, 289 (1979)

11. Regarding the change in their perception of social work practice as a result of their legal training, 71% (N=30) of the respondents stated the training had changed their perception of practice. For example, they noted that they now "see law as a framework"; are "more aggressive in working with the legal system"; have "fundamentally changed my conception of social work, for the better"; realized that there are "more legal dimensions of social work practice than I knew". Additionally, 47% (N=30) responded they frequently distinguished between legal and social work components of the problems they encountered; 13% stated they so did very frequently; and 13% stated they so did almost always. Finally, 32% (N=28) responded that their approach to practice was very different from their co-workers due to their legal training, while another 32% stated their approach was slightly different from their co-workers. One respondent noted that her approach differed because she was able to "grasp more fully the intermingling of social work and legal principles". Another stated her "tendency to rely on verifiable facts as well as feelings, to analyze more, to read more of legal history, and to rely on the possibilities rather than limits of practice". And another noted that she differed in her "approach to clients -- entire focus not on feelings but also on environment and its impact on their lives".

12. Regarding the frequency with which they
worked with attorneys, 27% (N=33) responded they frequently worked with lawyers; 9% very frequently; and 12%, almost always. Additionally, 43% (N=23) stated they felt their legal training had adequately prepared them to work with attorneys; 30% felt they had been more than adequately prepared for such collaboration.

13. Regarding the extent to which the respondents incorporated legal knowledge and skills into their intervention strategies, 50% (N=32) stated they frequently did this; 12%, very frequently; 14%, almost always. Additionally, 34% (N=29) responded that their agency frequently relied on their legal knowledge and skills; 17% responded that their agency was almost always so inclined.
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INFORMAL HELPING NETWORKS AND
SOCIAL SERVICE CHANGES:
A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Interviews with 112 household respondents and 58 social service agency directors in three ethnically and racially distinct Chicago neighborhoods provided a comprehensive assessment of household helping relationships in a community context. Reliance on informal helping greatly exceeded use of formal agencies at the household level. Households were twice as likely to give help as receive it in a complex variety of ways, while agencies struggled to add new functional programs in a time of retrenchment. What households gave and got did not overlap with agency programs in any coherent way. Further, household respondents and agency directors disagreed in their perceptions of community needs. Households wanted employment and general city services, while agency officials emphasized human services. In effect, efforts to tie formal and informal helping relationships together at a community scale will have to respect the complexity and reciprocity of informal helping by reformulating how the needy are identified, emphasizing reciprocity versus expertise in helping and expanding what presently count as program needs to include a wider range of services.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years persons concerned with the organization and delivery of social services have given new attention to helping among family, friends, neighbors and within mutual support groups. Such help is usually...
called informal help or care-giving to distinguish it from formal help or care-giving by professionals in public agencies, non-profit organizations, and other institutions. This new interest in informal help has resulted in a number of research studies and experimental programs that indicate that informal help is both more common and more effective than has been popularly believed in the social service professions (Caplan, 1974; Gottlieb, 1982; Froland et al., 1981; Jonas and Wellin, 1980; Stack, 1974; Unger and Powell, 1980; Whittaker et al., 1983).

As interest has shifted to the community as a source of help it has become increasingly apparent that our conventional ideas and beliefs about help for people in need require re-examination. First, the common assumptions that only trained professional care-givers are effective in helping people has to be put aside based on the evidence from recent studies comparing formal and informal help (Collins and Pancoast, 1976; Froland et al., 1981; Gottlieb, 1981; Norton et al., 1980; Warren, 1981). Second our conventional definitions of need and help, to the extent that they are based primarily on a professional care-giving perspective deserve closer scrutiny (Garbarino, 1983; Lenrow and Burch, 1981; Mitchell and Hurley, 1981; Naparstek and Biegel, 1982). Third, the assumption that community setting or neighborhood is relatively unimportant in designing effective help has to be re-examined (Guttman, 1982; Naparstek and Biegel, 1982; Norton et al., 1980; Plant, 1982). In effect this evidence suggests that answers to questions--Who is the helper? What constitutes help? What defines needs?--are more complex than conventional definitions of human service professionals have allowed for.

We adopted a community perspective in studying helping relations in order to study the ways in which diverse human needs and resources were bound together in residential settings. The methodology section which follows briefly reconstructs how we selected our respondents and conducted our research.
METHODOLOGY

Neighborhood selection

In order to interview households of the working poor in their neighborhood setting, we selected Chicago residential communities where socioeconomic measures from the 1980 census indicated modest level of unemployment, but low incomes. We selected three neighborhood areas that differed dramatically in racial and ethnic composition. The three neighborhoods include Austin (largely black), East Side (predominantly white), and Little Village (primarily hispanic). Both Austin and Little Village were reported to have slightly more than 20 percent of the households below the poverty line and between 10 and 20 percent unemployment in the 1980 census. East Side was reported to be in better condition with only 6 percent of the households below the poverty line and 8 percent unemployment.

Household surveys

Within each neighborhood we selected one subarea of 16 square blocks hoping thereby to enhance the chance of interviewing several household respondents who participated in the same local helping networks. The blocks were chosen on the basis of census information and visual observations to ensure that they were not social or economic misfits in relation to the majority of residential blocks in the neighborhood.

Within each subarea interviewers were assigned a sequence of blockfaces. As they canvassed each block, the interviewers used a screening instrument to assess household composition and willingness to participate. A quota system ensured that a minimum number of predefined household types were interviewed for each blockface with maximum number of interviews set for each blockface. In this way we were sure to include non-nuclear households we expected would exhibit different vulnerabilities to economic stress and different resources for coping. We compiled 112 interviews. The respondents were not selected to represent any larger group of households. Our purpose was exploratory and descriptive rather than analytical.
Lack of resources limited our interviews to 35-40 households in each neighborhood. The interviews were conducted by trained interviewers under supervision of the Survey Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois. Most, though not all of the questions were open ended, an average interview taking slightly more than an hour to complete. Most respondents were with "the woman of the house". In Little Village interviews were conducted in Spanish.

The interview gathered detailed demographic and employment information for each number of households as well as the social network of the respondent including relatives, friends, and neighbors. A comprehensive assessment of helping activities by type of helping episode enabled us to determine not only kind and source of help, but type of helping interaction. We also asked about the respondent's knowledge of local social service agencies, opinions about community needs and expectations for the future of the household.

Community organizations survey

In our survey of organizations we sought to identify all social service, civic and activist organizations in each of three neighborhoods as well as organizations outside the neighborhoods which residents of our 16 square block subareas were likely to use. Relevant directories, personal knowledge, and organizational references were used to compile the list of organizations. In East Side we interviewed all sixteen organizations we identified as meeting our criteria. In Little Village of the 28 organizations identified, 21 were deemed important enough to be interviewed; we successfully interviewed 19 of them. In Austin we identified 38 organizations and interviewed the 17 most important ones. Our judgments about importance were based on our extensive prior knowledge of the areas, the apparent scope and size of the organizations (favoring the broader and larger ones) and the extent to which residents of our subareas were likely to be a significant proportion of clients and users.
WHO HELPS?

Informal helping within households

About half of the households we studied appeared to be near or below poverty levels—unemployment and in some cases illness pushed many of the AFDC and GA rolls. Others manage in a variety of ways. Clearly, much helping and sharing goes on within households. Many families deplete their savings during unemployment or illness, while some rely on occasional emergency help from family, and sometimes friends or neighbors. Others simply do without food, medical care, utility services, mental health and dental services. Individuals with recurrent, persistent problems live on very low incomes and are often unable to maintain autonomous households. For large kinship groups, the standard of living declines as relatives feed and house each other; unemployment and illness are household, not just individuals' problems.

Although our study focused primarily on questions about the help that households receive from and give to, relatives, friends, neighbors, and organizations, we found that the help household members provide to each other cannot be ignored. Sharing of housing especially, is both common and an important way of solving crises.

Informal helping between households

We asked the households we interviewed to describe to us their network of close relatives, friends, and neighbors (up to three each), and the kind of helping relationships they have with them. Most respondents could name all or nearly all of the nine possible persons. Some households, however, are relatively isolated; thirteen households could name only 3 or fewer persons. The households clearly identified those relationships that involved regular helping as opposed to those that are primarily social contacts. A total of 768 relationships were identified. Over half, 498, of these were classified as active relationships. Since this is an average of nearly five regular helping relationships per household (out of a possible nine)
it seems quite clear that informal helping relationships are quite common. Wellman (1979), in a study of Toronto's East Yorkers' found that most respondents had at least 5 intimate social ties, 30 percent of whom provided emergency help and 22 percent of whom helped with every day needs.

Table 1

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We found three important characteristics of these regular helping relationships. First, the family is clearly the first line of defense for the household in trouble. When we asked respondents about particular instances of helping in addition to the kind of helping relationships they enjoyed, we found that the households got help more often from relatives than from any other source, more than half as often as from either of the next two most frequent sources, organizations and friends. Relatives accounted for 47 of the 129 instances of help received, while organizations and friends accounted for 33 and 25 respectively. Because the kind of help given is very different for different problems it is difficult to give weight to the help given by different sources. However, money and material goods were often given by relatives, so it appears that the relatives' contribution was substantial as well as frequent.

Second, as other researchers have found (Sarason and Lorentz, 1979), informal helping relationships are predominantly reciprocal or based on sharing. Over half (276) of the helping relationships we found were characterized as reciprocal by the respondents. The remainder were either relationships in which the respondents primarily got help (141) or gave help (81).
When we examined their reasons for helping in these relationships, fairness was the most frequent reason given for reciprocal relationships. However, predominant reasons were different for nonreciprocal helping relationships. Households receiving more informal help from others justified this by pointing out their need or the obligation of the others to help. But when respondents mentioned relationships in which they gave more help than they got, most claimed they did so because of the need of the recipient.

Third, we found that there are a great variety of helping patterns. The different combinations of kinds of social relationships, types of helping interaction, and kinds of help were as numerous as the households we interviewed. There does not appear to be any systematic pattern describing a "typical" informal helping network. A close examination of the active helping relationships within the social networks of the respondents uncovered an extraordinary range of helping networks. Low income households give as well as receive help, as do the elderly. Some of the prosperous employ a large network, while others live within a narrow range of social ties. Within these networks, large and small, the interactions combine giving, receiving, and sharing. The pattern then emerges is that there is no pattern.

**Formal helping between households and organizations**

To get a clearer picture of the interactions between these households and the organizations that served them we asked household respondents in each neighborhood about the seven organizations that were identified in our agency survey as most active in the area. These included all kinds of organizations—a field office of the Department of Human Services, churches, health clinics, community and civic organizations, counseling centers, and others. The households reported a total of 77 contacts with these 21 organizations. In 50 of these contacts they received a service; in the others they had some other contact, were rejected, or in a few instances gave help to the organizations. The 77 contacts with organizations involved 55, or almost exactly half, of our 112 households. Given the active use of informal helping networks, as well as organized
help in the form of transfer payments, this appears to be a relatively low level of actual utilization of the local organizations we specifically asked about.

Table 2
Contact with Formal Community Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>No. of Possible Contacts</th>
<th>No. Recognized</th>
<th>No. Contacted</th>
<th>No. Received Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Village</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Side</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>749</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The households do know about the organizations. All but four of the households said they know of at least one of the seven organizations mentioned as serving their area, and 36 households know of about at least five of the seven agencies. Almost everyone knows of the large public agencies, such as the Department of Human Services or the outpost of the Health Department. However, the smaller community based organizations are likely to be known by only about one third of those we spoke with.

Some authors argue that community organizations serve as mediating institutions providing a neighborhood locale for interaction and shared experiences (Milofsky, 1979; Schoenberg and Rosenbaum 1980) and also mediate between households and large economic, social and political organizations (Warner, 1963; Suttles, 1968; Kornblum, 1974). Our results suggest that the community organizations we interviewed do not appear to play either a major role in the life of most households in our area or mediate many of the impacts on households produced by organizations outside the neighborhood.

The lack of frequent and significant helping relationships between the households and community organizations we interviewed is paralleled by similar weak ties among the community agencies in each neighborhood. Organizations within each neighborhood
know of other organizations but seem to have relatively few working relations with each other. Working relationships that exist appear causal and incidental rather than systematic and regular. There are some expectations, such as one cluster of four organizations in Austin, which between them deal with commercial revitalization, tenant screening, housing development, business financing and a wide variety of community organizing and activist programs. They all knew each other, worked together regularly and shared board members.

It may be, as some researchers suggest (Taub, 1977), that these community organizations serve a representative rather than a mediating function—mainly communicating the interests of outside organizations to local households. If the community organizations we studied do represent, they clearly do so with a limited segment of the neighborhood.

Summary

According to the reports of our household respondents, they find help largely within their own household or among members of their social network. This finding is consistent with other research efforts that found personal relationships to be the main source of help (Pancoast and Chapman, 1982: 131).

Although virtually everyone of our households reported knowing at least one community service organization in their neighborhood, the vast majority had not used these services. It may be that the reason households do not seek assistance from local community organizations is a lack of need. However, it seems more likely, given evidence of widespread household distress and the weak working relationships among the relatively specialized organizations in each neighborhood, that needy households, despite at least one contact with a local service organization, receive little in the way of referrals to other nearby agencies with relevant assistance programs.
WHAT KINDS OF HELP?

Informal help

Research exploring the relationship between social networks and helping tends to focus on particular types of problems such as unemployment (Gore, 1978), mental disorders and stress (Finlayson, 1976; Gottlieb & Hall, 1980; Henderson, 1977), health problems (Ratcliffe, 1980; Pilisuk & Froland, 1978), child care (Moore, 1980; Collins & Watson, 1976; Genovese, 1980), or other human service issues. The most noteworthy exceptions include Warren's study (1980) of Detroit households in which he used a list of nine concerns to test for the "help-seeking behavior of individuals" within different settings tied together by what he called Problem Anchored Helping Networks (PAHNS). The range of concerns was broad although predefined. Another study by Gottlieb (1978) used a classification scheme of 26 helping behaviors to describe social support provided a sample of single mothers.

In our study we used an open ended approach asking our household respondents to recall specific instances of getting and giving help from outside their household on a variety of problems in the last six months.

In addition to this outside help, many of these households had help from outside. Perhaps the most important form of inside help occurs when family members move in with each other and share housing, food, other resources, and the time they give to the household. We found that more than one in three households did not fit the the normal cultural pattern of family life cycles, but document the extent of helping by relatives that is involved in these living arrangements it appears to be very substantial. Also many of these households receive regular aid through such entitlement programs as AFDC and SSI, and unemployment compensation. Unless a new claim on an entitlement program was made during the past six months such assistance was considered part of their regular resources.
Receiving Help

There is no typical pattern to the helping that was experienced by household type, or income, or employment status, or neighborhood. The variety of situations and the pattern of getting help is so varied that it would be misleading to talk about typical help needed and received by a single parent household or a nuclear household. Perhaps the best way to represent this diversity is to present a few examples of how households coped with their troubles.

In order to make ends meet a couple with two children in Little Village share ownership of a car with relatives, get money from these relatives and a friend, get food from two organizations, clothing from a friend, and health care from a community clinic and Cook County Hospital. They help others with money, transportation, advice and errands. The father is employed and the mother is looking for work. In the past year they have fallen behind on utility and rent payments, and their house has been robbed twice.

A retired couple in their sixties live with their 40-year-old son, disabled from birth. They receive income only from Social Security checks, but own their home. Everyone but the mother has health insurance through Medicare and Medicaid. This household receives some money and help with errands occasionally from relatives, friends and neighbors who are better off; in return they help a friend who is paralyzed and exchange advice, favors, and small loans with neighbors. The retired father has been depressed, both he and his wife have joined a block club and neighborhood organization to try to improve the neighborhood. Money is so short for this household that they have given up movies, basketball games, bowling and they try to be content at home watching TV.

In East Side, a couple in their forties and three children have $24,000 per year from the husband's full-time job and 19 year old's part-time job, and $50 a month from relatives. In spite of their relatively high income, this family has no savings, no car, and they rent their apartment from relatives. In 1983 this household fell behind in rent and ran so short of cash
they had no food for several days. The youngest son has a learning disability, the eldest son has suffered with an injury, and their father is an alcoholic. To cope with these health problems they have health insurance, but for the others they received help with food, repairs, advice, and money from relatives and one of the wife's friends; also several agencies have helped—providing emergency food and a job for the eldest son.

Households reported 133 instances of receiving help in the previous six months. The most common type of help received was services (41 percent). Goods and advice were received about equally, but each was received only half as often as services. Receipt of money was least frequently at only 13 percent.

Giving Help

While these households clearly had many problems and sought and received help to solve them, they also gave help freely to others. They reported 263 instances of giving help, or almost exactly twice as many as the 133 instances of receiving help. While some households are clearly more able to give than others, even the households who received help most often, and presumably had the greatest needs and least resources, reported giving help to others twice for every three times they received help. The pattern of giving while getting extends to organizations as well, with the households giving (time and money) to organizations two-thirds as often as they report getting help from them.

The households reported giving goods to others about as frequently as they received them. When it came to service (e.g., childcare, rides, repairs) or advice they reported giving such help twice as much as they received it. However, in the case of money, the households mentioned giving it four times more often than they mentioned receiving it. It is important to note, however, that the analysis of giving and getting help by kind of help, type of household and neighborhood did not yield any discernible patterns. While there are some households that only give help and some that only receive help these did not share any common feature we could discern.
The large surplus of giving over getting in these households is difficult to explain considering that they all have limited resources and many needs. Based on our examination of the motivations in their regular helping relationships, it is possible that where receipts of help occur within a reciprocal relationship they are not thought of as help. Instead they may be thought of more as mutual property, like a cup of sugar that passes regularly between neighbors. In any event, there appears to be a sense of reciprocity, not necessarily giving and getting with the same person, but a general sharing of time, money and resources as part of the way of life of many of these households.

Formal help

Among the 52 community organizations we interviewed we identified 143 separate programs. Of the programs offered, 59 or 41% were added during the past two years, while 13 programs were eliminated during that period. Thus, the number of programs grew from 97 to 143 over the past two years, a 47% increase.

The community organizations we studied varied widely in size (none to more than 100 employees) with programs ranging in scope from property management for a few landlords to health screening for over 10,000 children. However, these program emphases were unevenly distributed among the different neighborhoods. Austin has a very large number of housing programs, even though its housing stock is probably not significantly worse than that of Little Village. Little Village has a large number of health care programs, probably related to the large number of children and women of childbearing age. East Side seems to be well-supplied with recreation programs, while each of the neighborhoods has a significant number of programs aimed at employment counseling and job placement.

In addition to program additions, organizations were instrumental in organizing letter writing campaigns, protest marches, or other forms of action to protest cutbacks in services and programs. Even though these protests did little to change the conditions which gave rise to them, organizations were working with local...
residents to save what they could, change specific program cutbacks, or merely let their voices be heard. This kind of assistance fell outside the categories of help we originally developed and yet constituted an important kind of community assistance.

Summary

When examined comprehensively the kinds of informal help given and received both from within and outside the households we studied resist efforts at classification. Some poor, single parent households received many kinds of informal and formal assistance, while providing little help to other households. However, other single parent households in similar circumstances not only received help from others, but shared and gave help as well. It appears to us that future research might provide a more useful comprehensive account of informal household helping by analyzing kinds of help within the context of the helping relationship.

Formal organizations deliver services in programs which are easily classified by kind reflecting their functional organization. Although we did not study the actual direct delivery of agency services, the functional structure of these organizations precluded a coherent fit with the complex and informal household helping networks or household needs. This is not out of any lack of desire to serve on the part of agency personnel, but the more basic dilemma our study uncovered between the specialization of formal helping relationships and the diversity of informal helping relationships which confronts any effort to link both forms of helping at the local level.

HOUSEHOLD NEEDS

Household situations

In their efforts to achieve basic security and reasonable prospects for increased prosperity, the households in our study encountered a wide variety of obstacles which frustrated and undermined their efforts to achieve even these modest goals. Unemployment was foremost among these. More than half of the households
we talked to were supporting unemployed adult members. Half of these, mainly elderly and single parent households with no one employed, subsisted almost entirely on some form of transfer payment.

Of the 30 unemployed males who actively searched for work in the previous year only half got jobs, and half of them lost the job later in the same year. The record was twice as bad for unemployed women of whom only a quarter found jobs, and over two-thirds lost them within the year.

Inadequate income confronted many of the households we interviewed with difficult but necessary trade-offs in meeting their bills. Those facing these problems usually first postpone utility payments, then put off rent payments and finally, unable to buy groceries, they go hungry. Thus there is a clear hardship hierarchy in these essential needs, as one or the other are not met. One out of four of the households we interviewed had experienced severe hardships at the bottom of this hierarchy either needing food or doing without basic utilities for at least a month. Yet, lack of income did not necessarily lead to helplessness, even though it usually imposed hardships. Some relatively prosperous nuclear households experiencing the shock of unemployment for the first time found coping more difficult than single parent households for whom poverty and unemployment are constant.

In effect the changing composition of households changes how we assess the situation of the household: new members may bring additional income to a household, but draw heavily on other members for care and support. An unemployed sister may provide child care for a single mother with a job. Such complex and shifting relationships of distress and support among household members produce a complex set of household situations immune to the categories of functional needs assessment.

Perceptions of need

We asked both household and organizational respondents
about what sorts of services and help were still needed in the local neighborhood. We uncovered some significant differences between the perceptions of household and organizational respondents of what help was needed.

Households

Reflecting their economic distress, many household respondents think organizations should give more help in finding employment. Almost as important, however, are public safety and public housekeeping issues. These are expressed as a concern about gangs and drugs, but sometimes they are mixed in with comments about the need for more recreational programs for teenagers and others. The housekeeping issues are street and alley cleaning, and repairs and lighting. When asked what kinds of deserving people get little help, respondents in Little Village mostly mentioned immigrants, while respondents in Austin emphasized the poor, and those in East Side emphasized the elderly.

In terms of what they would want to have done for themselves, however, respondents mainly asked for services like childcare and help with housework that would ease the burden of household maintenance. Many talked about the quality of helping relationships rather than a particular kind of help. They were especially concerned that the helping relationship, regardless of what they got, be based on social bonds of trust and cooperation.

Organization

Organizations appear to overemphasize, both in their descriptions of needs and programs they have added over the past two years, human service programs rather than the programs dealing with employment and gangs which are the respondents' top concerns. This occurred in spite of the fact that some of the mechanisms for adequate communication appear to be in place. For instance, over half of the organizations have a board which has a majority of community residents as members.

At the least this may signify a delay in organizational responses to felt needs. On the one hand,
organizations may to some extent be quite aware of needs but unable to respond as well as they would wish because they are impeded in responding by the limitations of what programs can be funded. Although the reason given for adding specific programs most often was "changed client needs," one of the alternatives, "because funding was available" was also frequently cited. In any event, the results suggest the importance of independent, community based assessment of current household needs, rather than organizational assessments alone, in determining service priorities.

CONCLUSION

Who is the helper?

The line between informal and formal help givers is not well defined. Advice from a neighbor is clearly informal help. But activities of block clubs, social organizations, and churches often fall between informal and formal help. Others have used a variety of classification schemes to describe formal and informal helpers. For example Froland et al. (1981) consider government mandated or sponsored services administered by state or private organizations (including voluntary organizations receiving government revenues) as formal, while services provided by relatives, friends, neighbors, or self-help networks in an unorganized manner are considered informal. Warren (1981) distinguishes four levels of help giving: informal, quasi-formal, formal professional and formal interagency. Garbarino (1983) argues that there appear to be as many forms of helping as there are professional orientations, but he eventually distinguishes between those services deliberately provided by organized agencies (formal) and those forms of helping which while not deliberately organized manage to satisfy social needs.

We adopted the general formal/informal distinction that cuts across this literature. We defined informal help as the help provided directly by family, friends, neighbors, and other individuals. All other help we called organized or formal help because it is based in the activities of an organization, whether a public
agency, no-profit organization, church, or other institution.

It appears that the family, or kinship network, is the first line of defense for households in trouble. We found extensive evidence of this working in two ways: 1) the households restructure themselves to take in or retain other members who, in better times, would maintain their own households; and 2) the households rely heavily on regular help from relatives for major and minor needs and regularly give help to relatives.

Despite their needs, surprisingly few households turn to agencies regularly. Often, however, their needs do not require professional, sophisticated help. In many cases, financial stability is the real need and agencies cannot offer immediate help. We did find that the agencies were offering many new programs to meet local needs, but that there appeared to be some differences between households' and agencies' assessment of priority needs. Similarly, inter-agency coordination in treating clients and in program development seemed weak. A typical response to this finding might be to call for more communication between client and agency and among agencies. However, it is not clear from our findings what form of communication would be most helpful. Many agencies now have clients on their boards and presumably have other mechanisms for communication.

What constitutes help?

When asked what type of help they would like, respondents mainly asked for services like childcare and housework that would ease the burden of the more routine tasks of household maintenance without removing the responsibility for these tasks from the respondents. Many talked about the quality of the helping relationship rather than a specific kind of help. They were particularly concerned that the helping relationship, regardless of what they got, be based on social bonds of trust and cooperation.

In undertaking this study we continually rediscovered that what counts as help depends on the kind of helping relationship. For example, some welfare recipients did
not characterize their receipt of funds as help since they believed they deserved the payments and were unwilling to characterize their bureaucratic treatment by public aid officials as help. These respondents usually received services from other informal or formal services which they openly acknowledged as helping. In effect the ongoing social relations of our respondents within the household, with others outside the household including relatives, friends, neighbors and professionals defined relatively discrete social networks within which helping relationships were identified.

Categorical distinctions among kinds of help like instrumental, emotional and informational (Unger and Powell, 1980) proved of little use; even when broken down into more specific activities. As we analyzed our data we discovered that what defined an act of giving, getting or sharing as help depended on the quality of the bond between the source of help and the recipient. We discovered, as many have before us, that the immediate family and the extended network of social relationships provides the primary source of meaningful help for most households (Burke and Weiner, 1981; Lieberman, 1982; D'Angelli, 1983; Whittaker, 1983). However, unlike most of these studies, we did not focus on specific kind of help or type of problem--but tried to record the full range and diversity of helping activities a single interview would allow. This permitted us to discover the complex nature of the helping relationships within and between households and the serious limitations and distortions associated with the use of specialized or functional assessments of needs.

What are the needs?

Although we interviewed households vulnerable to the negative effects of the 1981-1982 recession; those not only needing help in maintaining their present lifestyle but also in avoiding a precipitous decline in household security, we purposely did not identify need with household conditions. Instead, we reconstructed needs in the context of what household respondents reported as their problems and the help they got from and gave to others. For example, a respondent in a
household with several unemployed adults might report giving more help than receiving it despite admitting that the household standard of living was much worse than last year. The household that needs jobs may still help other households with services like child care. Perhaps this finding that "receiving" households are often also "giving" households should be used to suggest that means-testing for service eligibility is not a good idea in neighborhoods like these. It seems misleading to classify households into discrete categories of need since this separates dynamic helping interactions into static one way relationships with the needy at one end and the giver at the other.

Any attempts to strengthen these informal helping relationships or tie them more closely to the system of organized helping will have to respect the variety, complexity and reciprocity of informal helping. In many ways this is antithetical to the traditional organized helping system in its elimination of the difference between the helper and the helped.

Another important finding is that there seems to be no reliable way to use financial condition to assess the service needs of these households. Households with low total and per capita income are clearly poor and usually unable to finance their own health care or insurance. But it is not necessarily true that households with higher income are better off -- they are often caring for less fortunate relatives (Duncan, 1984). Even households with higher per capita income were often, in our study, coping with health conditions, alcoholism, worries about adequacy of health insurance coverage. Because household structure varies greatly, the customary practice of assessing needs for social services by classification of household type, income, and other readily available measures is not only likely to mis-estimate the extent and kind of unmet needs, but more importantly, to provide misleading information about current caseloads thereby thwarting agencies' efforts to help the most in need.
Bibliography


PREDICTORS OF DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS AMONG UNEMPLOYED BLACK ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Using data from a probability based survey of unemployed Black adults residing in an urban area, this study explores factors related to the presence of depressive symptoms. Findings indicate that depressive symptoms are less among unemployed persons with higher levels of income, education, religiosity, age and satisfactory social support. Age, however, is the single best predictor of depressive symptoms among unemployed Blacks. There were no significant differences by gender.

With unemployment becoming an increasing phenomenon in recent years, researchers have given greater attention to the psychological impact and mental health consequences of unemployment. Yet, despite the disproportionately high representation of Blacks among the unemployed, few studies have systematically examined the psychological consequences and responses of Black adults to conditions of unemployment.
Historically, the unemployment problems of Blacks have intensified during periods of recession and economic decline. During the ten-year period from 1970 to 1980, the unemployment rates for adult Black males and females were consistently at least twice as high as rates of unemployment for adult white males and females (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1982). To be noted, these official unemployment rates did not encompass the numbers of long-term unemployed Blacks, i.e. those who have joined the ranks of discouraged workers no longer seeking employment (National Urban League, 1981).

Nonetheless, most of the research on the mental health effects of unemployment have focused on white workers, to the exclusion of Blacks.

In general, research has shown that unemployment can have a devastating effect on mental well-being. Noted among the consequences of unemployment are distress, loss of self confidence, hopelessness and depression (Eisenberg & Lazarsfeld, 1935; Bakke, 1933; Hall, 1955). In particular, depression among unemployed persons may become manifested in alcohol abuse (Borrero, 1980), family violence (Hall, 1978), crime (Borrero, 1980) or thoughts of suicide (Brenner, 1976).

The psychological response to unemployment, however, is not a uniform experience (Gore, 1978; Liem & Rayman, 1982). Previous research has indicated that the extent to which the experience of unemployment is associated with depressive symptomatology varies according to one's life circumstances or socio-demographic characteristics as well as the availability of social support from family members, friends, neighbors and others.
Among the socio-demographic characteristics found to mediate the psychological effects of unemployment is age (Minkler, 1981; Hepworth, 1980). According to Minkler, middle-age persons (40 to 55 years of age), in particular, may encounter great psychological difficulties, as many still have families with children in school to support. Minkler suggests that even though younger workers may be discouraged, they are more likely to develop alternative career goals and locate new employment. And, older workers may use this opportunity to ease into early retirement.

Studies by Hepworth (1980) and Figueira-McDonough (1978) report that those of the highest level of educational attainment evidence less anxiety and less worry than unemployed persons with the lowest level of educational attainment. The underlying assumption is that more highly educated persons have greater marketable skills, resources and awareness of employment options than persons in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations. Hepworth (1980) and Figueira-McDonough (1978) also note that the level of psychological distress is heightened as the duration of unemployment extends. In terms of marital status, less distress is reported among unemployed persons who are married in comparison to those who are never-married, separated, divorced or widowed (Komarovsky, 1940).

Unfortunately, most of the studies of the psychological consequences of unemployment have focused on males, without consideration of its impact on females. Among Blacks, in particular, the rate of unemployment is often higher for Black females than Black males depending on the region of the country (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1982), but meager evidence is
available to document differences between Black males and females and their psychological responses to unemployment. In a large, mostly white sample, Campbell, Converse & Rodgers (1976) do point out that unemployed men and women have greater distress than those who are employed, but the psychological distress is more acute for unemployed men. On the other hand, Warr & Parry (1983) report an inconsistent relationship between employment and psychological health among women.

There is some evidence which suggests that religious involvement may help to reduce symptoms of anxiety, poor self-image and anger associated with depression (Stoudemire, 1976) as well as promote psychological well-being in general (Cutler, 1977). Religiosity in particular is a factor to be considered as a moderator of psychological distress among unemployed Blacks, given studies reporting a high level of participation in religious activities among Blacks (Olsen, 1970; Klobus-Edwards et al., 1972; Brown, 1982) and the unique role of the church in Black communities (Myrdal, 1944; Frazier, 1963; Gary, 1981).

Another set of factors projected to mediate the psychological consequences of unemployment is support derived through social relationships. Social support encompasses the tangible and intangible assistance that people receive from family members, friends and others in their network of social relationships (Gottlieb, 1978; Leavy, 1983). Studies of depression among the unemployed contend that social support tends to buffer the stresses of unemployment (Komarovsky, 1940; Ferman, 1964, Gore, 1978).

From a longitudinal study of the physical and mental health consequences of unemployment, Gore (1978) reported that men
with little or no social support were the most depressed and consistently reported a higher sense of economic deprivation than those receiving social support. Also, Figueira-McDonough's (1978) findings indicate that active social support along with acquiring help for daily needs was the most relevant factor in reducing the distress of the unemployed. However, neither of these studies specifically reported findings related to Blacks and the Figueira-McDonough study was based upon a non-random sample of respondents.

Given the sparsity of empirical findings related to psychological consequences of unemployment among Blacks, the present study had as its objective to examine factors which influence the extent to which psychological distress is experienced by unemployed Black adults. Specifically, it is hypothesized that: 1) unemployed Black males have more depressive symptoms than unemployed Black females; 2) depression is higher among middle-age unemployed Blacks than other age groups; 3) the longer the period of unemployment, the greater the depressive symptomatology; 4) unemployed persons who are married will have fewer depressive symptoms than those who are not married; 5) depressive symptoms will be fewer among unemployed persons who are high in religiosity in comparison to those who are less involved in religious behavior; 6) those who perceive the social support they receive from others as being satisfactory will have fewer depressive symptoms than unemployed persons who receive unsatisfactory social support; and 7) when various factors are considered, satisfaction with social support will be the strongest moderator of depressive symptoms among unemployed Black adults.
DATA AND METHOD

The data for the study were gathered from a survey of Black adults residing in a metropolitan area. Respondents were selected through a stratified random sampling procedure. They participated in structured interviews conducted during the fall and winter of 1981.

The original sample consisted of 451 Black adults, 18 years of age and older. Excluding housewives, retired persons and students, 355 persons were eligible for participation in the labor force. Of these, 109 or 30.7 percent indicated that they were unemployed. The unemployment rate for males in the sample was 26.4 percent and 33.5 percent for females. Almost two-thirds (66.1 percent) of the unemployed were female.

The unemployed respondents had an average age of 39.6 years. Nearly three-fourths (75.2 percent) were not married. Level of educational attainment averaged 9.5 years of schooling; the median household income of respondents approximated $5,500. Respondents had been unemployed from less than a month to more than ten years. A considerable number of respondents were among the long term unemployed as the average length of time unemployed was 6 years, 2 months. Most of the unemployed persons (50.8 percent) worked in skilled jobs, however 34.4 percent had previously worked in service, semi-skilled and laborer occupations. Only 14.8 percent had been employed in professional, managerial and other white-collar occupations.

The dependent variable of depressive symptoms was measured by the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977). Widely used in epidemiologic field studies (Eaton &
Kessler, 1981; Comstock & Helsing, 1976; Roberts & Vernon, 1982; Frerichs, Aneshensel & Clark, 1981), the CES-D consists of 20 statements pertaining to recent moods such as feeling fearful, sad, lonely, happy, and so forth. Respondents indicate the frequency of particular moods from "rarely or none of the time" to "most of the time" on a four-point Likert-type scale. Total scores on the CES-D range from 0 to 60; scores 16 and above represent high levels of depressive symptomatology (Radloff, 1977). The Spearman Brown split-half reliability was 0.80.

Among the independent variables, the general socio-demographic factors included age, gender, marital status, household income, and highest year of education completed. Two of these variables (gender and marital status) were dichotomously coded. Respondents were also asked to give the length of time unemployed. Religiosity was measured using items from the scale developed by Kenney, Cromwell & Vaughn (1977). For this analysis, ten items were used pertaining to the frequency of involvement in a range of religious activities and the application of religious beliefs to their life. Responses to the scale items ranged from "never" to "very often" on a five-point Likert-type scale. Total scores varied from 10 to 50 and were categorized into low (10 to 27), moderate (28 to 43), and high (44 to 50) involvement in religious practices, based upon one standard deviation above and below the median score. Finally, the efficacy of social support was assessed by asking respondents to indicate the extent to which they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the responses of others to their problems on a four point Likert-type scale. Responses were recoded into dichotomous categories of
"satisfied" and "dissatisfied." Analysis of variance, Pearson's correlations and multiple regression techniques were used to analyze data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, to ascertain if conditions of unemployment have a detrimental impact on the psychological well-being of Black adults, scores on the CES-D for unemployed Blacks were compared to those for employed respondents. As expected, the 109 unemployed persons had a significantly higher mean level of depressive symptomatology (M = 14.91) than the 246 persons who remained employed (M = 9.54; F (1,353) = 31.140, p = .001). Almost one-half (45.6 percent) of the unemployed had CES-D scores of 16 or above, indicative of higher levels of depressive symptomatology. This contrasts with 27.4 percent for the entire sample.

Among the unemployed, it was hypothesized that the level of depressive symptomatology would vary according to selected socio-demographic characteristics and the efficacy of social support. Table I gives the distribution of CES-D scores for the independent variables in the analysis.

In terms of gender, the results show a slightly higher mean score for unemployed Black females than males, but the difference is not statistically significant (F(1,107) = .481). Contrary to the findings of Campbell et al., (1976), these data suggest that unemployed Black males are not more likely to have higher levels of psychological distress than similar females. Moreover, these findings also do not reflect the general trend of higher depressive symptomatology among females in comparison to males (Eaton & Kessler, 1981; Comstock & Helsing, 1976).
Table 1

CES-D Scores By Socio-Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.05</td>
<td>8.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>15.35</td>
<td>9.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.60</td>
<td>8.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.92</td>
<td>10.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>9.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 years &amp; over</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td>8.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years or less</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.94</td>
<td>9.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15.39</td>
<td>9.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.63</td>
<td>9.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13+</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>5.08</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Household Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $6,000</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16.43</td>
<td>9.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6 - 11,999</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.18</td>
<td>7.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12 - 24,999</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.86</td>
<td>8.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 and above</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>9.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Married</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>15.43</td>
<td>8.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religiosity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12.04</td>
<td>7.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>9.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 Cont'd

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time Unemployed</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12.71</td>
<td>8.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15.47</td>
<td>9.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 10 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19.14</td>
<td>9.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 years or more</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.19</td>
<td>9.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Efficacy of Social Support</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13.71</td>
<td>9.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.67</td>
<td>8.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show a good association between age and CES-D scores ($r = -.248$, $p = .01$), indicating that depressive symptoms among unemployed Black adults tend to decrease with increasing age. In contrast to the findings of Minkler (1981) and Hepworth (1980), distress was not greatest for middle-age unemployed adults. That these findings do not corroborate those of Minkler and Hepworth may in part be due to the slightly different age categories. In addition, it may be the case that many middle-aged Blacks would have been more likely than younger workers to have previously encountered periods of unemployment, and thus, be less apt to experience psychological distress related to unemployment. On the other hand, these results support other studies which have found that depressive symptoms decrease with increasing age among Blacks in general (Eaton & Kessler, 1981; Comstock & Helsing, 1976).
Education was only modestly associated with CES-D scores ($r = -0.155$, $p = 0.05$), but nevertheless suggested that depressive symptoms decline with higher levels of educational attainment among unemployed Blacks. These data support the previous findings of Hepworth (1980) and Figueira-McDonough (1978).

Depressive symptomatology was only slightly higher among non-married unemployed persons ($\overline{M} = 15.43$) than those who were married ($\overline{M} = 13.33$). The mean difference was not statistically significant ($F (1,107) = 0.457$). Accordingly, marital status among unemployed Black adults does not appear to influence the extent to which depressive symptoms are reported.

The level of depressive symptomatology did vary inversely with household income ($r = -0.280$, $p = 0.01$). Specifically, CES-D scores declined with increasing levels of household income. Unemployed Black adults with household incomes of $25,000 or more reported considerably fewer depressive symptoms than those of the lowest incomes.

It is not surprising that unemployed Blacks of the lowest incomes would report the highest levels of distress. Financial resources are understandably limited for the poor. Recognizably, unemployed persons of the highest incomes are more apt to have been in professional or white collar occupations and thus, have alternative financial resources such as severance pay, savings or employment income from a spouse or other family member.

When depressive symptomatology was examined according to the length of time unemployed, a very weak linear relationship was found ($r = -0.006$, n.s.). A further examination of the data, indicates an increase in mean CES-D scores as the period
of unemployment ranges from one year to ten years. After ten years of unemployment, depressive symptoms decrease. It would appear that at the end of ten years, many unemployed Blacks have adopted alternative ways of economic survival such as part-time or interim employment. To be noted, these findings differ somewhat from those of Hepworth (1980) who reported greater psychological distress among the unemployed as the length of time unemployed increased. Unlike the Hepworth study where only 23.1 percent of the sample of white male respondents had been unemployed for more than one year, this study included both males and females; 61.4 percent of whom were among the long-term unemployed.

For the variable of religiosity, it was expected that depressive symptoms would decrease as involvement in religious activities increased. To the contrary, there was only a weak linear relationship ($r = -.025$, n.s.). A closer look at the mean scores indicates that depressive symptomatology is lowest among the low and high religiosity groups ($M = 12.04$ and $M = 9.10$ respectively) and highest for those with mid-range religiosity scale scores ($M = 15.46$; $F (2,92) = 2.942$, $p = .05$). These findings indicate that having a strong religious commitment or none at all is associated with fewer symptoms of depression.

In terms of the efficacy of the social support provided by social relationships, there was a fairly good association with level of depressive symptoms ($r = -.179$, $p = .05$). Similar to the findings of Gore (1978), it appears that depressive symptomatology declines as satisfaction with the assistance received from others increases.
Table 2

Standardized Regression Coefficients for Predictors of Depressive Symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>beta</th>
<th>se beta</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.482</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>-2.945**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.228</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>-1.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td>-.210</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>-1.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Time Unemployment</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>1.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy of Social Support</td>
<td>-.101</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>-.846</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F (8,65) = 2.413* \]
\[ \text{Adjusted } R^2 = .243 \]

** p = .01
* p = .05

Table 2 presents the results of the regression analysis conducted to examine the factors having the greatest influence on depressive symptoms for unemployed Blacks. A
comparison of standardized regression coefficients among predictor variables indicates that age (beta = -.482, p = .01) is the single best predictor of depressive symptomatology among unemployed Black adults. These findings differ from those of Figueira-McDonough (1978) who reported that social support was the most important factor related to the experience of psychological distress among unemployed persons. Although receiving satisfactory social support is positively related to fewer symptoms of depression among unemployed Blacks, these results indicate that when other factors are controlled, social support is less important than age, education, household income and length of time unemployed. To be noted, this study employed a different measure of social support than the one used by Figueira-McDonough. And, this study included both unemployed males and females.

CONCLUSION

It was anticipated that unemployed Black adults would experience greater psychological distress than those who remain employed. However, the experience of being unemployed affects persons differently, depending upon their socio-demographic circumstances, religiosity, and social support. The psychological consequences of unemployment are less devastating to those with the greatest resources, that includes older Black adults and those of the highest levels of education and income. Also, distress is less among those who perceive they are satisfactorily supported by friends, family members and others. And, unemployed Blacks who are actively engaged in religious activities are likely to have fewer adverse psychological reactions. Of all these
factors - age, income, education, religiosity, and social support - which meliorate the potential negative consequences of being unemployed, the most important factor for Blacks is age. The experience of getting older appears to be accompanied not only by fewer idealistic perceptions of work and employment but also the accumulation of greater resources in terms of socially supportive relationships, economic alternatives and work experience.

Contrary to traditional assumptions applicable to white populations, findings from this study point out that unemployment may be just as psychologically distressful to Black females as males. Out of the necessity to contribute to the economic maintenance of their families, Black females have had an historical pattern of a greater participation in the labor force than females of other racial and ethnic groups. However, given the changing nature of workforce participation by women in general, their entry into a greater diversity of careers and occupations along with the increasing dependence on the financial contribution of women to their families, there is the need to further explore the psychological ramifications of unemployment for women.

Finally, the results of this study suggest that additional research is warranted among a much overlooked group - the long term unemployed, e.g. those who remain jobless for a year or more. Particularly acute among Blacks, lengthy and interminable periods of unemployment need to be examined around factors which affect participation in the labor force as well as factors related to strategies for coping and survival.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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REFERENCES


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THE EFFECT OF CHANGES IN THE FEDERAL DISABILITY PROGRAMS ON STATE AND LOCAL GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

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University of Maryland Baltimore County

Eric R. Kingson, Ph.D.
The Gerontological Society of America, on leave from the School of Social Work and Community Planning
University of Maryland at Baltimore

ABSTRACT

Since early 1981, there has been a large-scale removal of persons from the SSI and Social Security disability programs as a result of the Social Security Disability Amendments of 1980. This article reports on the findings of a national survey designed to determine whether the removal of persons from the federal disability programs had an impact on state and local General Assistance programs and the extent to which older recipients of General Assistance are in need of long-term income assistance for health and other reasons.

Some states and jurisdictions have noticed an increase in applications as a result of federal cutoffs and tightened administrative policies which is an indicator that state and local programs are sensitive to changes in federal policies. Since General Assistance programs are serving persons terminated from federal disability programs and a significant number of older clients who are in need of long-term income assistance, this article suggests that consideration should be given to modifying the disability criteria for the SSI program, at least for older persons.
INTRODUCTION

General Assistance Programs, a disparate assortment of state and/or locally-funded income support programs, are the "safety net" of last resort for a small but significant number of persons who fall through the federal "safety net". This group is composed primarily of persons with health problems, limited skills and/or persons who are not employed and who do not meet the criteria for the Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) programs or other federally-supported income maintenance programs.

In spite of the fact that the latest available data indicate that approximately 1.3 billion persons received General Assistance benefits in September, 1983 (Social Security Bulletin, 1985) and that program costs exceeded 1.4 billion dollars in 1980 (Social Security Bulletin, 1984), relatively little is known about general assistance programs and their clients. There has been little federal interest in these programs as they receive no federal funds in most cases. States typically have very limited resources for research, and General Assistance budgets are smaller than those of other income transfer programs and consequently generate less attention.

The absence of literature on General Assistance programs reflects a lack of interest in this client population. In addition, the benefit levels in most locations are very low which suggests that these clients are of minimal interest and are held in low esteem.

However, since the Social Security Disability Amendments of 1980, more attention has been focussed on these locally supported programs. Some governors and state officials, in condemning the termination of thousands of persons from the rolls of the SSI and Social Security DI programs, claimed that an additional burden was being transferred from the federal government to that of states and local jurisdictions. So, for example, in testimony before the House Select Committee on Aging, Michael V. Reagan, Commissioner of

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Iowa's Department of Social Services stated that while state welfare administrators support the concept of periodic review of beneficiaries in federal disability programs as implemented since March, 1981:

...this eminently reasonable practice has had perverse, unintended effects as many disabled persons have been wrongfully removed from the rolls... The impact of the problem on states has not been insignificant. State administrators report increasing requests for general assistance and AFDC from individuals previously receiving SSDI... State funds and personnel are being diverted from other essential services to support special efforts to protect the disabled... (Reagan, 1983).

This paper provides information which 1) helps identify the impact of changes--mainly the implementation of Continuing Disability Reviews--in the administration of the SSI and Social Security disability programs on state and local General Assistance programs; 2) describes General Assistance caseloads--particularly with respect to the employability and health status of recipients of aid. The findings presented in this paper are based on a survey conducted from July through September, 1983 of administrators of state and local General Assistance programs. The data are based on a sample of convenience. Consequently, although the study provides interesting insights, the study should be considered exploratory since the findings are not generalizable to the universe of General Assistance programs and program participants.

This article first provides background on the changes that occurred since March, 1981 in the administration of the Social Security and SSI disability programs. Next the methodology is described. The main section of the paper presents findings from the study. The paper concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of these findings.
BACKGROUND

As background, it is important to understand what Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs) are and the controversy surrounding these reviews. The Social Security Disability Amendments of 1980 mandated that the disability status of non-permanently disabled persons receiving Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits be reviewed periodically, at least every third year. Prior to the implementation of these amendments, disability reviews—termed "medical reviews" or "medical diary reviews"—were made less frequently.

To date, the periodic reviews have only been made on the DI cases and those DI cases in which there is a joint entitlement for SSI. Medical reviews had been conducted on DI, SSI and joint entitlement cases for many years before the 1980 Disability Amendments. Both of these reviews are commonly lumped together under the term "Continuing Disability Reviews".

From March, 1981 until the reviews were suspended in 1984, approximately 1.2 million Social Security and SSI disability cases were reviewed as a result of the periodic reviews mandated by the 1980 Disability Amendments and the medical reviews which had previously been conducted for many years (Congressional Quarterly, 1984). As of November, 1983, recommendations were made to terminate approximately 475,000 of these cases. According to Social Security Administration estimates, as of that date about 193,000 of these cases had been terminated. About 160,000 had been reinstated after appeal and another 120,000 were still in the appeals process. By September, 1984, when almost all the administrative appeals were completed, about 260,000 of the cases reviewed from March, 1981 through November, 1983 had been terminated (Kingson, Larson, Petersen, Rivelois, forthcoming).

The CDRs have been very controversial. The 1980 Disability Amendments, passed with the support of the Carter Administration, mandated these reviews:
to clean up an estimated $2 billion in program waste. But disability groups and their allies in Congress have said the reviews were undertaken with unnecessary zeal and charged the administration with attempting to trim the $18-billion-a-year program as part of its overall effort to reduce the size of Government (Congressional Quarterly, 1984).

States, through their disability determination agencies, are responsible for administering the CDRs. By mid-1984 the CDR process had practically collapsed. Because of the actions of federal courts and state legislatures, over one-half of the states stopped doing these reviews. In March, the House of Representatives passed (419-1) a bill designed to reform the CDR process. Two weeks later, the Social Security Administration placed a moratorium on all CDRs. In May, the Senate passed (99-0) its version of the bill (Congressional Quarterly, 1984).

The final version of the bill which was signed into law in October, 1984 as the Disability Benefits Reform Act of 1984: 1) clarifies the circumstances under which beneficiaries can be terminated from the program--generally requiring the government to produce evidence of medical improvement; 2) allows individuals to collect benefits throughout most of the appeals process, though pay-back to the government may be necessary if the appeal is lost; 3) requires publication of new standards for evaluating mental disabilities; 4) established a procedure whereby an estimated 175,000 persons whose benefits had previously been terminated as a result of CDRs will be notified of their right to appeal under the new procedures mandated by the new law.

Given these changes, it would seem that the controversy surrounding the SSI and Social Security Disability programs would dissipate. However, it has not. There continues to be controversy over the Social Security Administration's formal policy of limited
non-acquiesence. Under this policy, the Social Security Administration will ignore court rulings at the first administrative appeal level and will not apply the court's findings to others at the first appeal level. Only those who appeal to the administrative law judge level will have circuit court findings applied to their cases. A U.S. district judge in New York barred the Social Security Administration from following this policy in New York. It remains to be seen how the agency will respond to this challenge to its non-acquiesence policy (New York Times, 1985).

The Social Security Administration has not yet issued final regulations governing the 1984 amendments. It is not clear yet how the regulations will guide the administration of the "medical improvement" criterion. There are misgivings in some quarters that the agency might require a de-novo determination of eligibility prior to evaluation of medical improvement. If this is the case, the controversy will certainly continue.

The continuation of this controversy makes the data we are presenting particularly interesting because these data suggest that changes in the SSI and Social Security disability programs affect the cost of state and local programs. These data serve as an indicator of the sensitivity of state programs to changes in federal policies. Moreover, the findings on the health status and employability of General Assistance clients suggest that perhaps SSI disability standards might appropriately be loosened rather than tightened, at least for older persons.

**DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

By surveying administrators of General Assistance programs, we wished to answer several questions. First, we wanted to learn if administrators thought that the terminations from the Social Security and SSI disability programs had increased the rolls of General Assistance programs. Second, we wanted to get an indication of the health status and employability of general assistance recipients. This data would suggest
the extent to which General Assistance programs are a long-term disability program.

We sent a survey questionnaire requesting both statistical and impressionistic data to each state department of public welfare, to the District of Columbia, and to the welfare department of the largest jurisdiction in each state. While some states do not administer General Assistance programs, the researchers included all states in case some of those states collected information on local General Assistance programs. We also requested that respondents forward any reports that had been conducted on the General Assistance program in their jurisdiction.

The response was sufficiently large to give a reasonable picture of the kinds of data available from governments on general assistance programs and their clients, and of administrators' perceptions of the impact on their programs of SSI and DI cutoffs and tightened eligibility criteria. Nineteen states, including the District of Columbia, sent fully completed questionnaires, and seven sent answers to some of the questions. An additional 15 states responded that either there was no state General Assistance program or that G.A. programs were locally administered and that they were thus unable to furnish any data. Twenty-one local jurisdictions returned completed questionnaires with one additional county responding but only able to answer one question. Additionally, some states and local jurisdictions submitted reports and statistics on their programs. There are only 12 states from which we have no state or local data: Massachusetts, Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Montana, Missouri, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Alabama, West Virginia.

It is worth noting that in response to most survey questions, the local jurisdictions had a lower percentage of "don't know" responses and were generally more likely to answer the various questions. Perhaps this is because it is the local jurisdictions which actually administer most General Assistance programs and see the clients.
Despite the good response, it is important to note that the findings are based on a sample of convenience. For this reason and because general assistance programs are so varied, it is difficult to generalize from these data to the universe of General Assistance programs. Also, it should be mentioned that the survey instrument was designed to ascertain general, rather than detailed, programmatic information and that General Assistance programs are constantly subject to revision due to political and financial pressures.

In spite of these limitations, the data provide a useful source of information about General Assistance programs at a point in time in which the eligibility criteria of SSI and Social Security were being tightened.

FINDINGS

In discussing the findings, we first discuss the perceptions of administrators regarding the effect that tightened eligibility standards for SSI and Social Security Disability programs had on General Assistance rolls in their locales. Then we present data on the characteristics, particularly age, health, and employability characteristics, of General Assistance recipients, and the difference between the older and younger General Assistance clients.

Our concern for the characteristics of General Assistance recipients, particularly their health and employability, was related to our hypothesis that to some extent, and perhaps to a very significant extent for clients aged 50 and older, General Assistance programs provide long-term support to a significant number of disabled and partially disabled persons who are not eligible for SSI or DI. Consequently, one would expect these local programs to be affected by tightened standards of the federal disability programs.

Effect of Tightened Disability Administration

The data indicate that many states and local administrators of General Assistance programs believe there has been some increase in the G.A. caseload as a
result of terminations of disability beneficiaries since March, 1981. For example, respondents in 11 out of 18 local jurisdictions and 5 out of 12 states that answered "yes" or "no" to this question reported that there had been a noticeable increase in applications from persons recently terminated from the SSI or Social Security disability programs (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increased Applications from Terminated Recipients</th>
<th>Jurisdictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information on the magnitude of this effect is fairly scarce. Los Angeles County estimated that 1% of their caseload are terminees from SSI or Social Security disability programs. Preliminary analysis of data from another part of our study shows that approximately 4% of a sample (n=1043) of applicants (including both new applicants and continuing clients who must reapply) to Baltimore City's General Assistance Program during October, 1983 report that they were recently dropped from either the Social Security or SSI disability programs (Kingson, Larson, Petersen and Rivelois, forthcoming). A New York City Department of Human Resources internal report entitled "Analysis of 1982 Home Relief Caseload Increase" analyzed the increase in its General Assistance population (Home Relief Program) between December, 1981 and December, 1982. During that period, the case openings caused by
"end of other assistance" (excluding AFDC and AFDC-U) rose by 155% to 7,565, a jump of 4,592 cases, that they report almost exclusively represented persons who had lost SSI.

Fewer General Assistance program administrators perceived an impact on their caseload because of other Social Security administrative changes such as tightened administration of initial eligibility criteria. Three out of the eleven states and eight out of the fifteen localities that answered "yes" or "no" to our question reported that there had been an impact on their program (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of Impact on Caseload</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although states may not have precise figures on the impact of administrative changes, recent actions indicate that states believe there has been a substantial impact with a cost to the clients of the federal disability programs in their states. As of June, 1985 at least twenty-one states had refused to administer the disability review process as prescribed by the Department of Health and Human Services.
General Assistance Programs and Client Employability

To complement the data on the impact of changes in the federal disability programs, we sought to determine the extent to which General Assistance programs are disability programs. An important distinction between General Assistance programs is whether they serve only the disabled. Some General Assistance programs serve only those with a medically proven disability; others also serve persons who are unemployed and have a financial need for assistance but have no disability. Table 4 shows the percentage of the General Assistance caseload administrators in the jurisdictions responding to this questionnaire consider employable. In some cases this is an estimate; in other, it is based on the official designations of the clients.

The data suggest that there is considerable variation among the states in the percentage of General Assistance clients perceived to be employable. Eight of the eighteen states and four of the eighteen local jurisdictions responding to this question report that no one in their caseload is employable. Six of the states and ten of the local jurisdictions report that half or more of their caseloads are employable (see Table 3).

A substantial portion of administrators of General Assistance programs believe that General Assistance rolls are sensitive to levels of unemployment. Eleven out of the 17 local jurisdictions and eight out of the fifteen states that answered "yes" or "no" to this question report that there is a relationship between General Assistance rolls and high unemployment. Those answering in the affirmative included agencies whose programs serve employable persons such as New York City and Los Angeles, as well as jurisdictions which exclude "employable" persons such as the District of Columbia. Cuyahoga County (Cleveland, Ohio) stated that two investigations showed a definite correlation between unemployment and the size of the General Relief caseload. Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (1982) reported that their General Assistance caseload nearly doubled between May, 1980 and May, 1983 during which time the county's level of
### TABLE 3

**DISTRIBUTION OF PERCENTAGE OF GENERAL ASSISTANCE CASELOAD THAT IS EMPLOYABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Caseload that Is Employable</th>
<th>Jurisdictions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 +</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)New York City noted that 21% of clients aged 50 and over are employable (New York, 1982).

\(^2\)Clark County, Nevada, stated that 50% of those over 50 are employable.

Unemployment increased from 6 percent to 10 percent. The bulk of the Los Angeles client increase was the result of adding employable persons to the General Assistance program which increased their employable segment from 20 percent to 35 percent of their General Assistance population.

Since our study focussed primarily on older General Assistance recipients, those aged 50 and over, we asked states several questions regarding the employability of their older clients. A large proportion of those states and localities who made an estimate of the number of older General Assistance clients unable to work because of their health stated that 50 percent or more of their older recipients are unable to work (see Table 4). This varying assessment of employability occurs, in part, because the eligi-
bility criteria for General Assistance programs are not uniform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Older Clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely To Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exploring the employability of General Assistance clients a little further, we asked what percentage of the older clients were unlikely to work because of a combination of factors such as age, skill level, health and local unemployment. Nine out of the ten states and eleven out of the thirteen local jurisdictions which provided estimates reported that over 50% of their older clients are unlikely to find employment for such reasons (see Table 5).

Older clients constitute a significant proportion of the General Assistance population in some locales. Percentages ranged from one and one-half percent in Wyoming and two percent in Concord, New Hampshire to 75 percent in Utah and 70 percent in Norfolk, Virginia. Older clients comprise more than 20 percent of the caseload in 50 percent of the local jurisdictions and in 65 percent of the states (see Table 6). Based on the data, we estimate that roughly 20 to 35 percent of General Assistance recipients nationwide are age 50 and over.
### TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PERCENTAGE OF CLIENTS, AGED 50 AND OVER, UNLIKELY TO FIND WORK BECAUSE OF A COMBINATION OF FACTORS SUCH AS AGE, SKILL LEVEL, HEALTH, LOCAL UNEMPLOYMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Older Clients</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely to Find Work</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 +</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other = "great majority"

### TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PERCENTAGE OF GENERAL ASSISTANCE CASELOAD AGED 50 AND OVER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Caseload Age 50+</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 40</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 60</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 - 100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of Older and Younger Clients

Finally, we wanted to know if there was a difference between younger persons who receive General Assistance and the older client. We expected states and localities to report that, at minimum, the client aged 50 and over would, on average, have poorer health and a resultant need for a longer period of assistance.

Indeed, the data strongly suggest that some differences do exist between the older and younger clients (see Table 7). Local jurisdictions in particular noted that differences are present especially in the areas of health, sex, employability and length of stay on the rolls, with state administrators having a higher frequency of "don't know" responses.

Unfortunately, as a result of the survey design, the nature of the differences are not always clarified. However, a sufficient number of jurisdictions sent reports with information that indicate the probable direction of the differences—mainly that the older clients have poorer health, are less employable, and receive assistance for longer periods of time.

Perhaps most surprising is the reported sex differential in the different age cohorts. Ten of the local jurisdictions and four of the states reported that there were differences in the proportions of men and women in the older and younger groups. Two local jurisdictions and one state replied the younger group had more women but three states and four local jurisdictions, including the large cities, reported that their older caseloads had a larger percentage of women. Data from other aspects of our study suggest that this relative increase in women among the older General Assistance is due partly to the larger number of widows at the older ages and especially to the "graduation" of some women (perhaps the least healthy) from AFDC to General Assistance when their children lose their dependent status (Kingson, Petersen, Downey, Joyce, Kasner, and Sowers, 1983).

Eleven of the local jurisdictions and five of the states noted a difference in the employability of the
### Local Jurisdictions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>07</th>
<th>06</th>
<th>09</th>
<th>07</th>
<th>10</th>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### States:

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>18</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>18</th>
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<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Length of Stay on Roles</th>
<th>Employment Probability</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Older &amp; Younger Clients Difference between Presence of a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Table 7**

AND YOUNGER CLIENT POPULATION-SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLIENTS AGED 50 AND OVER
older client. Those making comments all stated that the older clients were less employable. The data for Chicago, for example, showed that of General Assistance clients aged 16-49, 6 percent are unemployable while 20 percent of the clients aged 50 and over are unemployable (Illinois Department of Public Aid, 1983). While data wasn't provided to link the unemployability to health problems, each of the nine jurisdictions which stated the older clients had more health problems, suggesting that for a percentage of General Assistance clients health stands in the way of employment.

As one would expect, if older clients are less healthy and less employable, eleven of the local jurisdictions and two of the states noted a differential in the length of stay on the General Assistance rolls. With the exception of Concord, N.H., all comments stated that the older client needed assistance longer. Los Angeles reported that clients over age 50 average a benefit period of 21 months while clients under 50 have an average benefit period of 10 months. Wayne County, Michigan (Detroit) reported that with the exception of those who go on to the rolls of a federal disability program, older clients are generally on longer. Norfolk, Virginia reported

the younger persons helped are usually expected to regain their health and return to work, while the older population has been found to have more long-term illnesses or disability and do not usually return to work.

Length of time on assistance in Michigan generally increases with age, with clients aged 21-30 receiving assistance for an average of 9.7 months; clients aged 51-60, 20.8 months; clients aged 61-65, 18.9 months (Michigan Department of Social Services, 1982).

In our study, eight of the local jurisdictions and four of the states estimated that over 25 percent of the clients aged 50 and over needed long-term assistance. However, it should be noted that eleven of the 16 states and six of the local jurisdictions that
provide long-term assistance report that they could not make such an estimate.

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire, and a very high percentage of those responding from local jurisdictions stated that they believe the long-term General Assistance client would be best served by SSI or another type of income maintenance program for a number of reasons. Of course, it should be noted that this response is not too surprising since that arrangement would be to the financial advantage of states and localities. Even so, their points are well taken. Many wrote that their programs were not designed to support long-term clients and that their funding is insufficient to maintain such clients. Some jurisdictions limit benefit periods to only a few months. Several jurisdictions point out that their General Assistance policy requires administrative procedures such as periodic reviews or reapplication which are inappropriate for persons with chronic disabilities (see Table 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether Long-term Clients Should Be on Another Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary and Conclusions

The survey of state and local jurisdictions during 1983 reported here was based on a sample of convenience
and, as such, primarily points to the need for further research. However, the response by General Assistance administrators was such as to suggest that:

1) General Assistance rolls were increased by persons terminated from the Social Security and SSI Disability Programs as a result of medical and periodic disability reviews;
2) A sizable percentage of General Assistance clients are not employable for health and other reasons;
3) On average, the older General Assistance participant is less healthy, less employable, more likely to be female and more likely to have received benefits longer than the younger participant.

The data reported in this study appear to support the contentions of some state welfare leaders that changes in the administration of the Social Security and SSI disability programs linked to Continuing Disability Reviews have resulted in increased state and local welfare costs. While it is not possible to estimate with any accuracy the cost of these changes to state and local General Assistance programs from the findings reported in the study, these costs would appear to be neither so great as to represent a substantial portion of program costs, nor so small as to be inconsequential to the state and local jurisdictions involved. The pressure that some states have exerted on the Social Security administration to change procedures used in the periodic and medical reviews of continuing disability cases may result in savings to state and local General Assistance programs.

Continued concern on the part of state and local General Assistance administrators seems appropriate in light of these findings, and in light of the fact that the CDRs will begin again. Under new regulations, the CDRs may continue to be controversial and to have negative effects on disability clients and applicants, and, concurrently, on the budgets of state and local governments which administer General Assistance programs.
Related to the issue of the CDRs and federal standards for disability, are the findings of this study which suggest that a substantial portion of state and local General Assistance participants, especially those aged 50 and over, may need long-term assistance. At issue then is whether the federal government, and some state and local governments as well, are ignoring a sizeable population of persons who are in need of long-term income assistance and are not adequately served, or are not served at all.

While many locales provide General Assistance benefits, there are inequities between states, and even between localities in the same state, in terms of the extent to which General Assistance programs serve as a safety net for persons who are not eligible for federally assisted cash income maintenance benefits. In many locations there appears to be no governmental safety net at all for these persons; in others, the benefit level, and/or duration of benefits, are severely limited.

If it can be further documented by other studies that a significant percentage of older General Assistance clients are indeed unemployable for health and other reasons, then it would be appropriate to give serious consideration to a liberalization of SSI disability criteria applied to older applicants.

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Social Security Bulletin  

Social Security Bulletin  
1985  **Social Security Bulletin (July):** Table M3:79.
ISSUES IN ASSESSING COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR THE LEISURE-TIME NEEDS OF THE ELDERLY*

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ABSTRACT

The growth of leisure-time, following retirement, is potentially problematic for the elderly and can result in such adversities as depression, problem drinking, loneliness, and boredom. Leisure-time resources include recreation, education, volunteerism, training, voluntary associations, familialism, and solitary activities. The use of resources for leisure-time needs of the elderly are influenced by idiosyncratic differences; cultural background, financial resources, geographic variations; and the characteristics of programs and services. There is a need to better prepare individuals for the use of leisure-time. Each

community must ensure that leisure-time resources exist and do not exclude any elderly from possible involvement, for either structural, programmatic, or philosophical reasons.

Ours is a work-oriented society which has evolved from the Protestant Work Ethic and the Spencerian philosophy of Social Darwinism - the survival of the fittest. Work had been the means to an end - survival - but in time developed functional autonomy and has become an end unto itself. Within these contexts, leisure time has been variously viewed as sinful or dysfunctional, restorative for work, or status conveyed to those who are deserving (Kaplan, 1970). Such conceptions have generally excluded the oldest members of society, and also the handicapped. Yet, the number of older people who are spending more and more of their lives in non-job related activities is growing. Whether one desires such free time is immaterial, for free time results from a combination of factors which generally include technological advances and economic fluctuations.

THE GROWTH OF LEISURE TIME

The growth of leisure time is viewed to be problematic; one solution is to eliminate those conditions which have given rise to the growth in leisure time. There are several separate yet interrelated reasons for this growth. As a society, we are facing earlier retirement, either voluntary or involuntary (Atchley, 1980a; Harris and Cole, 1980). While in the past one could work until unable or until one wanted to retire, the Social Security Act defined 65 to be the appropriate age for retirement, and the trend is for earlier and earlier retirement based upon years of service as well as chronological age (Neugarten, 1975). Mandatory retirement age has increased as the result of union demands and
economic forces. Yet, the trend towards early retirement has not abated and the age of 65 continues to be defined as the appropriate retirement age by our society. Attendant to earlier retirement is greater longevity. "Medical science is working on the probability that the apparently ironclad limit on human life will be broken - that humans will live to the age of 125 or 150 years" (Blakely, 1971, p. 175). Taken together, a growth in leisure time results from earlier retirement and longer post-retirement life and it may be that in the near future there will be 25 to 30 post-retirement years (Neugarten, 1975). Looked at another way, retirement which accounted for 3.0% of the entire life expectancy for men in 1900 increased to 20.0% in 1980 (United States Senate, 1984).

LEISURE TIME AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Should we not applaud the trend of the growing amount of time spent in non-work related activities for present and future populations of elderly in our country? It is certainly a testimony to the efficiency and organization of our present society that so many time-saving devices and techniques have accomplished their goal. Yet, this greater freedom has not come without its price. As Fromm (1973) states: "Among the answers to the question of how violence and drug consumption can be reduced it seems to me that perhaps one of the most important ones is to reduce boredom ... in leisure" (p. 88). Boredom from free time introduces a general question of whether free time is related to social problems for any age group and can be used to explain alcoholism (as Fromm did), non-utilitarian crime, depression, and misuse of medication, as well as other problems.

Undoubtedly, to envision the problematic ramifications to leisure time, one need only to view the aged in our society. The boredom from
lack of activities for our elderly is common knowledge (Hendricks and Hendricks, 1981). Furthermore, the aged are less likely to be in the work world (Harris and Cole, 1980), and have been stripped of the most significant role in their lives: worker. The importance of work for economic reasons is obvious. But work has importance for social reasons; for work provides opportunities to develop friends, socialize, and share common activities (Harris and Cole, 1980). Work gives a reason for getting up each morning, taking care of grooming and appearance, and getting out of the house. Work gives a person a place to go, something to do, and someone with whom to share experiences.

Work has importance for psychological reasons. Self-esteem is often related to occupation, success in that occupation, and the recognition that one is adequately caring for the needs of dependents. The high suicide rates during the Great Depression can, in part, be explained by self-concept crises on the part of those unable to take care of their dependents.

Those who have free time resulting from retirement can face not only economic loss, but also diminished role and status. The consequences can include lowered morale, frustration, isolation, and loneliness. "...it seems that retirement does constitute a serious threat to the way of life of most people, and some reorganization of the way they satisfy their needs has to ensue" (Chown, 1977, p. 683).

While many make necessary adjustments to free time, others cannot, and seek coping mechanisms. Peterson, et al. (1979) discuss heavy alcohol consumption by the elderly: "Too often the use of alcohol is not the result of emotional illness or psychological stress but merely of increased leisure-time, boredom, and a lack of challenging activities" (p. xv). Mishara and Kastenbaum (1980) have described the late-onset older problem drinker as turning to
alcohol as a result of depression, following loss of one's job.

The abuse and misuse of drugs by the elderly has also been discussed as a coping mechanism. Whittington and Petersen (1979) have suggested that older persons, like younger persons, may sometimes misuse drugs because of "the lack of meaningful work opportunities or leisure-time pursuits, boredom, and loneliness" (p. 25). Chown (1977) has indicated that excessive free time may result in emotional and psychological problems for the aged.

The affluent elderly can respond to free time in dubious ways. Although their leisure-time results from either past economic achievements or from the lack of need to work, the so-called "leisure class" also have such problems as alcoholism, drug misuse and mental illness. While the affluent do have the financial means to travel and can afford many activities, their trips, vacations, and activities can occasionally be interpreted as a pathetic and wasteful search for excitement and meaning. For the more-affluent retired, relative deprivation of role and status can be greater than for the less-affluent.

Another example of adverse ramifications from growing leisure time can be seen when a woman's children grow up and leave the home: the so-called "empty nest syndrome." While men and women in the work world face very similar situations when they retire, housewives whose traditional home and family activities and concerns are reduced must create alternative leisure-time pursuits or adversity may occur. The "empty nest" syndrome is not as problematic today as in the past for women, as they enjoy the options of work and career activities in addition to child-rearing. However, there is the increasingly evident complication of mid-life divorces (Garcia and Kosberg, 1985). Divorce constitutes a number of role exits for each
partner which creates loss of activities and, consequently, increased free-time. Often, this newly-found leisure is unwanted and comes with significant, if not overwhelming, stress. Here, are seen the prime ingredients, time and stress, for self-destruction through any number of escape behaviors (i.e., alcohol and other drugs).

Accordingly, the existence of leisure time has resulted in tumultuous ramifications for the retired, for the unemployed, and even for the divorced. The economic, social, and psychological losses are prodigious. Superimposed upon these losses, and greater leisure time, is the Protestant Work Ethic in our society. Such an ethic maintains that work is good and leisure an idleness. Having been socialized to this ethic, with its philosophical, psychological, and religious overtones, those with leisure time can be viewed as deviant, superfluous, socially superannuated, or nonfunctional (Miller, 1968). Unfortunately, these attitudes can be held and usually are held by those with the leisure time. In addition to feelings of guilt or rejection, boredom and emptiness can occur. "...the current generation of older people is among the least prepared, practically or socially, to take advantage of its 'leisure'" (Hendricks and Hendricks, 1981, p. 347).

It should be noted that many persons withdraw gradually from the workplace. Social, psychological, and economic adjustments occur for them more easily than results from sudden withdrawal from the workforce. Also, many retired individuals replace work roles through consulting, volunteerism, and other creative and personally rewarding activities.

In sum, while leisure time may be desired and used meaningfully, it also can result in problems. Individually, new-found freedom can be met with guilt or boredom. Further, individuals may cope with free time by the use of alcohol or
drugs, or may become depressed, alienated, or hostile. Leisure time and its adverse reactions are not completely understood. "This freedom is, at best, a mixed blessing, for the human needs remain and so individuals are required to find new ways of satisfying themselves; .... In this context, leisure is viewed as a great opportunity and, concurrently, a grand challenge" (Garcia, 1984, pp. 1-2).

LEISURE-TIME RESOURCES

What opportunities are presently available for those with leisure time? Pre-retirement counseling programs seek to prepare individuals for their retirement years and focus upon different options for leisure-time use. Leisure activities are often conceptualized to include the following areas: recreation, education, volunteerism, employment, and voluntary association. In addition to these traditional and institutionalized areas are solitary and family activities. These areas merit brief review.

Recreation

Recreation means to restore or refresh and is often used synonymously with leisure time; however, it is, in fact, but one area of leisure (Kaplan, 1970). Opportunities for recreation are created by federal, state, and local governments, in addition to private sectarian and non-sectarian organizations. Recreation has its participant and non-participant components. That is, such activities can be enjoyed by doing, observing or listening.

Education

We are presently witnessing an emphasis on educational opportunities for those with leisure time. Many colleges and universities provide reductions in fees for those over a certain age and courses geared to the interests of those with
free time. High schools, extension programs, and the YMCAs, among others, have been involved in educational opportunities for those with leisure time. However, less than 10 percent of the elderly take advantage of adult education courses (Hendricks and Hendricks, 1981). Liberal education, as opposed to education for practical purposes, has traditionally been identified with the aristocratic (Blakely, 1971); yet, "... the most practical education is that which aids in the search, clarification, and enhancement of meaning and value for self and for society" (Blakely, 1971, p. 170). Accordingly, there is a need to change conceptions toward education away from the job market and toward a more general orientation of psychological and intellectual growth.

Volunteerism

Volunteerism has yet to be a part of the American ethic as it has been in Great Britain, but it does play a most significant role in meeting leisure-time needs. Initially, volunteerism had been for the privileged classes. The notion of "lady bountiful" combined the philosophy of Social Darwinism with the growing awareness of one's responsibility for the less-fortunate. However, to help others (and be involved in activities with no economic remuneration) necessitated an ability to "afford" to be a volunteer. Indeed, the less-affluent were too busy working to be involved in volunteer work. Yet, this situation has changed, especially for the elderly. It has come to the point where volunteer work, even for the poor, is better than no activity at all. Caution must be used in not overemphasizing volunteerism. It has been found, in a 1981 Gallup Poll (Voluntary Action Leadership, 1982), that volunteer work is engaged in by about 37 percent of all the elderly. Furthermore, it has been found that volunteerism in old age is an extension of such activities from younger age; individuals who had
not been volunteers will generally not engage in such activities in old age (Chambre, 1984).

Training

Vocational training and employment have been opportunities created for those unemployed, under-employed, retired, or dissatisfied with their present occupations. The federal government has been active in efforts for employment training and retraining. Efforts have only "scratched the surface" in creating paid employment opportunities for those in their retirement years. Many elderly actively seek out second careers following retirement (Lieberman and Lieberman, 1983), regardless of economic need. Others are motivated by economic necessity. Until pension programs are more adequate, until our Protestant Work Ethic is changed, and until we create better leisure-time activities, employment and employment training will be sought by those with free time. While job training and retraining might be costly, the alternative of having a population which considers itself too old to be useful might be a higher price (Hearn, 1971).

Voluntary Associations

Leisure time can be spent in voluntary associations, whether political, fraternal, religious, or social. There are many organizations, clubs, and affiliations that are open for membership. America is referred to as a "nation of joiners" and for church membership there is an increase with age (Atchley, 1980a). Church membership is important both for religious and social reasons. In addition, union organizations, fraternal and patriotic associations, and social groups all potentially meet many needs of those with free time. Indeed, as a function of free time, people have the opportunity for membership in such activities.
In addition to the above-mentioned formal mechanisms which meet the needs of those with leisure time, there is familialism. Free time ceases to be an issue when the person is fully involved in family tasks and activities. For the family-centered aged, grandparenting can play a significant and major role in their lives and they may virtually live for their family and for family events (Neugarten and Weinstein, 1968). In addition to actively being of assistance to one's family, celebrations, holidays, and visits may play a vital role. For example, we know that 75 percent of elderly parents live within commuting distance of their children and 50 percent live in the same neighborhood (Atchley, 1980a). However, there is danger in giving too much importance to this informal mechanism. First of all, the use of family stipulates (1) the existence of family, (2) the convenient location to family, and (3) given both the above, a desire to interact with family.

Paradoxically, while we are a "nation of joiners," there seems to be a tendency toward solitary activity in our leisure time. This is especially true for the aged, and one study found that close to 50 percent of their sample spent their leisure time at home, and most of that time was spent alone (Atchley, 1980a). Television plays a major role in the use of leisure time regardless of age (Pfeiffer and Davis, 1971). Both radio and television are convenient, relatively inexpensive, and are non-demanding. The point being that, for many, solitary activity is sought voluntarily, as opposed to being the only alternative.

PRESENT KNOWLEDGE ON LEISURE-TIME UTILIZATION

Our societal system provides institutionalized leisure-time opportunities
which include recreation, education, volunteerism, employment, and voluntary associations. Auspices are federal, state, and local, private sectarian and non-sectarian. Furthermore, the formal network of opportunities is supplemented by familialism and solitary leisure-time activities. Theoretically, the informal and formal systems appear comprehensive and effective. However, the adequacy of these systems can be questioned through findings from empirical research and common knowledge. As Atchley (1980a) states: "Leisure roles are extremely diverse, yet seldom will an older individual [or any individual] be able to select from the entire range of possibilities" (p. 314). Among other variables which impede the use of an entire system of leisure activities are personalities, geographical availability, climate, health, and age. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

Idiosyncratic Differences

People are not alike; they vary in their personalities and their life styles. Some are extroverts, joiners, inquisitive. Others are quiet, passive, private. Some individuals can accommodate to change and others are rigidly set in their ways. This variation has implications for the use of leisure-time programs. For example, activities in congregate settings will not be utilized by some individuals who feel uncomfortable in large groups.

Some older persons have spent most of their adult lives focusing upon their work roles and, when faced with free time (whether vacations or retirement), the elderly must either find suitable work-related activities or change their focus of life. Havighurst and Feigenbaum (1968) have discussed the relationship between leisure and life-styles and have differentiated between community- and home-centered life styles. Weiss and Reissman (1963) have discussed businessmen, forcibly retired, who may "go to pieces" due to
an inability to fill the void and substitute leisure-time activities. Other individuals will be able to seek contemplative or solitary activities or change interests and activities.

Unfortunately, the use of many leisure activities stipulates good health and ambulation. Those who are house-bound, with handicaps, physical or mental impairments, or who are otherwise restricted cannot use many of the available community resources. The institutional system of leisure activities may not reach this group. Attempts may be made to bring activities to these individuals. In this regard, television and radio play an especially important role. In addition, a community may assist those with health problems in going to available resources for leisure-time use.

Miller (1968) has introduced the concept of "Portent of Embarrassment." This refers to an older individual believing him or herself, or a group of individuals believing itself, to be inappropriate for membership in a certain group. For example, elderly participants in a leisure activity may feel out of place when the majority of the other participants are younger and more active. This may be related to recreational and education activities, as well as membership in voluntary associations. Such "ageism" may be intentional or unintentional, real or imagined, and exist for young as well as old.

Social Variables

Individuals' uses of leisure time are greatly influenced by ethnic, racial, and religious background. People are acculturated differently to use and view leisure time. While we should not overgeneralize or stereotype groups, our social planners have created programs for entire communities only to learn that some subpopulations did not become involved due to cultural barriers or differing values. A recent survey of a retired Hispanic sample illustrates
that ethnicity does make a difference in behavior and, even in the face of need and discomfort, a minority population may not utilize available community facilities and social services (Garcia and Bonnano, 1984).

Significant differences in use of leisure time are most likely a function of social class. As an example of this, Lambing (1972) found professional Blacks averaged 12.8 leisure time activities while a stable blue collar sample average 6.3 activities. A third group, less-affluent than those from the blue collar population, had an average of 4.1 activities. In addition to quantitative differences, those in the three samples engaged in different types of activities as well. For all groups, we know that the more-affluent join voluntary associations and have a greater tendency toward volunteerism. Conversely, we know the less-affluent, the blue collar worker, is more home- and family-centered, enjoys different recreational pursuits, and may be less likely to occupy themselves in solitary pursuits (Havighurst and deVries, 1969; Orzack, 1963).

Financial Resources

"... the most important limitation on older people's leisure options is their lack of money. Pursuits such as travel, entertaining, or going to a movie, concert, or play require money, and those without money are shut off" (Atchley, 1980a, p. 191). This relates specifically to the old, but certainly is true for other age groups as well. Finances are related to doing things directly, such as traveling and affording equipment, entrance costs, tickets, tuition, and memberships. Indirectly, the financial situation can be a more subtle barrier to leisure-time activities. For example, we know the elderly may refrain from church attendance or club membership because they cannot afford to give donations, are shameful of their old and shabby "Sunday Best," or cannot adequately care for their grooming.
Geographic Variations

The greater the population density, the more numerous the leisure-time opportunities. Persons living in suburbia and in rural areas will generally have less institutionalized leisure-time activities. Yet, their needs may well be the same as their urban counterparts. A concomitant to geographical availability is transportation. Especially for the poor, to be without public transportation is to be limited in the use of free-time activities. Often planners establish recreation, education, or social service programs and expect, ipso facto, all who can use such resources will take advantage. This is hardly true. "Obviously, if you cannot get there you cannot participate. Club and church socials or activities, outings, shopping, eating out, and visiting are all examples of leisure pursuits that can be greatly hampered by a lack of transportation" (Atchley, 1980a, p. 193).

All things being considered, leisure time in the South is more accessible than in the North, as weather presents few restrictions. This is especially important and true for the old, and the handicapped. In the North in the winter, outdoor activities are possible for only those who are healthy, young, or hearty. Cold and windy weather make outdoor activities impossible and drastically curtail the mobility of the aged and handicapped.

Programmatic Issues

Additional considerations, often forgotten by those responsible for leisure-time activities, include the location where activities occur and the time of day they take place. This, of course, is related to transportation needs of the target population. Further, many activities are planned for evenings and some elderly may not wish to go out, or return home, after dark. Another consideration is the setting of the meeting or activity. For example, a recreation
program for the elderly may be established in a multi-service center for Saturday afternoons. However, the entrance to this center, which serves all age groups, may be a location where teenagers congregate and socialize on Saturday afternoons. Elderly individuals may be reluctant to enter the building because of taunts, etc., and may refrain altogether from attending the program.

Some leisure-time programs that are planned to reach an entire elderly population, serve (in reality) a portion of the aged population: women, Blacks, affluent, Spanish-speaking, Jews, etc. Accordingly, other aged individuals are most reluctant to participate. Indeed, they may not be wanted by the participants. Agency staff should be aware of such a potential problem.

The sponsorship of a leisure program can influence the use of that program. For example, a program sponsored by a religious organization, although designed to meet the needs of the aged of all faiths, may only attract the aged from that religion. There may be a reluctance to participate in leisure-time activities sponsored by public welfare, or other programs perceived to be charity or welfare, as a result of the sponsoring agency or organization.

Similarly, often the site of a program may be incorrectly interpreted to be the sponsor and, therefore, affect utilization. For example, a nutrition program located in a church may be viewed to be a church-sponsored program and those not of that faith may be reluctant to participate. Similarly, programs located within long-term care facilities may not be adequately used because of common perceptions regarding institutions for the aged. Leisure-time activities located in public housing may have a stigma attached. Programs located within housing for affluent elderly may not attract those from less-advantaged backgrounds or those not living in that setting. (For example, Waring and
Kosberg (1984) found that a bible-study program, which was to be available for all the elderly in the area but located in an apartment building for only more-affluent white aged residents, attracted very few from outside the apartment building and then only wealthier whites.)

IMPLICATIONS

Educating for Leisure-Time Utilization

"An active and creative use of leisure in one's youth is the surest way to guarantee a similar pattern in old age, since older people tend to retain patterns and preferences developed in the past" (Atchley, 1980a, p. 184). Research findings indicate that the use of leisure time, the adjustment to a life of free time, can be predicted by earlier patterns of leisure-time use. One of the important implications of such knowledge is that problems caused by inability to adequately cope with free time in youth may well continue throughout the life cycle and can be exacerbated by the loss of one's major role and activity (i.e., retirement). Indeed, Atchley (1980b) has stressed the importance of "identity continuity" in explaining adjustment to a retired status.

It is believed that the preparation for leisure-time is a responsibility of our educational system and must occur early in life. The school system has a prodigious and awesome responsibility in providing not only vocational preparation and counseling, but leisure-time preparation and counseling as well. Educating for leisure is still a rather novel idea, but one that has begun to be discussed particularly in gerontological circles. One educator has suggested a strategy for time-structuring in the service of need fulfillment throughout life (Garcia, 1984). Time-structuring as a tool for satisfaction and personal growth can be useful at any stage of life, but is particularly
advantageous to the retiree with a greater degree of discretionary time.

Our societal preoccupation with remunerated activity and production (i.e., work) is a major source of difficulty vis-a-vis the use of leisure time. Such cultural values denigrate quiet contemplation and solitary spiritual or personal activities that renew the non-physical aspects of the human being. Vocational preparation is occurring earlier than ever in the school experience of children and this reinforces the importance given to work and to working. We must begin to instill the notion of the liberal education; knowledge for the sake of knowledge; for spiritual growth and for mental stimulation.

Community Planning

Each community; indeed, each society; must ensure that leisure-time programs exist and do not exclude any from involvement, for either structural, programmatical, or philosophical reasons. The point has been made that not all are being served by institutionalized leisure-time activities. Nor are all individuals aware of the potential benefits to be derived from such activities. There is a need to support the value of "self-determination" and free choice. However, for such a luxury (or right) to be possible, alternatives with individual options are necessary. Some variations in the uses and benefits of leisure-time activities have been discussed. It seems only logical to hope for a comprehensive system of leisure-time activities to exist in a community, or for a specific subpopulation. It is important that a wide spectrum of activities and programs exist for potential use by all elderly in each community.

A final issue for planning consideration deals with the difference between leisure-time activities and meaningful leisure-time activities. The distinction is hardly academic. Often recreational, educational, and voluntary
associations, programs and services have been used once or twice by an individual and then not at all. Among explanations is that the activity did not meet the needs of the individual for special meaning and for a specific role, nor provided a purpose above-and-beyond mere attendance.

Schleisinger (1971) has suggested that a national leisure policy might be created to reflect the need for different methods of using free time to develop and enrich the human personality. Opportunities for recreation, for community involvement, for self-fulfillment, for stimulation and for activity outside the world of work must be increased in number and importance.

This is imperative to meet the needs of the increasing number and proportion of elderly. Indeed, the elderly may lead the way for others. "Perhaps, as the number of retired persons increases, societal views will foster the development of a leisure ethic that can co-exist with the work ethic" (Hooker and Veutis, 1984, p. 483). Should this occur, the oldest members of society will be opening new opportunities to be enjoyed by all other age groups.

REFERENCES


DEMOGRAPHIC UNDERSTANDING OF VOLUNTEERISM*

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University of Missouri, St. Louis

ABSTRACT

A large sample of volunteers from a midwestern city chapter of the American Red Cross were studied to identify demographic correlates of the reasons given for volunteering. The findings suggest that the reasons people give for doing volunteer work are conditioned by their age, sex, and marital status. Implications for volunteer programs and future research are discussed.

Studies of volunteers have explored a wide range of social background characteristics, role characteristics, health, and personality variables in predicting voluntary participation (Anderson and Moore, 1974:120; Smith, Macaulay et al., 1980; Smith, 1975; Smith, Reddy, and Baldwin, 1972). These studies have been helpful in describing how certain variables affect the incidence of volunteerism (Anderson and Moore, 1974; Zakour et al., 1985) but they do not shed much light on the motives of individuals who volunteer. Traditional studies of volunteers have primarily distinguished between volunteers and non-volunteers while ignoring individual reasons for volunteering.

Research has uncovered many reasons for volunteering —"to serve one's community," "to help others," "to make friends," "to obtain job training and skills," to name just a few (Action, 1969; 1974; Independent Sector, 1981; Gallup Polls, 1983, King and Gillespie; 1981, Sills, 1957). Few researchers,
however, have analyzed these reasons and their correlates (Anderson and Moore, 1974). To ignore the reasons individuals give for volunteering places too little weight on an individual's conscious motives for doing something. This opinion is not offered to diminish the importance of other variables which enter into the decision-making process. Nevertheless, if you want to know why people engage in an activity or behave in a certain manner, the first and most direct step is to ask them (Gillespie, 1977). Their response can be then used as a baseline from which one can measure individual actions (Sills, 1957).

The practical implications from this line of reasoning are important in the case of volunteer participation. When an organization knows the particular reasons people give for joining that organization, it can see to it that those reasons are in some way satisfied through the volunteers' experiences. This type of understanding is crucial to the survival and effectiveness of voluntary associations and other organizations which depend a great deal on volunteers. This study, therefore, describes a sample of volunteers to the American Red Cross with respect to the reasons they gave for volunteering, and it analyses those reasons relative to several key demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**METHOD**

**Sample**

The respondents were drawn from a mail survey of American Red Cross volunteers living in a major midwestern city. Questionnaires were mailed to current and former volunteers of the Red Cross chapter. Out of 5,000 questionnaires distributed 1,346 (26.9 percent) completed and usable questionnaires were returned. The return rate was surprisingly low, suggesting some problems with the file of volunteer addresses. Surveys of the general population typically report return rates of 35 to 50 percent in the absence of any follow-up procedures, as was the case in the present study. No doubt the return rate could have been bolstered through the use of some follow-up procedures, but this by itself is insufficient to account for the discrepancy between what one might normally expect in returns and what in fact were returned. A reasonable interpretation of this outcome is that the 1,346 questionnaires that were returned represent 35 to 50 percent of the Red Cross volunteers, and that the mailing list is an inaccurate sampling frame for the
Red Cross volunteer population. This interpretation is supported with the observation that the average American changes their address every four years, thus suggesting that at least 1,000 of the questionnaires mailed were non-deliverable.

One way of increasing confidence in the usefulness of these findings is to compare key demographic characteristics of respondents to this survey with those of other surveys of volunteers. The differences between this survey and several national surveys on three demographic variables—sex, age, and marital status—were compared and found to be negligible in each case except sex (U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, 1969; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1981; Independent Sector, 1981; VISTA, Action Annual Report, 1974; VISTA, Action Annual Report, 1979.; Babchuck and Booth, 1969). The proportion of women to men was about 10% greater (80% to 20%) than what has been found in national surveys (70% to 30%), but the direction of difference remained consistent. We believe that the sample of volunteers used in this study are essentially comparable to volunteers in general.

Data Collection

The reasons people gave for volunteering were measured by asking respondents: "What finally made you decide to volunteer for the American Red Cross?" Twelve fixed-choice response categories and one open-ended ("other") category were provided. After checking any number of the reasons for volunteering with the Red Cross, respondents were asked to choose the single most important reason for volunteering. The reasons given for volunteering were studied comparatively across three personal characteristics—age, sex, and marital status—which were elicited through standard questionnaire formats.

FINDINGS

Reasons for Volunteering

We were interested in the reasons given for the decision to volunteer with the Red Cross. Table 1 presents the response categories, along with the relative percent and number of respondents characterized by each category. The categories have been rank-ordered from high to low according to the percentage of respondents checking each reason for volunteering.
Table 1
The Reasons Given in Rank-Order of Times Noted by 1,346 People for Volunteering with the American Red Cross

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Order</th>
<th>Reasons for Volunteering</th>
<th>Percent*</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To help others</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To contribute to the community</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To obtain training and skills</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Enrich personal life</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Had some time available</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To be needed</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To make new friends</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reputation of the Red Cross</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Career exploitation</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To be around others</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>To help school **</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Repay for services received by Red Cross</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Drawn in during a crisis</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Drafted by church group **</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Had to in order to volunteer for another organization **</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Like children **</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>To carry first aid training to scouting</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Psychiatrist suggested **</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percents total more than 100 because most respondents checked more than one category.

** These are additional reasons for volunteering with the Red Cross as indicated by the respondents in the other category.

It is interesting to note from Table 1 that the two most frequently checked categories—"to help others," and "to contribute to the community"—represent long established traditional values in volunteerism (Laski, 1948; Thursz, 1960; Action, 1969; Action, 1974; Independent Sector, 1981). The third most frequently cited reason for volunteering—"to obtain training and skills"—is a more recent addition to the reasons for volunteerism (Anderson and Moore, 1978; Adams, 1980; King and Gillespie, 1981). This skills acquisition orientation to volunteering could be emerging as a result of
the increased number of women entering or returning to the work force (Loesser, 1978). If this is true, it would seem to carry some important implications for agencies such as the Red Cross that benefit from extensive volunteer staffs.

One of the implications from a skill acquisition orientation is that people who become trained or skilled as a result of their volunteer experience are likely to move on to paid employment and a regular career path (Zakour, 1985). A second implication is that the turnover among volunteers is likely to be increased in proportion to those who have volunteered their time for the purpose of gaining training and skills. If the 40 percent who indicated interest in skill acquisition in the present survey is confirmed in subsequent studies, then the impact with regard to agency operations is likely to be quite substantial.

On the other hand, a substantial number of the respondents indicated personal reasons or simply having the time available (ranks 4, 5, 6) as motivation for volunteering with the Red Cross. People indicating reasons such as these are likely to be more enduring in their affiliation with the agency. Of course, given the opportunity for respondents to check more than one category, there is a need to examine the extent to which the people checking training and skills as their reasons for volunteering are distinct from those checking personal reasons or simply having the time available. This was done in the present study and no significant differences were observed.

Respondents were asked to choose the single most important reason for volunteering. Table 2 presents the response categories with the percent and number of respondents in each category. Again the categories are rank-ordered from high to low according to the percentage of respondents checking each reason for volunteering. Table 2 shows findings very similar to those reported in Table 1, except that "training and skills" was more frequently cited as the single most important item than was "contribute to the community." Given the directions for respondents to indicate the single most important reason for volunteering, these findings are more easy to interpret than those in Table 2. Yet they are also more restrictive since there is a certain amount of arbitrariness attached to the extraction of a single most important reason. Nevertheless, the findings do suggest
that a significant number of people—somewhere between 177 and 541—do volunteer with a skills acquisition orientation rather than on simply an altruistic basis.

Table 2
A Rank-Order of the Single Most Important Reason for Volunteering as Indicated by 977 Red Cross Volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Order</th>
<th>Reason for Volunteering*</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To help others</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To obtain training and skills</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To contribute to the community</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Enrich personal life</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To be needed</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Had some time available</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Career exploitation</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Drawn in during a crisis</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Repay for services received by Red Cross</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To be around others</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reputation of the Red Cross</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>To make new friends</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The "other" category was excluded from analysis because none of the additional reasons form volunteering received sufficient frequency to justify their being reported.

** The 133 cases listing "other" reasons have been excluded as have the 239 missing data (nonresponse) cases, thus accounting for the reduction of sample size.

We should also point out that a substantial number of respondents gave personal reasons ("to enrich my personal life," "to be needed," and "to make new friends") for volunteering, which supports the notion that individuals who volunteer do so in part to satisfy psychosocial needs. The motivations underlying decisions to volunteer are complex and represent a host of basic human needs along with the current state of peoples personal and social lives (Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt, 1971). A closer inspection of the data through bivariate analyses revealed several interesting findings that shed additional light on the apparent
motivational trends of these Red Cross volunteers.

Age and Reasons for Volunteering

Several differences are evident when the age of the respondents and their reasons are cross-tabulated. Table 3 presents the reasons for each of the age categories and the percentage of respondents in each category. Compared to their younger counterparts proportionately more respondents age 38 and older indicated that they volunteered "to help others." A similar finding emerges when one compares these two age groupings on their interest in contributing to the community. Proportionately more respondents age 38 and older gave the reason "to contribute to the community" than did their younger counterparts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>To help others</th>
<th>To obtain job training and skills</th>
<th>Contribute to the community</th>
<th>Career exploration</th>
<th>Had some time available</th>
<th>To be needed</th>
<th>Reputation of the Red Cross</th>
<th>To make friends</th>
<th>To be around others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-32</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-38</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-54</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-65</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These findings may lead one to believe that older individuals are more altruistic in their motives for volunteering than younger people. This conclusion, although plausible, obscures the complexity of volunteer motivation.
The motives for engaging in volunteer work are not only based on one's unique capacity to feel compassion for fellow human beings but also on other equally important social and personal needs. The younger individuals (age 38 and younger) appear to be more concerned than their older counterparts with using volunteer work as a means for obtaining job training and skills or exploration. The findings in Table 3 suggest that the younger the respondent the larger the percentage of individuals who gave these employment related motives for volunteering. One might explain this finding by arguing that younger volunteers are more likely to be concerned with employment and career advances than older volunteers (Frisch and Gerrard, 1981). On the other hand, middle-age volunteers probably have reached a point in their work careers where the skills and job training opportunities available through volunteering are of little value. In other words, for most individuals age 38 to 54, the skills and career options found in most volunteer settings might be either unrelated to their career interests or so basic that they would not help an experienced career person.

A similar difference surfaces when the response patterns of older and younger Red Cross volunteers are compared across three interpersonal reasons—"to be needed," "to make friends," and "to be around others." Proportionately more individuals age 38 and older gave these reasons for volunteering than younger individuals. Perhaps older volunteers' social or interpersonal circumstances do not provide as many opportunities to satisfy these needs. Younger volunteers, on the other hand, are probably more socially active, and thus more likely to encounter situations where these needs may be satisfied.

Senior citizens who volunteer may be even more socially isolated than either their middle-age or younger counterparts. Proportionately more older Red Cross volunteers are widowed and divorced than younger volunteers. As we advance in age, especially beyond our middle years, we tend not to be as socially active. Moreover, there is an increased likelihood that long-term friends and associates will either move away or die. Senior citizens find themselves more isolated. Add to these events the death of a spouse and it becomes obvious, if not painfully clear, why so many senior citizens might work as a volunteer.
All of these circumstances leave the senior citizen with a lot more time on their hands than their younger counterparts. Again, Table 3 provides some evidence to support this interpretation. Proportionately more Red Cross volunteers age 38 and older indicated that they volunteered because they had time available than did respondents age 38 and below. Almost 10 percent of the individuals age 65 and older gave this reason compared to an average of 3 percent of the volunteers age 38 and younger.

**Sex and Reasons for Volunteering**

The only meaningful difference in reasons observed between male and female respondents occurred across one category—"to obtain job training and skills." Table 4 presents the reasons given for volunteering by males and females and the percentage of respondents characterized by each category. More than twice the percentage of men gave this reason for volunteering than did women. It is clear that the men in this sample were more interested than the women in using volunteering to acquire employment-related experience and skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To help others</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To obtain job training skills</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to the community</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had some time available</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be needed</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the Red Cross</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make friends</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be around others</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cross-tabulation analysis provided additional data to help explain the above finding as well as support the conclusion that these male volunteers were more interested than their female counterparts in deriving some employment-related benefits from their volunteer experience. There was a slight relationship between the occupation of these Red Cross volunteers and sex (Cramer's $V = .22$, $P = .001$): 59.4 percent of the men were professionals compared to only 35.1 percent of the women. Since proportionately more men than women were working along some professional career path, it seems understandable that they would express a greater desire to use volunteering as a vehicle for improving their job skills or for acquiring new ones. Also, as Anderson and Moore (1979) point out, men are more likely to be currently employed in any type of job than are women.

**Marital Status and Reasons for Volunteering**

Several interesting findings are shown in Table 5 pertaining to the relationship between the marital status of these volunteers and their reasons for volunteering. First, proportionately more respondents in the single/widowed category volunteered "to help others" than did respondents from any other group. What may be seen here is an effect of the relationships between these respondents' age and their motivation to volunteer. Most of the single/widowed respondents are older (90 percent of the widowed/widowers were 55 or older) and probably have fewer activities competing with their desire to engage in humanitarian tasks. In other words, the senior citizens that comprise a significant portion of the individuals in the single/widowed category have more time than their younger counterparts to draw upon their altruistic motives, and they also have fewer family obligations and roles. The younger respondents are more likely to have both family and career responsibilities. They may feel the need to use whatever time they can afford trying to improve their employment skills, especially since it is these skills that will determine how far they advance in their careers. Or, they may feel a need to engage in activities related to their young children, such as volunteer activities focused on school events. It could be argued, therefore, that the apparent relationship between these volunteers' motives and their marital status represents a difference in social and economic circumstances rather than
a difference in their desire to help others.

Table 5
Percentages for Reasons for Volunteering by Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Single/ Never Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To help others</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To obtain job training skills</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute to the community</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had some time available</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be needed</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation of the Red Cross</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make friends</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be around others</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A significantly larger proportion of single/never-married respondents volunteered to obtain job training and skills than did any other marital category. Again, we may be observing an effect of age on the reasons for volunteering. Of the respondents aged 18 to 32, 90 percent were single and had never married; of this 90 percent, 71 percent were between the ages of 18 and 25. At this stage of life several things may be occurring to explain this particular finding. For example, they are either attending college, working in their first full-time job, or in the process of obtaining employment. If the respondent is in college or unemployed, he/she might decide to volunteer in order to acquire new skills or crystalize skills recently acquired in a classroom setting. In other words, both groups of individuals might be searching for an inexpensive way of acquiring and refining marketable job skills, as well as a way of gaining valuable practical experience. If an individual between the ages of 18
and 25 is employed, he/she is probably in an entry-level position at the lower end of the career ladder. In order to progress up that career ladder, the individual must acquire more knowledge, experience and advanced skills. Volunteering represents one way to satisfy these constraints (Zakour, 1985).

The reason most closely associated with "to obtain job training and skills" was "career exploration" \((r = .34)\). The two categories (single/never married and divorced) with the largest proportion of respondents giving "career exploration" as a reason for volunteering are the two groups that we would intuitively expect to have more job-related concerns. It is to be expected that the single/never married respondents are concerned with the process of career exploration because they are typically young, relatively inexperienced, and not quite sure what profession or area of work they would like to pursue. Further analysis of these data indicated that 80.9 percent of the single/never married respondents were 32 years old or younger; 67.8 percent were 25 years old or younger. These findings suggest that age may serve as an intervening variable for any relationship observed between the marital status of an individual volunteer and their reason for volunteering.

Divorced respondents also gave this reason ("career exploration") proportionately more frequently than married and single/widowed respondents. These individuals gave this reason for volunteering proportionately more often than any other marital category, including single/never married volunteers. Most of the divorced respondents (58.4 percent) are between the ages of 32 and 65, with 21 percent being 65 years old and older. Thus, age doesn't appear to be as important a factor in this case since a very broad spectrum of age is represented in the divorced category of volunteers. One variable that might help explain this finding is sex. When women experience a divorce, they often are faced with a partial or complete loss of income. As a result, they are forced to seek employment or training for employment. Since their financial resources may be limited, volunteering may be viewed as an economical way of investigating the job or career opportunities available. Although the data from this study precludes an empirical testing of this explanation, it should be pointed out that over 91 percent of the divorced respondents were females.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored the reasons a sample of volunteers gave for engaging in volunteer work. The reason most frequently given for volunteering—"to help others"—is the reason given most often by many volunteers when asked by researchers (Action, 1969; Action, 1974; and Independent Sector, 1981). The second and third most frequently given reasons, as stated by these respondents—"to help the community," and "to obtain job training and skills"—were different from what researchers have found in the past when studying national samples of volunteers. "Interest in the activity" (Independent Sector, 1981), and "enjoy doing volunteer work" (Action, 1969; Action 1974; and Gallup Poll, 1983) have in the past been found to be the second and third most widely stated reasons for volunteering.

In addition, this study analyzed the manner in which various reasons were distributed across the categories of age, sex, and marital status. These findings indicated that individuals who differ by age, sex, and marital status tend to give the same reasons for volunteering but at widely disparate rates. The age of the volunteer seems to be an important independent variable when one is trying to explain why individuals volunteer. It has been empirically demonstrated that older respondents volunteered for different reasons than younger people and vice versa. Moreover, the findings suggest that age also indirectly affected the relationship between the marital status of the respondents and the reasons they gave for volunteering. All of these findings underscore the potential explanatory power that age might possess when trying to understand why individuals volunteer.

There is little theoretical knowledge to guide an inquiry into the relationship between the reasons individuals give for volunteering and demographic characteristics such as age. The Sequential Specificity Model (SSM) for explaining individual voluntary action (Smith, 1966) lists three broad types of independent variables that help explain, predict, and understand individual voluntary activity. The three types of variables are: Contextual factors, personal factors, and situational factors. The third type of variables, situational factors, are described as specific situational stimuli,
perceptions relevant to individual action, including time, age in the life cycle, and temporal goals. These are the same factors or variables that appear to have influenced the responses in the present study. Although strong arguments have been made for the importance of these variables to help understand volunteer motivation, situational variables have been identified as the least studied and least understood of all those in the SSM model (Smith, 1972: 328). A more recent discussion on the subject by Smith, Macaulay et al. (1980) makes the same point.

The potential importance of age and situational factors rests upon the assumption that, at any given point in time, personal and social circumstances are conditioned by age. As people age their personal and social circumstances, as well as goals change. This study, as well as others, indicates that certain goals are being satisfied when people volunteer (Sills, 1957; Berke, 1980; Gidron, 1979; Lindeman, 1949; Moore, 1961; King and Gillespie, 1981). The specific goals sought seem to depend upon where people are in the life cycle, as well as the immediate situational factors. Older people volunteer for different reasons than younger people and, apparently, as individuals age personal goals change accordingly. Thus, individual motives for volunteering may vary as their priorities in life change.

Closely related to age levels are the characteristics of social and personal life. Whether one is married, has children, or is currently seeking employment depends to some extent upon where that person is in the life cycle. These social situations, in turn, help determine life goals as well as how they are prioritized. Although two groups of individuals may express concern for helping others, one may give that reason proportionately more often than the other because current personal and social circumstances provide the opportunity to place more emphasis on helping others rather than, say, seeking new friends or job opportunities.

There are a few studies that have analyzed the reasons individuals give for engaging in volunteer work (Anderson and Moore, 1978; Adams, 1980; Smith and Berns, 1980; Sills, 1957). Adams' study of an American Red Cross chapter found a pattern of reasons very similar to those reported in the present study. In their study of Canadian volunteers, Anderson and Moore found similar reasons for volunteering,
but less emphasis on work related responses; "To obtain job training and skills" was given as a reason for volunteering more frequently by the American Red Cross respondents than by the Canadian volunteers. Perhaps the Red Cross provides more opportunities for individuals to gain job training experience than other volunteer organizations. The Red Cross does have many health related training programs that provide volunteers with marketable skills.

The Anderson and Moore study was a national survey in contrast to the local nature of the present study and the one done by Adams (1980). Although the similarities among these studies is encouraging, each of them might not be as reliable as necessary given the low return rates reported. Sill's (1957) study of the National Infantile Paralysis Foundation is the only other study to have elicited stated reasons for volunteering. Sills, however, did not analyze the reasons given by various demographic characteristics. The limited amount of comparable data on this topic suggests the need for more research in this area.

In the past, most studies of volunteer motivation have focused upon isolating a single general motive or reason for volunteering. These attempts have usually focused on trying to identify the social or psychological characteristics (attitudes, personality attributes, etc.) that are responsible for certain individual involvement in volunteer work (Downing, 1957; Freeman, Novak and Reeder, 1957; Nelson, 1970; Smith, 1966; Johnson, 1973; Reissman, 1965). Alternatively, there have been attempts to explain why people volunteer by inferring motivation from the socio-economic background of those most likely to do volunteer work (Anderson, 1943; Eitzen, 1970; Hanks and Eckland, 1978). Both approaches have failed to increase our level of understanding as to why people actually decide to volunteer at a specific point in time because they are descriptive, they largely ignore current social contexts, and they exclude any consideration of the consciously stated reasons individuals give for volunteering.

While researchers have long recognized the need to explore the usefulness of situational variables for explaining volunteer behavior, little research in this area has actually been carried out. Moreover, most studies also fail to incorporate the role individuals' current personal and social
circumstances play in this process, especially as they relate to the individuals' position in the life cycle. Kornhauser and Lazarsfeld (1955) have argued that one cannot explain human behavior by focusing solely on either psychological processes such as internal motivation or situational environmental factors. Future research efforts searching for empirically based explanations of volunteer behavior should include individual, environmental and situational variables, as well as the consciously stated reasons individuals give for volunteering. In addition, more longitudinal studies will be necessary if the effects of specific social and personal circumstances on the decision to volunteer are to be known.

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THE SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORKS OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

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ABSTRACT

Refugee sponsors and social service staff of agencies serving Indochinese refugees in Utah were surveyed to determine the relationship between social support and economic self-sufficiency among refugees. Agency staff and refugee sponsors rated contacts by family, work, school, and sponsors who are family members as most useful, with differences emerging between the two groups regarding other sources of social support. Respondents who had been refugees rated some forms of social support higher than nonrefugee respondents. Mutual Assistance Associations were seen as underutilized resources for helping Indochinese refugees build and maintain networks of social support.
Introduction

Social support networks and informal care-giving by family, friends, neighbors and self-help groups have been recognized only recently as important resources for addressing social needs and increasing the effectiveness of human services (e.g., Caplan, 1974; Collins and Pancoast, 1976; Froland, et al., 1979; Froland, et al., 1981; Gottlieb, 1981; 1983; Speck and Attneave, 1973). Whittaker and Garbarino (1983) define a social support network as:

a set of interconnected relationships among a group of people that provides enduring patterns of nurturance (many or all forms) and provides contingent reinforcement for efforts to cope with life on a day-to-day basis (p. 5).

The concepts of social network and social support are integrated by Caplan's (1974) definition of a personal support system as an:

enduring pattern of continuous or intermittent ties that play a significant part in maintaining the psychological and physical integrity of the individual over time (p. 7).

A person's network of supportive relationships functions as a source of emotional and moral support, physical care and nurturance, information and advice, and tangible aid such as food, money, employment, clothing and shelter (Whittaker, 1983, p. 46). The positive effects of a well-developed social support network have been documented in a number of areas, including aiding men in adjustment to life changes such as unemployment (Cobb,
training parents in child management skills (Cohn, 1979; Wahler, 1980b), helping families deal with stress (Stack, 1974; Unger and Powell, 1980); assisting recovering addicts in re-entering the community (Fraser and Hawkins, 1984); and aiding child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Cochran and Brassard, 1979; Sandler, 1980).

Similarly, informal helping networks comprised largely of neighbors, kin, work contacts, and retailers such as hairdressers and bartenders appear to play a significant role in preventing child maltreatment (Garbarino, et al., 1980), linking parents to day care services (Collins and Pancoast, 1976) and performing other concrete social functions. The connections provided by both strong and weak network ties fulfill important functions in mediating life crises and providing day-to-day problem-solving resources (Granovetter, 1973, 1983).

Large and diverse networks, as opposed to small and dense networks, have been associated with successful coping and the absence of problem conditions such as mental illness, alcohol abuse, and drug addiction (Pattison, 1979). Denoff (1982) in a recent study of supportive functions among network members highlighted the role that supportive relationships can play in "buffering" against the impact of illness, divorce, unemployment, and death (see, for example, Andrews et al., 1978; Caplan, 1974; Cobb, 1976; Dean and Lin, 1977; Nuckolls, Cassel, and Kaplan, 1971).

But what if a "life crisis" consists of a sudden departure from one's homeland, culture, family and friends, as in the case of Indochinese refugees who were evacuated
or escaped from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos? In contrast to other areas, research on the role of social support networks among Indochinese refugees is less complete, particularly with regard to the role of social supports in helping refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency. This article will report the findings of a survey of refugee agency staff and sponsors regarding the role of social support in helping refugees achieve "economic self-sufficiency"—defined as independence from any form of public assistance (e.g., refugee assistance, AFDC).

Social Supports and Indochinese Refugees: An Overview

The migration/evacuation and resettlement of Indochinese peoples since 1975 constitutes one of the most far-reaching and complex social dislocations in recent history (Hirayama, 1977; Montero, 1979; Moore, 1981). The greatest number of Indochinese refugees who fled Southeast Asia have resettled in the United States (Kelly, 1979). Although the first "waves" of refugees (April and August of 1975) were comprised primarily of Vietnamese, other Asian groups such as ethnic Chinese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong relocated to America as well. Currently it is estimated that 650,000 Indochinese refugees have been resettled in the United States with 9,500 refugees resettled in Utah alone (Moore, 1983).

Utah is the fifth most heavily impacted state in the country when extent of refugee resettlement is measured on a per capita basis. Paradoxically, it has one of the lowest refugee welfare dependency rates in the nation (11%), when the national average for 1984 was at 52% (Kerpen, 1985, 820
The purpose of this study was to identify those services and social supports that account for this remarkable record.

The Role of Social Supports in Attainment of Self-Sufficiency

Social support among Asian and Pacific Americans is strongly correlated with self-sufficiency in the areas of health, transportation, employment, mental illness and household maintenance (Chen, 1977; Lin and Lin, 1978; Lin, et al., 1979; Salcido, et al., 1980). However, for refugees, uprooted by war and resettled across the globe, the lack of family, extended family, and religious support systems that were so common in their homelands has made adjustment to life in America difficult (Haines, 1981; Moore, 1981; Timberlake and Cook, 1984). American resettlement policies have complicated this adjustment by scattering refugees across the fifty states, thereby destroying whatever shreds of support may have survived the journey from Asia (Brown, 1982; Liu, et al., 1979; Nhu, 1976). In contrast to their Asian American counterparts, many Indochinese have arrived in American communities without the traditional resources provided by family and church.

Refugees have been forced to seek new and possibly alien social supports. Increasing numbers of community "Mutual Assistance Associations" and relatively high rates of secondary migration are indicators that America's most recent newcomers are building community networks or moving to ethnic enclaves to maximize physical, emotional, and economic support networks (Haines, Rutherford and Thomas, 1986; Montero, 1979; Skinner and Hendricks, 1979; Starr and Roberts, 1982; Vinh,
Despite these recent developments, the construction of social support networks is a formidable task. Moore (1981) observes that:

Confucian and Buddhist conduct patterns which encourage passivity, stoicism, and personal reserve combine with a tradition of devotion to the family (nuclear and extended) to disallow seeking support or affirmation outside the family system (p. 102).

The cultural, religious, and family orientation of many refugees may be a barrier to the formation of nonfamily and comparatively more western social networks. Although limited in size, the networks that refugees are able to form appear to be useful in achieving self-sufficiency. A number of studies have reported that refugee sponsors, voluntary agencies (VOLAGS), family members, church groups, and ministers, teachers, physicians, Mutual Assistance Agency (MAA) staff, shopkeepers, and respected neighborhood leaders or elders fulfill important roles in helping refugees obtain jobs and adjust to American life (Bureau of Social Science Research, 1982; Harding and Looney, 1977; Lamphier, 1983; Vinh, 1981; Winkler, 1981; Wright, 1981)). But most of these data are anecdotal and no study has attempted to weigh the comparative usefulness of network members from alternative spheres of contact—-the family, the workplace, the neighborhood, the school and the church.
Utah Refugee Study

Method

The findings reported here are from a survey of (1) workers, supervisors and administrators of agencies serving Indochinese refugees in Utah; and (2) a sample of sponsors of Indochinese refugees in Utah. Refugee agency staff and refugee sponsors were surveyed using a questionnaire that included both open and closed ended questions. As part of the survey respondents were asked to rate the "usefulness" of certain refugee social or cultural supports (e.g., family, school, and work-related contacts).

Agency Staff Sample

For the staff survey, as many Utah refugee workers as possible were surveyed. Questionnaires were distributed at a statewide staff retreat and mailed to virtually every refugee serving agency in Utah that could be identified by the state refugee office. These included all four Mutual Assistance Associations (Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Vietnamese), Utah's Asian Association, Utah Department of Social Services Field Service Offices, English as a Second Language and Vocational Training Projects, local Refugee Coordinating Councils, local and State Health Offices, all Voluntary Resettlement Agencies (American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Tolstoy Foundation, and United States Catholic Conference), and other refugee-serving community agencies and groups such as local VISTA Volunteer offices, the Voluntary Action Center, and the Community Action Program.

One hundred Agency Staff surveys were distributed or mailed, and 68 were returned. The majority of respondents were
front line workers (38, 56%) followed by agency or program directors (12, 18%), supervisors (7, 10%), volunteers (5, 7%), teachers or trainers (2, 3%) or "other" staff (4, 6%).

Staff from over eighteen refugee agencies participated. The largest group of respondents worked for the State Department of Social Services (20, 29%), followed by Job Service staff (10, 15%) and Voluntary Agency staff (10, 15%). On average, respondents had worked 3.7 years with refugees, but there was wide variation with some working less than one year and others between seven and nine years.

Of the agency staff returning the survey, many were caucasian (24, 39%) but Vietnamese (11, 16%), Laotian (9, 14%), Chinese or Chinese-Vietnamese (6, 10%), Hmong (5, 8%) and other ethnic groups (Cambodian, black, Native American and Hispanic) were represented. A large proportion of the respondents had been refugees themselves (38, 43%) and had sponsored at least one refugee (22, 37%). Years of education for the respondents ranged from 6 to 22 years, with a mean of 15.3 years. Thus from the perspective of state refugee experts the sample appears representative of refugee agency staff with the exception of a slightly higher average amount of education.

In terms of religious preference, 25 respondents (39%) were Latter Day Saints (L.D.S.), followed by Buddhists (14, 22%), Catholics (8, 12%), or Protestants (3, 5%). One respondent listed Traditional (Confucianism/Taoism/Buddhism) and 13 respondents reported a variety of other religions.
Sponsor Sample

A systematic random sample of 230 sponsors of Indochinese refugees was selected from the total population of 832 sponsors affiliated with three major voluntary resettlement agencies: American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Tolstoy Foundation, and United States Catholic Conference. Virtually all refugees in Utah other than a small number of secondary migrants have been assigned a sponsor from these agencies. The population of 832 sponsors constituted the total number of refugee sponsors in Utah from January 1975 to August, 1983. The sponsors chosen for the study were mailed a questionnaire along with a cover letter describing the purpose of the study.

Of the 230 sponsor surveys that were mailed, 51 were returned. This limited response may be due to the time required to complete the survey (35 minutes). These data cannot be generalized and will be used only to provide a comparison to the sponsor data. The number of refugees sponsored ranged from 1 to 19 with an average of 5.2. Respondents had worked an average of 3.2 years as sponsors or volunteers with refugees, but there was wide variation with some working less than one year and others up to six years.

Of the persons returning the survey, the majority of the respondents were caucasian (34, 76%) but Vietnamese (7, 16%), Native American (2, 4%), Chinese-Vietnamese (1, 2%), and other ethnic groups were represented (six respondents did not report their ethnicity).

Only eight respondents (16%) had been refugees themselves, thus state administrators estimate that refugee
sponsors are slightly under-represented in the sample. Years of education for the respondents ranged from 10 to 22 years with a mean of 15.7 years. Most respondents were managers or professionals (20, 43%). Technical/sales/administrative staff (9, 19%), service staff (7, 15%) and housewives (5, 11%) were the next largest occupational categories. Fifty-three percent of the sponsors reported an income in the over $30,000 range (26,53%). The next largest group had incomes of 15,001-20,000 (8,16%). Thus, roughly 88% (43) of the respondents had incomes of 15,000 or above.

In terms of religious preference, 41 (82%) of the sponsors were Latter Day Saints, followed by Buddhists (5, 10%). One respondent reported being Protestant and four respondents reported "other" religions. In reviewing the sponsor demographics with state and voluntary agency staff, the sample appears biased by an over-response of college-educated and LDS sponsors who constitute roughly half of all refugee sponsors in Utah.

Ratings of Social Supports

Staff responses. Refugees have contact and receive supportive help or services from many individuals and groups. These persons can be important sources of assistance in relation to obtaining training, securing employment, locating health services, and so on. A seven-point rating scale ranging from "1" (Not Useful) to "7" (Extremely Useful) was used by respondents to rate the usefulness of various contacts for helping refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency.
Each of the supportive contacts along with agency staff and refugee sponsor ratings of social support are presented in Table 1. Agency staff rate family member, state assimilation or social service worker, voluntary agency, and work-related contacts as most useful. However, each of the groups judged all of the contacts to be helpful as all the median ratings for both samples were 4.1 or above.

Because a high percentage of respondents were social service line staff, a separate analysis was conducted to determine whether the ratings of state social service worker contacts were different from those of other respondents. As might be expected, state social service worker contacts were rated higher by the state staff (Mann-Whitney U = 198.0, z = 3.37, p < .001). These high ratings may be due to inherent biases—a belief in and commitment to social service work with refugees. However, state workers differ from nonstate workers in important ways. More are refugees themselves and fewer belong to the Church of Latter Day Saints; thus they may value government-related services more than church-related services for helping refugees find employment.

**Sponsor Responses.** In contrast to the Agency staff, refugee sponsors rate social service worker and voluntary resettlement agency contacts as less useful and rate sponsors who are family members, church-related contacts, and other friends as more useful in helping refugees attain economic self-sufficiency.
Comparison of Staff and Sponsor Data with National and Local Refugee Data.

In contrast to the opinions of sponsors, a recent study of 96 Utah refugees found that 28% of the refugees listed social service or other professional workers as their primary source of support as well as sponsors. Other important services included family members (22%), friends (13%), religious leaders (6%), and Mutual Assistance Agencies (2%), (Fraser and Pecora, 1984, p. 18).

Furthermore in this same study, the majority of refugees reported that their first job was obtained most often through their sponsor (42%), followed by friends and relatives (19%), individual efforts (17%), or use of state employment offices (14%). VOGALs (6%) and social service agency (3%) contacts were also helpful while no church contacts were used to obtain their first job (Fraser and Pecora, 1984, p. 13) Thus the high ratings of church contacts and low ratings of social service workers by the refugee sponsors were not supported by the refugee interview data while sponsor ratings of other supports were similar to refugee ratings.

Agency staff and sponsor data are also supported partially by the findings of a recent study of the adaptation of Vietnamese refugees in three areas in the United States. The Bureau of Social Science Research (BSSR) in interviewing 555 Vietnamese refugees in Los Angeles and Orange Counties, Houston/Galveston, and New Orleans found that for the most part, refugees relied on their own resources and social networks to locate and obtain their first and second jobs (Bureau of Social Science Research, 1982, p. 33; Dunning and
Greenbaum, 1982, pp. 126-131). More specifically, of the 52% of the refugees using "personal contacts" to get their first jobs, about half of these personal contacts were refugees' sponsors, and half were friends or relatives. By contrast, only six percent of the refugees obtained their first jobs through voluntary resettlement agencies (VOLAGS), and six percent through formal placement services such as public and private employment agencies, school placement services, and job training programs (Dunning and Greenbaum, 1982, p. 131). These findings are also consistent with the important role that family networks play with regard to routine internal migration inside the United States (Price and Sikes, 1975).

Refugee Staff Responses. To determine whether responses differed for various subgroups of each sample, several nonparametric bivariable analyses were undertaken. In comparing LDS and non-LDS sponsors, no significant differences were found. However, when sponsors were divided into refugee (n = 8) and nonrefugee (n = 39) groups, nonrefugee sponsors tended to view work contacts (Mann-Whitney U = 69.5, z = -1.74, p < .08) and church contacts (Mann-Whitney U = 94.0, z = -1.85, p < .06) as slightly more useful. Similarly, sponsors who earn more than $30,000 a year (one of 26 of whom was a refugee) when compared to those earning less placed greater weight on school contacts (Mann-Whitney U = 132.0, z = -2.06, p < .04), neighbors (Mann-Whitney U = 168.0, z = -2.04, p < .05), and family-related sponsorship (Mann-Whitney = 118.5, z = -2.31, p < .03). With the exception of family related sponsors, this suggests that sponsors who are American or who have succeeded in American society view western social supports as more useful.
Because of these differences, the responses of only the staff members who were refugees were calculated to compare with those of refugee sponsors. As shown in Table 2, they differ markedly from the responses of the total sample.

Comparing the responses of both groups of refugees, State Refugee Social Service workers are rated higher on the average than other kinds of support. Utah has made a concerted effort to train and hire Asian refugees to work in refugee worker positions. Refugee workers spend as much time in refugees' homes--helping solve concrete problems--as they spend in their field offices. This reaching-out philosophy characterizes the delivery of refugee social services and may be related to the high regard they sustain among agency staff and refugee sponsors.

There is little agreement between the two groups on midrange rankings. Staff members rate other friends as not as helpful as work contacts, and sponsors disagree diametrically. On the other hand, both groups rate family contacts, voluntary agency services, and school contacts in the midsector, though they disagree on the exact order. Sponsors who are refugees rate support from family-related sponsors as the most useful. Staff members disagree, ranking it fifth.

There is relatively greater agreement on the supports which are less useful in achieving economic self-sufficiency. Both groups rate Mutual Assistance Associations (MAA's) last. Although exact rankings differ, Indochinese respondents generally
find church contacts, ethnic businesses and neighbors as less useful. Sponsors tended to rate unrelated sponsor contacts higher than staff, but the median ratings differed only by .278 points.

Comparing Tables 1 and 2, the subsamples of refugees rate family contacts somewhat lower than the total groups of staff and sponsor respondents. They rate the State Refugee Social Service workers higher and, perhaps reflecting the absence of a strong Buddhist organization in Utah, church contact lower.

Pronounced differences exist for some areas between nonrefugee and refugee sponsors. The aggregate group rated family contacts first, while the subsample of refugee respondents rated it sixth. The total sample of sponsors rated state refugee services eleventh but refugee sponsors rated them second. There is basic agreement on the importance of school and family sponsor contacts, but church contacts are rated as more useful by nonrefugee respondents. In subsequent analyses, the proportion of LDS sponsors in the total sample was found to be significantly larger than the proportion of LDS church members in the sample of sponsors who were refugees. This could account for the difference in ratings of church contacts, but the proportion in the refugee sponsor subsample is not stable as a result of the sample size (n = 8).

**Dimensions of Social Support.** Each question in this study focused on achieving economic self-sufficiency. In contrast, the BSSR research examined social adjustment, employment patterns, the receipt of welfare payments, and other
areas. Our questionnaire specifically identified twelve different sources of support that refugee agency staff believe are important for locating and maintaining employment. Given this greater specificity, it is possible that underlying clusters of various social supports may conform to the BSSR finding of the importance of personal contacts for obtaining jobs. In the field of drug abuse, Fraser and Hawkins (1984) recently reported that caution must be used in assuming that each sector of a network constitutes a dimension of support. Their data indicated that multiple sectors contribute to three or four fairly stable sources of support.

To determine if specific clusters of social support exist, an exploratory factor analysis using staff data was conducted. Shown in Table 3, this analysis must be interpreted with caution. The skewness in the staff ratings may have affected the factor loadings. Notwithstanding, in an exploratory sense, the factor structure is indicative of four basic clusters of social support among refugees. "Community supports" include church, ethnic business, and neighbor contacts. "Service system supports" are comprised of interactions with social service workers, unrelated sponsors, and school contacts (usually from English as a Second Language or Vocational Training). "Close family supports" are represented by family and work contacts while "Other family supports" are represented by family sponsors.

[Insert Table 3 about here]

Simple structure is not achieved on two dimensions of family support as refugee sponsors who are family members emerge as a
distinct factor separate from other family contacts. Yet it is significant that two aspects of family support emerge, and that these kinds of support are independent of support from the community and the service system. The first kind represents help received from closely-tied family members, while the second may represent sponsorship provided by uncles, nephews and other extended family members who may not have as frequent or intimate contact with refugees. If most family sponsors are indeed extended family members, these data would indicate the importance of weak family ties in Asian subcultures and are consistent with a growing literature on weak ties (Blau, 1974; Friedkin, 1982; Granovetter, 1973). However, family sponsor contacts may be an important employment resource for refugees apart from other family members, particularly if the sponsor is a close family relative who assumes an independent and significant role in locating jobs.

Work contacts load on close family supports, replicating the BSSR and Utah refugee interview findings that job contacts are often made through close family ties. Both family dimensions have poor factor structure, possibly because they are based on crudely measured dimensions of family support. Subsequent research should attempt to more fully describe these dimensions by including more items that relate to aspects of family support as well as including more sophisticated measures of social support (Pfouts and Safier, 1981; Tardy, 1985).

The results of the factor analysis extend the BSSR findings and parallel the sponsor data. Tentatively, the social
support networks of Indochinese refugees may be conceptualized as consisting of four basic elements: community supports, service system supports; close family supports; and family sponsor supports.

Summary and Recommendations

These preliminary findings underscore the controversy over resettlement policies that promote small, relatively isolated refugee communities rather than ethnic enclaves similar to those in Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York (see Haines, et al., 1981, p. 312). Refugee support networks established in reorientation centers may, during the resettlement process, be dissolved, leaving the refugees with few informal contacts upon which to rely. Recognition of the importance and utility of informal contacts for employment and emotional support is one of the prime reasons why states are actively organizing and promoting Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs). These refugee-composed community organizations can be an important linking resource for refugees.

As of 1980, there were over 500 MAAs in America; up from less than 100 in 1976 (Vinh, 1981, p. 50). Currently, however, the challenge in Utah and elsewhere is how to organize these services in such a way that informal support networks arise and carry on in the absence of public funding (Moore, 1983). As funding for refugee social services is reduced, MAAs will be asked to assume an assistance-giving posture similar to that of the extended family and Buddhist church. Is this a fair request?
These data reflect the problems MAAs have encountered here in Utah. Yet in other states such as Wisconsin and California, MAAs have been highly praised as a vehicle for promoting economic self-sufficiency. However, problems may remain with these and other secular refugee self-help groups. The concept of an extrafamilial, extrachurch support of this type may be too far removed from the traditional Asian way of life to address the total range of refugee needs. In addition, community resources will have to supplement spiritual or familial ties if MAAs are to survive future decreases in public funding. Careful attention must be given to the creation of Mutual Assistance Associations and the training of the leaders of these organizations. Moreover, taking into account separation of church and state, policies to support America's growing Indochinese Buddhist organizations should be investigated.

Finally, in Utah it appears that social services as well as family supports have been particularly helpful. There is little evidence for the often heard hypothesis that Utah's Mormon culture accounts for its low dependency rate. Far more important than the socioreligious infrastructure of the state may be the State's relatively lower rate of unemployment and the way refugee social services were staffed and designed. In addition to informal supports provided by close and extended family members, formal services were found to be associated with economic self-sufficiency. Reports from staff members, corroborated by reports from sponsors who were refugees, suggest that Utah's extraordinary record in assisting refugees in achieving economic self-sufficiency.

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self-sufficiency is due in part to a vigorous attempt to hire bicultural workers and an equally vigorous commitment to assist refugees across a broad range of financial, educational, vocational and social needs. The services provided focused on strengthening families by using an in-home, case management approach. Community supports have not been well developed, but formal supports—including services provided by the voluntary agencies—appear to have supplemented family supports in a way that has produced one of the nation's highest self-sufficiency rates among America's most recent newcomers.

FOOTNOTES

1The "buffering" hypotheses regarding social support and illness has been both questioned and extended by some recent research (see Lin, et al., 1978, p. 110).

2Because the ratings were skewed toward helpfulness, normality could not be assumed. Therefore, nonparametric statistics were used.

3At the time of the surveys, MAAs had recently been reorganized. Consequently, this finding should not necessarily be interpreted as opposition to the concept of self-help organizations. Rather poor ratings of Utah's MAAs are likely due to their comparative youth, shortage of direct service staff, lack of a longstanding record of helping refugees, and difficulty in establishing stable leadership.
For the last four years Utah's unemployment rate has been approximately two percentage points below the national average. While this comparatively lower rate suggests greater opportunity to become self-sufficient, Utah's dependency rate is lower than that of other states with equivalent rates of unemployment. Following the example of Starr and Roberts (1981), it would be useful to analyze a broader range of contextual variables to assess their impact on refugee self-sufficiency in those states with lower rates of refugee dependency on public assistance.

See Fraser, Pecora and Popuang (1984).

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Winkler, E.  

Wright, R. G.  
Types of support with the highest and lowest ratings are listed alphabetically.

The following scale anchors: (1) Not useful; (7) Extremely useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Refugee</th>
<th>Median Rating of Usefulness</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Refugee</th>
<th>Median Rating of Usefulness</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Church</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Work-related Contacts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Work-related Contacts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tax-exempt Social Services</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>School-related Contacts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>School-related Contacts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Church-related Contacts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Work-related Contacts</td>
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<td>6.0</td>
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<td>Church-related Contacts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Work-related Contacts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Helping Refugees Achieve Economic Self-Sufficiency
Rank order of support by degree of usefulness for Refugees

Table 1
Economic self-sufficiency: Refugee response only
Rank order of social support by degree of impact on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank of Ueetnees Rank</th>
<th>Median Rating</th>
<th>Rank of Ueetnees Rank</th>
<th>Median Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Sponsors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Refugee Sponsors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
Table 3

Only loadings .500 or greater are reported. The factor solution, varimax.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percent of Communality</th>
<th>Percent of Total Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Support Contacts</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Support Contacts</td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Contacts</td>
<td>.525</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Contacts</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Contacts</td>
<td>.740</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Contacts</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Contacts</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N = 46)
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A CASE ANALYSIS

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University of Lagos

ABSTRACT

Nigeria is plagued by a social poverty that continues to escalate dramatically, in spite of the rapid economic growth associated with the "petrol naira." Efforts to check this deterioration and ensure development are hindered by the lack of culturally rooted structural and conceptual supports in the social development sector. These support components have been, and still are absent and until they are established, economic growth and ideological choices will be irrelevant to any rational effort to halt the escalation of social poverty and enhance the quality of life enjoyed by Nigerians.

I. Introduction

The "oil boom" as well as the economic growth it allegedly generated in Nigeria has turned out to be an "oil doom." It fostered the false illusion that development would either automatically follow or could be conveniently imported instead of being indigenously stimulated through integrated social planning. It also made Nigeria a fertile ground for exploitation by indigenous and expatriate capitalist. One result was the extensive use of resources for the importation of foreign goods, technology and ideas, while allocations for the nurturing and cultivation of locally rooted development were discouraged. Another result was the interest of the west in encouraging and at times pressuring for developmental projects that did not
take internal conditions into consideration. Both these factors contributed to Nigeria's remaining deprived of structures and concepts to deal with development-related problems. This situation is especially evident in the area of social development.

The lack of social development has led to criticism of the development strategy in Nigeria. This criticism has generally been formulated from an ideological point of view. Some authors, for example, have concluded that all Nigeria has to do to solve its problems is to turn its back on capitalist ideology and embrace socialism. However, I want to argue here that acting on this position would not present an automatic solution for Nigeria because it is is a position which does not take all the relevant factors into consideration. Social development is not an automatic function of ideology, no more than it is an automatic function of economic growth. Social development should, on the other hand, be viewed as the product of a rational, heuristic system of which ideology is but one component that interacts with other culturally relevant structural and conceptual components. My thesis is that social development in Nigeria is hindered by the lack of these culturally rooted structures and concepts in the country. Such components have not been and still are not integrated into a cohesive system; and until they are, ideological choices per se or economic growth will be irrelevant to any rational effort to deal with social poverty in Nigeria.

A historical analysis of the development of social service structures and concepts in Nigeria will provide support for the argument that existing structures and concepts are inadequate to stimulate social development, as well as reveal some of the domestic and international factors that foster this situation. After such an analysis, suggestions can then
be made as to what needs to be done to move the social development sector into the mainstream of national development planning in Nigeria.

II. Strategy and Definitions of Development

A. International Economic Development Strategy

Social development, conceptualized as an administrative process, came into popular use around the time of the First International Conference of Ministers for Social Welfare which was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in September, 1968. This conference was organized at a time when there was much international discontent over the failure of post-World War II development strategies to significantly enhance the quality of life especially in Third World nations. Those strategies had been formulated by the developed countries of North America and Western Europe with the United States functioning in a dominant role. The result was a concentration of political and economic power in these western states which enabled them to make and impose decisions for the entire global system. Because of the colonial and imperialist heritage, Third World nations were integrated into the world economic system from a position of dependency and therefore forced to establish development plans that conformed to sets of rules, institutions and procedures which were created by the west and which did not take the interests or needs of the Third World into consideration. Generally, the post World War II system referred to as the Bretton Woods system, narrowly defined development in economic terms and created economic institutions as the major developmental tools.

The conceptualization of development under the leadership of the United States equated it (i.e.--development) with economic development.
It was the opinion of the United States officials that economic development did not necessarily require public international capital. It was argued that domestic development efforts in the Third World should be based on domestic capital. The liberalization and expansion of trade was expected to help reduce the need for external capital. Although domestic development was to be domestically funded, it was admitted that some external capital might be needed. In that case, the capital should be private and not public. The Third World nations were expected to stimulate the needed private capital by improving export opportunities and generally creating a favorable climate to attract foreign investment and capital. They were advised that a favorable climate for foreign investment could be achieved "by rejecting expropriation, following acceptable monetary and fiscal policies and minimizing governmental competition with private business." (4) In the few cases where public, external financing might be necessary, such financing should be limited in amount and offered on market terms as opposed to concessional terms. Finally, the United States argued that public funds for development in the Third World should be of secondary priority, with European postwar reconstruction being the first priority. European reconstruction was seen as essential for Third World development in that it would reopen European trade and provide export markets for developing countries. As a result, no concessional funds were established to promote Third World development in the post war international economic order. This forced Third World nations to be concerned about realizing hard economic returns from financed projects in order to meet the terms of repayment, and encouraged the production of cash crops over food crops.

These initial post war development policies established development as an economic process. This economic concept of development
proved most detrimental to developing nations which were in need of large scale political and social changes. In most cases, these international development strategies produced only limited economic growth at best. Even in countries that experienced large increases in GNP, like Nigeria, there was not always a coinciding development of the economy as a whole, or of the social welfare sector in general. In fact, growth seemed to have aggravated the unequal distribution of income as national wealth concentrated in the hands of the privileged few. (5)

These widespread failures led to various efforts by Third World nations to redefine and expand the conditions and concepts of development. The First International conference of Ministers for Social Welfare was the first international attempt to organize social welfare administrators to deal with development strategies. The organizers realized that in spite of increases in GNP and attempts to equate development with economic growth, important structural barriers to significant development still remained. They determined that the role of national governments in the field of social welfare should be more than just one of coordination. It was recommended that national governments assume leadership roles in the formation of national policies, legislation, research, planning and training in the area of social welfare in their respective countries. (6) These recommendations involved viewing social development as a new administrative approach to social services. However, they did not clearly establish the functional aspects of this new administrative approach. Although the concept was incomplete, many nations in the Third World adopted social development as an alternative strategy in principle if not in practice. Nigeria was one of the nations that accepted and sought to implement this progressive new service idea of development.
B. Social Development as National Strategy

Nigeria's earliest attempt at operationalizing the new concept of social development arose in the context of the country's plans for economic development in the late 1960s. In *Introduction to the Social Development Division*, a pamphlet published by the Federal Ministry of Social Development, Youth and Sports, it is stated that:

"Social development is now conceived as a comprehensive action programme designed to cater for the needs of all the people in the same way as economic development. In other words, social development should be complementary of economic development." (7)

In 1970, the Federal Military Government of Nigeria requested the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa to make an advisor on social welfare policy and training available to it. Dr. A. H. Shawky was sent to visit the country in March and April, 1970 and he submitted the Shawky report. Without clearly defining social development or establishing tangible goals and criteria, Dr. Shawky's report outlined the respective roles the Federal Government, the State Government, the local Government and voluntary agencies should play in the social development of the country, and the types of institutions and training most conducive to the development process. Based on these recommendations, the Federal Government passed the Social Development Decree No. 12 of 1974. This decree placed responsibility for social development at the Federal level and established federal institutions that were supposed
to "ensure continuous improvement and transformation in the quality of life of the people throughout the nation."(8)

Although Nigeria has adopted in principle the concept and terminology of social development as defined at the First International Conference of Ministers of Social Welfare held in 1968 and has made efforts to establish structures which are intended to be conducive to carrying out social development functions, these efforts have not resulted in social development in practice. A decisive commitment to identified social goals, and strategies for realizing these goals seem to be lacking in Nigeria's attempts at social development. The introduction of social development structures has not significantly impacted upon national development planning, nor has it transformed the quality of life or checked the social deterioration facing the country. The first step in enriching social development efforts in Nigeria should have been directed at identifying the essential knowledge base, functions and roles, as well as structures which characterize social development as a change process which is not only much broader than social welfare but which is also distinct from economic development. This way its vital importance to national planning can be underlined.

III. Social Development Defined

Beginning from the late 1960's various authors have attempted to define and conceptualize social development. To cite some examples; David Gil indicates the importance of "evenly shared, balanced progress across an entire population."(9) Paiva emphasized the integrative aspects of the development processes that operate to complement each other at "all levels within and between countries."(10) He also stressed the importance of relating social development features in a
country to cultural factors that are relevant to the needs, values and priorities of the country. Dr. Pratt conceptualized social welfare approaches along an axis ranging from "remedial to developmental." She analyzed the potential contribution of the various models to national development in Third World nations. She concluded that the development approach "has the greatest potential for contributing to national development in new and poor countries."(11)

All these authors made direct or implied references to the improvement of the quality of life of a country's citizenry; the need to expand the range as well as scope of traditional welfare approaches; and the need to establish structures and institutions which are culturally relevant and that have a futuristic, systems perspective. These ideas can be used to build a working definition of social development. For this purpose social development will be defined here as planned transformation in the interactional experiences of systems and people sharing a commitment to a social environment. This can be achieved through the implementation of a rational, comprehensive, action-oriented program which identifies, conceptualizes and caters for the social security and justice of the people.

In order to operationalize such a concept of social development at the national level, it is necessary to design and operate appropriate national organizational structures. However, the structures will be ineffective unless they are supplied with and then utilize appropriate knowledge and value inputs in generating policies, programs and processes. A historical review will reveal that Nigeria has not yet realized social development from its planned National development efforts, in terms of designing relevant and appropriate organizational structures to facilitate social development in the country.
IV. From Colonial Welfare Administration to Neo-Colonial Welfare Administration

A. The Service System

The social service system in Nigeria has remained essentially the same since its formal inception under the colonial administration at the end of World War II. The Colony Welfare Service was initiated in Lagos and was meant to function as a tool for dealing with problems as identified by colonial administrators."(12) One of the most serious problems facing the country at the end of World War II was the increasing number of orphaned, abandoned or run-away children who flocked into the urban areas. These young people, mostly boys, lived on the streets and frequently resorted to delinquent behavior. Apparently these juveniles constituted a significant problem for the colonial administration who feared that they could be used to ferment social unrest by the emergent nationalist movements. Indeed, virtually all of the social service structures and institutions established in Lagos from 1942 to 1945 were designed to serve delinquent youths. In 1946-47 the scope of the Colonial Welfare Service was expanded to provide for custody of girls and younger boys (8-11 years) who were declared in need of "care and protection" or "beyond parental control" as stipulated in "The Children and Young Persons Act" of the British Parliament.(13) Approved school services for delinquent girls and younger boys and "matrimonial services" were not established until 1948. The Juvenile Court was also established in 1948. In 1959 adult probation was provided for persons over eighteen years old.(14) These services made up the core of Nigeria's service system and it was essentially in place by the time the nation became independent.

It is interesting to note that although
This service system was organized for Lagos. It was actually administered by the central administration since Lagos was a federal territory. When the Federal Government was established in 1954 Lagos remained a federal territory and the administration of the welfare system passed to the Federal Ministry of Labor. The only formal service system outside of Lagos developed in Calabar in the Old Eastern Region. This city, like Lagos was a port city and was plagued with similar problems of juvenile delinquency. Although the services in Calabar paralleled the service development in Lagos in time and nature, the two systems were actually independent of each other. None of the other regions of the country had formal systems until after Western and Eastern Nigeria became self-governing in 1957. At that time the old Western Region established its own social welfare service. The Eastern and Northern Regions did not establish government level social services until the creation of twelve states in May, 1967. At that time some, but not all of the newly created states established social welfare services. In 1972, the Federal Government assumed responsibility for the Social Development of the nation and each state was mandated to organize social development services. (15)

Currently there are nineteen states and every state provides social welfare services in the areas of Family Welfare, Child Care, Juvenile Welfare and Probation and after-care. Many states also have community development and adult literacy programs. (16) Most recently, the Fourth National Development Plan 1981-85 included the mandate that each state establish services for the Handicapped and "beggars and destitutes." (17) Although the range of programs highlights services to highly vulnerable populations and areas, a content analysis reveals that the conceptualization of social services, even to these groups, is still quite narrow and has remained virtually
unchanged from that of the Colony Welfare Service. Family Welfare is conceived of as reconciliation or settlement of disputes; Child Care consists of limited use of foster care; the Juvenile Welfare services include Approved schools, Remand homes and Juvenile Courts for the adjudication and treatment of delinquents; and Probation and after-care is case-by-case supervision of those released from the justice system. Community development is generally in the area of "self-help" projects with technical and limited financial assistance from the government and adult literacy programs. In essence, the focus of social development in Nigeria is not developmental but remedial in practice. The core services were developed during the Colony Welfare Service and have persisted. New services were added only when the problems became critical. The predominance of urban focus services and reliance on casework methods have also consistently characterized the system. As a result, the social development sector has remained on the periphery of National Development Planning in Nigeria. It has not been able to provide adequate responses to the wide range of social situations manifesting as problems in the country.

V. The System of Principles, Values and Assumptions

Any analysis of the social service system in Nigeria must necessarily involve an examination of the assumptions, principles and values underlying the formulation of policies to regulate the provision of those services. Like the provision of services, the philosophical stances that govern the formulation of social policy in Nigeria were largely established during the colonial era and are still reflected in current practice. These philosophical stances are implicitly economic in nature. Generally, there appears to be a tradition of only allowing or sanctioning govern-
ment involvement in the provision of services that are economically rational. For instance, before the 1930's the official attitude of the colonial government was that Nigeria, as a colony, could not afford to have social services or amenities which could not be paid for from her own natural resources. The only services that the colonial government provided were "crash programs" initiated in response to specific, widely experienced disasters, or programs and ordinances that appeared to have been primarily designed to protect and provide for the comfort of the British citizenry. Consequently between 1860 and the late 1930's what services existed were largely the responsibility of missionaries.(18) The British government did not become actively involved in social planning for the colonies, including Nigeria, until after World War II. The passage of the Colonial Welfare Acts of 1940, 1945 and 1950 made the first funds available for colonial development. These acts guaranteed funds regardless of the marketability of Nigerian products. (19) This guarantee of funds at least made planning a viable possibility. The Colonial Welfare Acts, especially those enacted in 1945 and 1950, came into being following a series of domestic and international factors which put pressure on Britain to change its attitude toward its colonies.

The first important event was the Great Depression of the 1930's; During the depression external demand for Nigerian products declined. In order for the country to survive economically, external aid was necessary to make up for the revenue loss created by the fall in demand for Nigerian products in the world market.

A second important factor was the dissatisfaction among vital groups in Nigeria who felt they had made sacrifices during the war and wanted reward. Ex-servicemen and businessmen were prominent among these groups.
Finally the British Labor Party came into power after the war with a Socialist programme. From this doctrine position, the party condemned colonial rule as immoral. An additional factor was the Atlantic Charter, 1941, in which the Americans denounced colonialism and thereby brought the issue to the focus of world attention. In short there were both domestic and global factors which brought the question of social conditions in the British colonies to the center of political discussion and whose effect was to lead to statutory action being taken to deal with them.

In response to these factors, the Colonial Welfare Acts were enacted. Their aim was to ameliorate the deteriorating social conditions in the colonies. The Act of 1940 made grants available to colonies. These grants provided opportunities for the establishment of trade unions and disallowed the use of child labor on any development scheme that was covered by the grant. The Act of 1945 guaranteed free medical services to Nigerians disabled in the Second World War. The Act of 1950 enabled voluntary agencies to qualify for financial assistance if they could demonstrate that the services they were providing were "worthwhile." The 1950 Act also provided grants for social service planning throughout the country. This was an important provision since hitherto much of social planning by the colonial administration had been limited to Lagos and Calabar.

Another underlying factor in social policy formulation in Nigeria has been a dependence on voluntary agencies. These agencies often assume responsibility for services which are not sufficiently economically rational, but which are nevertheless necessary. Some important social welfare issues which have received their attention are: care for the physically disabled, care for the the mentally ill and
the development of resources to help deter delinquency. These services are still largely provided for by voluntary agencies with some financial help from the government. Such agencies have included the Nigerian Red Cross, the Girls' Guide Movement, The Boys' Scout Movement and the Young Women's Christian Association. The provision of these services tend to become the responsibility of federal and state governments only when the relevant social problems had developed to a sufficiently critical level to constitute a national problem.

These principles conform to an economic point of view which is borne out of a strict commitment to capitalist ideology although the acceptance of government action to provide some of these services represents an important modification of the capitalist emphasis on a laissez faire approach to solving social problems, in terms of minimum government interference and preference for private initiative to deal with them. That governments in post-colonial Nigeria have accepted an important role for government in this area is an important legacy of the 1940 and 1950 Colonial Welfare Acts. But other than this, government social planners in Nigeria have never questioned basic capitalist ideological assumptions underlying these principles. In elite planning circles, there is the reasoning that the social development sector represents a "net consumption" that drains the nation of scarce revenues.(22) There is also the popular belief that social services breed complacency, encourage laziness and kill initiative. The over-all effect of these perceptions is that the social development sector has been allocated a low priority position or marginalized in the country's development plans since independence. This is reflected in fiscal allocations to the sector annually for capital and/or recurrent expenditures (see Table 1, for instance). Generally, the social develop-
ment sector has demonstrated a decided lack of internal dynamism and has passively accepted the insignificant role and low priorities assigned it by economists who have dominated the planning process in Nigeria.

The marginality of the social development sector has also been aggravated by the fact that it has traditionally been staffed largely by untrained personnel who did not have an adequate perception of the sector's actual and potential roles in Nigerian society. There was also the regnant developmental view, encouraged subconsciously and at times consciously by the international society, that development was economic growth. This economistic view of development contributed in no small measure to marginalizing the other social sciences in the planning process, so much so that even when expertise in the planning was available in social science fields other than economics, it was virtually never utilized or included in national planning processes. (23) Those who have produced Nigeria's development plans since independence have demonstrated little knowledge or understanding of the nature of the social development function, or of the value of an integrative social development sector to national development. This lack of knowledge and understanding is evident when we examine the functions and allocations assigned to the "Social Sector" as outlined in the 1981-85 National Development Plan.

In the current national development plan, social development is one of five sub-sectors listed under the "Social Sector." The other four are education, health, information and labor. Allocations for the social development sub-sector represents about 7 percent of the total allocation for the "Social Sector." Education and health take the largest share of this sectoral allocation (see Table 1). It is significant that no specific provisions are made for any supportive social services in
either of the educational or health sub-sectors. One result is that all of the social services provided for are specified under social development.

The social development sub-sector is subdivided into social welfare, youth development, sports development, culture and community development (see Table 2). Judging from the disproportional amounts allocated to sports, one is tempted to conclude that social development is equated with sports. Social welfare is perceived as mainly juvenile services and family welfare, and community development is conceptualized as self-help and cooperative programs.

VI. A Proposed Change of Strategy

The term "social development" has been adopted in Nigeria as the official designation for social services for almost 10 years. There has even been an attempt to reorganize the service system structurally so as to establish a three-tier system of Federal, State and Local governments, intended to facilitate the appropriate change in social development processes and functions. However when we examine the programs in the various states, it becomes apparent that the Federal Government's perception of its role in social development remains limited. The operation of social development, for all practical purposes, has been interpreted to mean mandating that all the states implement the traditional social services as developed in and for Lagos, the original focus of work in this sector. If we look at the nineteen states, we see that virtually all of them have established social services programs which are almost identical in organization and content to those found in Lagos. This similarity in programs has occurred inspite of the fact that Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society with a wide variety of cultural factors operating to determine social development needs
and consequently to dictate different strategies for approaching and attempting to resolve these needs. The cultural factors should enter into the planning mechanism to ensure the development of relevant services for the respective cultural actions of the country. This situation is even more significant when we realize that the services developed in Lagos were not even indigenously developed, but were largely determined by the colonial administrators as control mechanisms. The social development sector in post-colonial Nigeria has not effectively transformed the service system into an indigenously rooted system which can participate in the mainstream of national planning and development. This is why there is an imperative need for an auto-centred approach to social development. Such an approach calls for a reconceptualization of social welfare in such a way as to reflect indigenous thinking. Some of the considerations and perspectives which should go into such an approach are the following.(24)

An analysis of the social development sector in Nigeria suggests that the structures of the sector have not resulted in culturally heuristic and relevant social service strategies. The present state of structural irrelevance that characterizes the sector is, as I have suggested, attributable to the fact that goals, processes and functions of the social development sector have never been clearly identified and conceptualized in the context of an over all determination of the rich cultural heterogeneity of Nigeria. The situation therefore demands the identification of a core of social development administrators and social researchers who can gather and organize information about services and needs, at least of the major cultural sections of the country, as well as the selection of an interdisciplinary team of social scientists who can critically analyze and suggest directions for the formulation of social policy.
On the other hand, the inadequacies of the social development efforts in Nigeria cannot be blamed entirely on the failure of administrators and social scientists to produce relevant content. Part of the problem is that the structure and organization of the sector is in itself problematic. The establishment of the Federal Ministry of Social Development and Sports was not sufficient to ensure a relevant, national outlook. One problem lies in the fact that no effective mechanism was created to provide for the flow of relevant information from the grass roots up. The Federal Government makes decisions without the benefit of relevant information and feedback from the states. A review of previous and current development plans indicates that decision about priorities and target populations have been influenced more by United Nations declarations -- such as the Year of the Child or the Year of the Disabled -- and the subsequent availability of funds relevant to these declarations from international organizations than by sensitivity to domestic, felt-need and relevance. These United Nations funds have tended to discourage the identification of national targets and the setting up of national campaign priorities independent of the U.N. and its specialized agencies. Yet it is important to develop such auto-centred initiatives so that the stimuli to create grass root channels and support can be nurtured and reinforced. What we see is a Federal level administration located in Lagos with closer ties to the international system than to the domestic scene. Also, the fact that the federal Government tends to snap up the very limited number of formally trained social workers and administrators for administrative work within the Federal Ministry of Social Development, Youth and Sports headquarters in Lagos means that the front-line workers are mostly untrained and are not given many participatory opportunities in the planning/de-
cision making processes at the headquarters.

Another major structural problem lies in the structural and functional separation of divorce of the social and economic sector to which I have earlier made an implied reference. This division of labor is characterized by the creation of separate Ministries for health, education, housing, social development and labor. While this functional separation may be understandable, what is desirable is the limited interaction between these ministries, something which is further worsened by bureaucratic competition for resources and personnel between them. One result is that instead of social development operating to stimulate integrated, comprehensive service and planning which takes the health, education, labor and housing sectors into account, its focus is limited to a narrow range of functions such as those like settling of matrimonial and juvenile delinquent cases, provision of remand and old people's homes, child care and sports to which references have been made earlier on here. The need for an integrated, comprehensive meeting of socio-economic needs therefore demands a different conceptualization of the social development sector. For example, social work education in schools, social work in industrial and medical settings--these are some areas of need.

Social administrators and other social scientists in Nigeria need, therefore, to make concerted efforts to re-evaluate the goals, priorities, processes and functions of, the various service sectors of the country and then organize to demand more participation in developing the role and structure of social development in national development. Information from all the states and more sustained interaction between major sectors of the planning process need to be strengthened and organized as a basis for comprehensive, relevant planning. More effort should in short be made
to conceptualize an auto-centred development, based on culturally relevant values, criteria and processes. Initially the role of the Federal Government in social development should be as a facilitator in developing a network which provides for interactions between state and local communities and with other significant social, economic and political units at those levels. These networks need to be designed so that information can flow smoothly in both directions. Such interaction and information can then become the tools by which local ideas, aspirations, needs and resources can be developed into services and service processes and then transmitted to the centre. Social development as a reality cannot be achieved in Nigeria by using the strategies and concepts developed elsewhere, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world.

The social development sector is one area where Nigeria must take a step, no matter how small, to exercise self-determination and discipline to ensure that whatever indigenous cultural, human and economic resources available are used to create and provide services that are not only relevant but also conducive to mobilizing Nigerians to participate in a collective effort to tackle and eradicate as much as possible the social poverty so pervasive in the nation.

Footnotes


3 Ibid., pp. 21-22.

4 Ibid., p. 132.


7 Ibid., p. 4.

8 Ibid., pp. 5-6.


14 Ibid., p. 5.

15 FMSD, op cit, p. 4.

16 Akeredolu, op cit, p. 51.


19 Ibid., p. 186.

20 Ibid., p. 186.

21 Ibid., pp. 187-188.


23 Akeredolu, op cit, p. 46.


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**Government Programs 1981-1985**

**Percentage Distribution of Federal, State and Local**

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